

March 24, 2022

**Economic Development Commission
Meeting Minutes**

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 7:05pm by Chairperson Stave. The meeting was hosted via Zoom internet conferencing and in conference room b at town hall.

Roll Call: Sondra Astor Stave, Andrew Ladyga, Bill Jobbagy, Barbara Barry, Carolyn Gerrity, Sam Belsito, Tim Liptrap, Darby Pollansky, Rick Conti

Citizens: John

Absent:

Town Staff: John Elsesser, Town Manager; Eric Trott, Director of Planning and Development, Pam Rochette

Adoption of Minutes:

A motion was made by Liptrap and seconded by Jobbagy to adopt the February 24, 2022 minutes as presented.

The motion passed unanimously.

Planner/Manager Reports: Copies of the reports were forwarded to the members for their review and comment.

John reported the following project updates:

- : Swamp Road project to commence soon.
- : A site walk – project kick-off meeting on the Nathan Hale Greenway trail grant project is scheduled for tomorrow with Town Staff.
- : The Library bid opening is to occur on April 1
- : The Town will be pursuing ARPA funds for the Bolton sewer project.
- : The Town is working with CT Water Company on upcoming improvement projects.

New Business:

1. Bolton Gateway EDC Subcommittee Report:

John reported that the Subcommittee with owner, Andrew Ladyga and a representative from the real estate agency that he has been speaking with. Conversations occurred about potential uses that would be appropriate for the site – car wash, EV motor vehicle, cannabis establishment. The

owner is eligible for equity licensing from the State. A discussion also occurred regarding possible Zoning Regulations approaches for the site and its ultimate development.

2. 4 Town Regional Economic Vitality Team updates:

Eric provided an update on 4 Town initiatives:

: A RFP has been released to hire a consultant and develop a logo/brand for the 4 Town initiative as well as a marketing plan.

: The workshop with UCONN was held on March 23 that provided details on the hiring of interns by local businesses that can support projects and needs of the businesses. A series of webinars will extend into the spring about this and other programs being offered such as local businesses hiring Uconn interns.

: Tim will be doing a workshop for the Tolland Chamber on April 19 on Facebook tools to support local businesses.

: An application was submitted by the 4 Town team with the Uconn Masters of Public Administration program to hire an intern to assist in executing the various initiatives in the Plan. Interviews were conducted on March 23 and decisions by the students are anticipated by mid-April.

3. Target development sites – member, staff contacts:

Eric gave an update on a couple of properties of interest and referenced the staff project memo that gives a comprehensive overview on the status of projects.

The one acre commercial site owner by Dickenson across the street from Cumberland Farms is receiving some attention. Public water is available which will assist with the ultimate design on site for a future use.

John indicated that the former Swiss Cleaner unit at Meadowbrook Plaza will be rented for a children's clothing store. Additional space is to be provided to Integrated Rehabilitation as Meadowbrook Wine and Spirits space will be modified as well. Energy efficient upgrades to their coolers may be possible as well.

4. RTE 44 Bolton/Coventry sewers – Windham sewers - status:

John provided an update. A meeting with the Windham WPCA was held to begin the dialogue on connection considerations with the Windham sewer system. Improvements to the existing treatment plant will be necessary which raises the question about whether an inter-municipal project is prudent. ARPA funds are available to assist with this. The Windham plant is well below capacity and Coventry would need to address nitrogen reduction issues at the current site.

John will be meeting with the new Bolton First Selectperson to discuss the ongoing efforts with the Bolton sewer extension project. An engineer is working on design. An authorization is necessary from Manchester.

5. New potential medical – dental office – Boston Turnpike –status:

Eric reported that an IWA application is currently being administered. Design issues have arisen with septic, well, drainage improvements. Staff continues to work with the designed to address the issues. Town land that is behind the site could factor in a solution. A PZC application is anticipated to be submitted in May.

6. Dunkin Donuts – access – vehicle cueing improvements:

A special permit application is pending with the PZC to construct a new vehicle cueing operation to improve traffic flow and eliminate impacts on Main Street A public hearing will be opened on the matter at the February 28 meeting and will likely be continued to the April 11 meeting. The designer continues to address Staff and property owner comments.

7. PZC regulations development – cannabis establishments:

The Commission Chair and Town Staff continue to work on developing draft regulations and are examining other town regulations that have been adopted as a reference. Copies have recently been received from Tolland, Vernon, East Hartford, Middletown. Eric had the opportunity to discuss Tolland's experience recently when they adopted their regulations.

8. Housing Affordability Plan development:

The PZC Housing Affordability Subcommittee has provided final comments on the Housing Needs Assessment and it is now on the project website. A community workshop is scheduled for March 30 at 7pm.

9. New/Improved businesses – certificates of appreciation – business visitation:

A list was prepared by Staff and shared at the next EDC meeting. There had been many certificates issued last year and there are very few at this time. New certificates can be issued to the following: Nathan Hale Financial, Hale Barber Shop, Golf Cart Guy, Can Dance Studio.

John reported that Coventry Collision will be closing in the near future, with the owner retiring.

10. Business Employee Recognition Program:

Pam Rochette, the Town Manager's intern from Uconn, provided a presentation on how the project was coordinated. The campaign was held in January and February with online and paper surveys. Heather, a Dunkin Donuts staff was the award winner and Nicole Irvine of Courtside Nutrition at second place. Both will be recognized in a ceremony at their business later in April.

11. Arts on Main – planning:

The Land Use and Parks and Recreation Departments are cooperatively work with the Coventry Arts Guild to plan for the Arts on Main Street fest. A date in September is being selected. A budget and event details continue to being formulated. The event will combine with the Coventry Cares Food Truck Festival. New stakeholders are being invited to participate, such as the Glass Museum and Coventry Schools.

12. Hytone Farm – anaerobic digester project status:

The permitting process for the project continues. However, challenges have arisen with the consultant and designer in providing site plan details that reflect the project accurately and consistent with what had been reviewed and approved by the IWA. Town Staff continues to assist the owner and consultants to gain final approval for the project.

13. Business View Magazine article:

John reported that he and Eric participated in a follow up article with Business View magazine on how the Town responded to the challenges with Covid and related business support activities. Town success stories were shared from over the past two years.

Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned at 8:40 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Eric M. Trott
Director of Planning and Development