

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

Economic Development Commission
Regular Meeting Minutes
October 4, 2021

Not Approved by EDC

Present:

Joe Mirra, Chair
Mark Gingras, Vice-Chair
Gary Fappiano, Commissioner
Hank Baum, Commissioner
Jim Wolfe, Commissioner
Patricia Cymbala, Commissioner
Anthony Bracale, Alternate
Rob Fritz, Alternate

Absent:

Rosemarie Preneta, Commissioner

Others Present:

Tim Ryan, Economic Development Specialist
Stacey Hoppes, EDC Secretary

Chair Joe Mirra called the regular meeting of the Economic Development Commission to order at 6:33 p.m.

1. **Pledge of Allegiance** –Chair Mirra led the EDC in the Pledge of Allegiance.
2. **Discussion and Possible Action on Regular Meeting Minutes dated August 30, 2021** – Commissioner Fappiano noted that he was not in attendance at the meeting on August 30, 2021. Secretary Hoppes will remove Commissioner Fappiano from the minutes. **Jim Wolfe made a motion to approve the minutes as otherwise presented. Mark Gingras seconded the motion. The minutes were unanimously approved.**
3. **Review of Monthly Expenditure Report** - Being there were no comments regarding the Expenditure Report, Chair Mirra moved onto the next item on the Agenda.
4. **Committee Remarks**
 - **Marketing** – Chair Gingras stated that the efforts of the meeting dated August 23, 2021 were focused on a continued discussion regarding a Feasibility Study for the Old Railroad Station. Jon Walworth was asked to enlighten the Committee on the process of formulating a Feasibility Study. More specifics to come by the next EDC meeting. Mayor is asking that the EDC Marketing Committee takes the lead for the Feasibility Study. Commissioner Wolfe mentioned that it would be beneficial for all of the EDC members to stop by the facility and take a look around.
 - **Planning & Zoning Liaison** – Chair Baum stated that their last meeting was on Wednesday, September 29, 2021.
 - There was a detailed discussion regarding the Special Workshop meeting on the proposed regulation changes to the IX and I-5 Zones dated Tuesday, October 5, 2021 being held at the HUBCAP. This discussion prepared the committee members to

54 represent the EDC at the public workshop. Baum noted that the proposed changes
55 are a collaborative effort that had been agreed upon by the Town Planner,
56 Environmental Planner, Public Utilities, Town Engineer, and the EDC with guidance
57 from the Law Department. Data Center development is one of the line items in the
58 proposed regulation changes. Baum mentioned that Data Center development
59 addresses the strategic initiatives of the Town's POCD.

- 60 • There was a brief discussion regarding the PZC's denial of the Montante Construction
61 application (Amazon). Staff Ryan stated that Montante filed an appeal.
62

63 ➤ **Retention/Incentives** – Chair Fappiano stated that they had a meeting on September 24,
64 2021.

- 65 • Wallingford's ARPA funds are expected to be approximately \$13MM. Staff Ryan
66 clarified some questions regarding timelines for the ARPA funds. Every town has to
67 have a plan completed by 2024 and the funds need to be distributed by 2026. The
68 RFP for consulting services to guide the town through the process went out and is
69 due back by October 14.
- 70 • The Committee had a discussion regarding Workforce Development and the
71 HUBCAP. EDC Chair Mirra attended the meeting and informed the committee that
72 there are Pipeline Opportunities in October. The HUBCAP Board of Directors has
73 been rebuilt and is looking to continue aligning school curriculums to create career
74 opportunities within Wallingford. They would also like to have a meeting open to
75 parents to show them the value these opportunities create for their children.
- 76 • Chair Fappiano expressed that at some point down the road the EDC may want to
77 create a sub-committee under the Marketing Committee for Retention/Incentives.
78 Take a look at whether these committees should be combined or restructured.
- 79 • Staff Ryan informed the Committee that the PZC workshop is scheduled for Tuesday,
80 October 5 at 6:30pm at the Hubcap on Center St. Ryan stated that the EDC's
81 recommendations of reducing the open space requirement in the IX and I-5 zones,
82 adding uses in the I-5 zone, and allowing environmentally appropriate development in
83 the Watershed are addressed in a document prepared by the Town Planner and
84 Town Engineer. This extensively researched draft document has been collaboratively
85 vetted by our land use professionals, the Water/Sewer Division, the Law Department,
86 the Mayor, and the EDC P&Z Liaison Committee. The portion of the proposed zone
87 changes that are specific to data center use will be treated as a separate item in
88 hopes to expedite approval. Recommended zone changes involving data centers will
89 be on the agenda at the 10/13 PZC meeting. The larger scale zone changes will be
90 scheduled for a future PZC meeting
- 91 • Chair Fappiano asked Staff Ryan to clarify the revenue comparison that the Data
92 Center Municipal Host Agreement would bring to the town vs. current taxable tenants.
93 The Data Centers could create a revenue of \$23,460/acre vs. the \$8,900/acre
94 revenue received currently in Barnes Park North & South. The \$8,900/acre was
95 calculated using pure numbers (current non-profits and farmland was taken out of the
96 equation). Ryan also stated that when the Industrial Parks in the area were created
97 previously, the town paid for the roads, the electricity installation, the water and sewer
98 installation, and upkeep. According to the language in the Agreements with the Data
99 Centers, the town would not be responsible for any of these expenses. Ryan stated
100 that if at any time they need him to speak to someone in the community to clarify any
101 questions, he is willing to have a conversation.
- 102 • Next meeting: Friday, October 29, 2021 @ 9:00 am
103
104
105
106

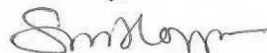
- 107 **5. Staff Report** – Staff Ryan gave an update of Activities from September 2021.
- 108 ➤ The PUC, at their September meeting, voted to approve a power purchasing agreement with
- 109 Gospace Data Partners, a Massachusetts based LLC proposing to develop data centers on
- 110 two campuses in our industrial zones. The power purchasing agreement will need Town
- 111 Council approval. The project awaits a zoning amendment to allow data centers in our IX and
- 112 I-5 zones.
- 113 ➤ Chairman Mirra and staff visited CyrusOne, a 16MW data center in Norwalk. Our goal was to
- 114 see firsthand the physical scale of the facility and experience the sound generated by its
- 115 operation. The sound from the data center was a non-issue as the ambient noise from I-95
- 116 was a bit louder. Chair Mirra interviewed several residents from a neighboring upscale
- 117 apartment complex that was built several years after the data center began operation, to
- 118 determine if the data center created any quality of life issues. None were reported.
- 119 ➤ An internal meeting was held on 9/28 and final details are being refined... We're requesting a
- 120 small dormant parcel of Town owned land behind Center St Brewing Company at 25 Wallace
- 121 Ave be sold to the property owner for possible expansion. The Mayor has sent a letter to all
- 122 necessary Town departments to determine if there is any need for the Town to retain
- 123 ownership.
- 124 ➤ EDC commissioners and staff attended the Quinnipiac Chamber of Commerce's Business
- 125 Showcase event held at the Best Western in North Haven. This was the first "in person" trade
- 126 show held in over two years. Special thanks to EDC Secretary Hoppes and Commissioners
- 127 Gingras, Fappiano, and Fritz for making the time to staff our booth. Donald Mauritz, WED
- 128 Energy Specialist represented the WED at the Showcase. Ryan mentioned that if any
- 129 commissioners know of any businesses in town that would like to take advantage of Energy
- 130 Efficiency programs, please direct them to Don.
- 131 ➤ Ryan thanked Commissioner Bracale for representing the EDC at the Manufacture CT
- 132 annual meeting
- 133
- 134 **6. Chair's remarks** – Chair Mirra gave an update on what is happening with the HUBCAP. In addition
- 135 to planning for a meeting open to parents regarding the Pipeline Opportunities; the HUBCAP has
- 136 hired a part-time employee that will start to attend the PTO/PTAC meetings to inform parents and
- 137 educators of these opportunities. The HUBCAP is planning a Small Business meeting in November
- 138 to talk about growth and expansion. This meeting would be geared towards home-based businesses
- 139 and inform them of the opportunities the HUBCAP offers them, including conference space, a 3rd
- 140 work space, networking, and more. Next HUBCAP Merchant meeting is scheduled for October 16,
- 141 2021.
- 142 ➤ Vice-Chair Gingras asked what the plan is for the next Desk of Joe article... There will be 2
- 143 more articles regarding the data centers.
- 144
- 145 **7. Other community business** – **Jim Wolfe made a motion to discuss the future of the existing**
- 146 **Wallingford Police Department, Mark Gingras seconded the motion, and the motion was**
- 147 **unanimously approved.** After a brief discussion, the EDC agreed that they would like to see a
- 148 private entity take over the property.
- 149

150 **There being no further business, Gary Fappiano made a motion to adjourn the meeting at**

151 **8:00 p.m.; Mark Gingras seconded the motion. By unanimous vote, the motion carried.**

152

153 Sincerely,

154 

155 Stacey Hoppes, Secretary

156

157

158

159