



**Town of Wallingford**  
**Economic Development Commission**  
45 South Main Street, Room 311  
Wallingford, CT 06492

**Economic Development Commission**  
**Regular Meeting Minutes**  
October 23, 2023

**Present:** Mark Gingras, Vice Chair  
Rob Fritz, Commissioner  
Tim Ryan, Commissioner  
Jim Wolfe, Commissioner  
Patty Powers, Alternate  
Don Crouch, ED Specialist

**Guest:** Liz Davis, WCI  
Mark Davis, resident

**Absent:** Joe Mirra, Chair  
Hank Baum, Commissioner  
Anthony Bracale, Commissioner  
Gary Fappiano, Alternate  
Patricia Cymbala, Alternate

In the absence of Chair Joe Mirra, Vice Chair Gingras called the regular meeting of the Economic Development Commission to order at 6:32 p.m.

1. **Pledge of Allegiance** – Vice Chair Gingras led the Commission in the Pledge of Allegiance.
2. **Discussion and Possible Action on Regular Meeting Minutes dated September 25, 2023** – There was a brief discussion regarding a few amendments to the minutes. **Patty Powers made a motion to approve the minutes as amended. Rob Fritz seconded the motion. All in favor except Jim Wolfe abstained, as he was not present. Minutes approved.**
3. **Review of Monthly Expenditure Reports – July 2023 & August 2023** – Wolfe noted that the Office Expense account is at 60% used and we are only at month 3 (three). He asked if funds need to be transferred to cover this year’s office expenses. Secretary Hoppes stated that \$450 is encumbered for the WB Mason Purchase Order, and the Hartford Business Journal digital-print subscription of \$132.00 was paid out of this account. Hoppes will keep an eye on the account, but does not see a need to transfer any funds at this time.
4. **Update and discuss: Historic Railroad Station Re-Use Project** – At the Town Council meeting on September 26<sup>th</sup>, EDC updated the Town Council on the progress of the project and

48 presented an opportunity to transform the building into a multi-vendor food hall concept. The  
49 initial presentation was to get their feedback. The concept was well received, councilors were in  
50 favor of the idea of a food hall, but were not pleased with the process of how this idea came  
51 about. Town Councilor Fishbein has requested an agenda item for the Town Council meeting on  
52 Tuesday, October 24, 2023: Discussion and possible action on a Resolution regarding  
53 Wallingford's Historic Railroad Station, and issuance of an RFP regarding its revitalization and  
54 restoration as a publicly usable, inviting space in our downtown - Councilor Fishbein (item #9)

- 55 • Staff Crouch, Chair Mirra, and Vice Chair Gingras will be attending the Town Council  
56 meeting. Gingras encouraged the EDC Commissioners to attend if they are available.  
57 Depending on the outcome of the October 24<sup>th</sup> meeting, EDC will go back to Town  
58 Council at their November 14<sup>th</sup> meeting with an update, including more details for the  
59 food hall concept.
- 60 • Staff Crouch has had multiple meetings and conversations with Adult Education and  
61 the Superintendent. Board of Education conducted a transportation survey of the  
62 students attending Adult Ed. Survey results showed that none of their students use  
63 public transportation, 69% drive or get dropped off, and 26% walk. 64% of their  
64 students live 5 miles or less from the Learning Center. Crouch is working with  
65 Superintendent Bellizzi and the Director of Adult Ed to research possible options for  
66 relocation. Commissioners had a conversation regarding the amount of classes that  
67 are held in the historic railroad station, their brochure...does it reflect their mission, and  
68 noted that Wallingford Adult Ed is now accepting students from Cheshire and Berlin.
- 69 • Fritz asked what initiated the development of the lower town center area. Ryan stated  
70 it is in the Town's Plan of Conservation and Development. The POCD was adopted in  
71 2016. Chapter 6 of the Plan of Conservation and Development, has been devoted to  
72 "Making the Town Center a Vibrant Destination"; thus an Incentive Housing Zone was  
73 adopted to encourage development in this area. In conjunction with the State of  
74 Connecticut, a Transit Oriented Development and Pedestrian Safety & Walkability  
75 Study was completed to encourage redevelopment in this area as well. These efforts  
76 have enabled great strides in the lower Center Street section over the past few years,  
77 in turn, making the renovation of the historic train station a timely, and wise  
78 investment.
- 79 • Liz Daviz, Wallingford Center Inc. Director stated that the common goal of WCI and  
80 EDC is to develop the lower portion of Center/Hall/Quinnipiac streets, and retain the  
81 existing businesses in all areas of the Town Center. The historic railroad station re-use  
82 project will encourage the continuing development in the area. Developing the lower

83 portion will bring more foot traffic and additional opportunities for housing, retail, and,  
84 restaurant businesses.

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86 **5. Discussion: Sign Regulations** – Planning & Zoning Department is the process of doing an  
87 entire overhaul of the sign zoning regulations to clarify and simplify business signage for the  
88 whole town. There will be workshops for discussions. Continuing item to next agenda.

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90 **6. Committee Remarks**

91 ➤ **Marketing, Retention & Incentives Committee** – No update from the committee at this  
92 time.

93 • Secretary Hoppes reiterated that the Marketing Committee and the Retention  
94 Incentives Committee have merged. Ryan reiterated that there was a high need for  
95 Incentives approximately 10 years ago and that is no longer the case. Hoppes stated  
96 that Chair Gingras and Powers can work with staff to coordinate agendas. The tasks  
97 that Retention Incentives does at this time are renewing the existing Incentive  
98 Programs (just completed in September 2023), and coordinate Mayor Company Visits  
99 with town businesses (will resume upon new administration). Merging the committees  
100 allows the group of commissioners to collaborate together and assign tasks easier.

101 • **Next Meeting:** Friday, November 17, 2023 @ 12:00pm (noon) (*tentative*)

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103 ➤ **P&Z Liaison** –The moratorium on warehousing has been lifted. Wolfe stated that the  
104 regulations do not allow high-cube, e-commerce warehousing in any zones.

105 • **Next Meeting:** No meeting scheduled

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107 **7. Staff Report/regional matters** –

108 • CGI Digital – Crouch spent 3 days with the videographer last week. The filming went  
109 well. They were able to get a lot of needed footage. He has a meeting with CGI Sales  
110 Rep on October 24, 2023. He has gotten a lot of positive feedback from businesses,  
111 non-profits and private schools regarding CGI's initiative. Videos will not be complete  
112 until early 2024, awaiting new administration before completion.

113 • ED Luncheons are resuming. Started with Wallingford today, October 23rd at  
114 Gaetano's Tavern on Main. 13 Economic Development representatives from the  
115 Northeastern area of CT attended the event.

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- Crouch will be attending SCRCOG's Mixed Income Housing Tour on October 24<sup>th</sup> with Town Planner, Kevin Pagini. They will go to a variety of housing developments in Milford, Branford, and Wallingford)
  - Crouch reviewed the Public Hearing items scheduled for the Planning & Zoning Commissions November 13, 2023 Regular Meeting.
    - 55 Kondraki Lane – Nursing home conversion to Housing
    - 1 Miles Drive – EV Charging station/applying for text change to the zoning regulations. State regulations states that the property must have a building. This would be the first EV Charging station in CT.
    - 5 Research Parkway (BMS property) – application to subdivide a portion of the property making the day care building its own parcel. This would allow the property owners to lease this portion of the property.
  - Proton Beam Therapy Center project update – Project is still proceeding. More updates in the first quarter of 2024.

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8. **Chair's Remarks** – Gingras encouraged the commissioners to attend the Town Council meeting on November 14<sup>th</sup> to support the EDC with the Historic Railroad Station Re-Use Project presentation.
  9. **Other community business** - none
  10. **Next Meeting Date:** November 20, 2023 @ 6:30pm ~ Town Hall, Room 315

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**There being no further business, Patty Powers made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:45p.m.; Jim Wolfe seconded the motion. By unanimous vote, the motion carried.**

Sincerely,



Stacey Hoppes, Secretary