

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

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Economic Development Commission
Regular Meeting Minutes
January 31, 2022

Not Approved by EDC

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

- Others Present:**
- Ginny Kozlowski, Executive Director - REX Development**
 - Barbara Malmberg, Project Manager/Director of Marketing - REX Development**
 - Tim Ryan, Economic Development Specialist**
 - Stacey Hoppes, EDC Secretary**

Due to Town Hall Room 315 having no heat, the meeting location was changed to The HUBCAP, 128 Center Street. Notices were posted to the town website and at the Town Hall.

Chair Joe Mirra called the regular meeting of the Economic Development Commission to order at 6:30 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 January 3, 2022** – Hank Baum made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Mark Gingras seconded the motion. The minutes were unanimously approved.
3. **Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy – CEDS Presentation** – Tim Ryan introduced Ginny Kozlowski and Barbara Malmberg from REX Development to the Commission. REX Development works on many projects throughout our region and has been a great asset to the Wallingford EDC. Ginny and Barbara presented the 2021 update on Regional Economic Development. Key sectors that the report focused on were – Healthcare, Higher Education, BioScience, Manufacturing, Arts-Culture & Tourism, Infrastructure, Workforce, Housing, and Resilience.
 - During the Q&A portion of the presentation Jim Wolfe asked about Brownfields projects, stating that Wallingford has a property that he would like to see become a Brownfields project. (80 Valley Street, the former Allegheny Ludlum Steel plant) Staff Ryan informed the commission that this property is on the town’s radar. Staff has met with a commercial brokerage firm that specializes in Brownfields projects.
 - Joe Mirra stated that Workforce participation is a major concern. Manufacturers are struggling to get positions filled. Mirra suggested that the state provide transportation vouchers for those that have completed training programs created by the state, who want to work, but have limited access to transportation.

54 ➤ Staff Ryan informed and updated Ginny and Barbara of the proposed Proton Beam
55 Therapy Center in Wallingford. The CON (Certificate of Need) has not yet been rendered
56 by the OHS (Office of Health Strategy) in Hartford. This application has been active for
57 over two years.
58

59 **4. Review of Monthly Expenditure Report** – Hearing no questions, Chair Mirra went on to item #5.
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61 **5. ARPA Small Business Application Update** - Ryan stated that the draft of the Small Business
62 Application has been submitted to UHY Consultants for review. There is a timeline in place, steering
63 us to have an approved application by the end of Q1.

- 64 ➤ Wallingford has chosen to focus on three (3) main categories for the first round of
65 distribution of funds. These three (3) categories are small businesses (25 FTE employees
66 or less), non-profits, and households.
67 ➤ Once the application is ready, there will be multiple avenues used to get the word out to
68 the small businesses in town. (ie. town website, EDC digital marketing channels, and the
69 use of local non-profits to help spread the word - QCC/WCI/HUBCAP/etc...) The
70 application will be in paper form and electronic form. The application and instructions will
71 be on the Town of Wallingford website.
72 ➤ Ryan gave an update on the process the application will go through once submitted by
73 each applicant. Each application that is submitted will go directly to UHY for review to
74 confirm that all sections are complete, and all additional documents have been received.
75 If any part of the application is incomplete, or additional documents are needed; UHY will
76 contact the applicant directly. Once UHY has completed their review of the application it
77 will be submitted to the appropriate group of representatives that will be selected by the
78 Mayor for review. Each of the three categories will have a separate group of
79 representatives to review the complete applications.
80 ➤ Hank asked if there is any reference in the application to additional funding that small
81 businesses have already received or have applied for. Ryan stated that there is a section
82 that all applicants must fill out regarding additional funds received and/or applied for. The
83 application also includes claw backs and attestations that would hold the applicant
84 accountable if any portion of the application is falsified.
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86 **6. Committee Remarks**
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- 88 ➤ **Marketing** – Mark Gingras gave an update on the RFP for the Historic Railroad Station. The
89 pursuit of an RFP was approved by the Town Council at their January 18, 2022 meeting.
90 Town Council was enthusiastic and showed great support for the project. The RFP went out
91 to bid through the Purchasing Department. A pre-bid walk through was held on Friday,
92 January 18. All architect proposals need to be submitted by February 18, 2022. Ryan
93 informed the commission that there is a rigid timeline in place in order to meet the CT
94 Communities Challenge Grant deadline of April 2022. Grant Secretary-Susan Schott,
95 Purchasing Agent-Sal Amadeo, Public Works Director-Rob Baltramaitis, Town Engineer-
96 Alison Kapushinski, Jon Walworth (retired engineer), and Economic Development Specialist-
97 Tim Ryan have worked together to review the RFP criteria. A number of the requirements to
98 apply for this grant are checked off including; historic site, transit oriented, town center
99 development and improvement, and job growth. Town Council plans to have this item on the
100 agenda for their March meeting.

- 101 • Adult Education is currently residing in the Historic Railroad Station. They are in the
102 process of preparing a Needs Assessment so that they can determine their needs if
103 they are to relocate. One criteria they would like is that their location is within walking
104 distance to our Town Center.
105 • The commission agrees that this project has great potential to have something really
106 special in the lower portion of Wallingford's Town Center.

- 107 • **Digital Marketing Update:** Secretary Hoppes gave an update of the EDC Digital
108 Marketing Initiatives. Linked In and Mail Chimp are going well. Currently our goal is to
109 send out 4 initiatives per month. Hoppes is trying to reach this goal each month.
110 Hoppes asked the commission to reach out if they have any suggestions for initiatives
111 being sent out on our digital channels. Anthony Bracale suggested reaching out to the
112 high schools for additional initiatives to send out. Ryan also suggested that Liz Davis
113 from Wallingford Center Inc. take advantage of our digital initiatives.
114 ○ **Next meeting:** Friday, February 25, 2022 at 10:00 am
115 Town Hall, Room 205
116
117 ➤ **Planning & Zoning Liaison** – Baum updated the commission that the Planning & Zoning
118 Commission did not vote on the Proposed Data Center Text Amendment at their meeting on
119 Monday, January 10, 2022; due to the absence of the sound expert. The amendment will
120 now be pushed to their April 2022 meeting. The committee is disappointed with the delay.
121 • Joe Mirra stated that he understands the need for the sound expert to be in person,
122 but that it is disappointing that the PZC has continued this item for so long. This
123 amendment would allow data centers in the IX and I-5 Industrial Zones as a use to
124 increase opportunities within the zone. All larger scale data centers would be subject
125 to special permit.
126 • Jim Wolfe mentioned that he is concerned about smaller data centers having to meet
127 these regulations, especially if they were looking to expand. Ryan stated that these
128 regulations allow smaller data centers, and put limits to larger scaled data centers.
129 ○ **Next meeting:** No meeting scheduled
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131 ➤ **Retention/Incentives** – Gary Fappiano stated that the committee had a meeting on January
132 20, 2022. They reviewed the Small Business ARPA Application. The committee is impressed
133 with the application and the amount of firewalls that are included within the document. The
134 committee supports the hiring of UHY Consultants. Joe Mirra asked if there were going to be
135 any seminars/webinars for businesses looking to apply for these funds, and offered the use
136 of the HUBCAP if needed. Ryan stated that UHY Consultants is creating instructional videos
137 that will be customized to Wallingford’s applications.
138 • The committee also reviewed the Legislative priorities for 2022. Workforce
139 participation is one of the major concerns of the committee.
140 • All of the Town Incentives are set to expire in 2023 – will start to review these in the
141 near future.
142 ○ **Next meeting:** looking to have a meeting 3rd week of February.
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144 7. **Staff Report** –Ryan then gave an update of Activities from January 2022.
145 ➤ Staff Ryan went over the list of documents attached to the staff report. Ryan suggested that
146 the commission review them, and reach out if there are any questions.
147 • Annual Economic Development Commission Update
148 • 2021 General Assembly Session – Unemployment Reforms (requested at the
149 January 3rd EDC meeting)
150 ➤ Proposed Data Center Text Amendment: **see staff report**
151 ➤ Statewide Data Center Activity with DECD and Advance CT: **see staff report**
152 ➤ 5 Research Parkway/Calare Properties: **see staff report**
153 • Moratorium – Manufacturing and warehousing in the Watershed Protection Overlay
154 District through May 31, 2022 to allow time for the new regulations to be passed.
155 ➤ Adult Education/Historic Railroad Station: **see staff report**
156 ➤ Brownfields Projects/Allegheny Ludlum Steel plant: **see staff report**
157 ➤ Secretary of the State’s New Business Lists are now available through CTdata. Secretary
158 Hoppes was able to finalize the lists needed for 2021: **attached to staff report**

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- SOTS reflects that Wallingford had a total of 400 new businesses in 2021, when reviewing the lists a great percentage of these businesses are residential addresses. The commission recognizes a dynamic shift in the workforce, more and more businesses are working from home.
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8. **Chair's remarks** – Chair Mirra informed the commission that Economic Development Specialist, Tim Ryan will be retiring at the end of June. Mirra and the commission congratulated Ryan on his retirement. The commission thanked Ryan for all the work he has done for the commission and the Town of Wallingford. *“Tim has changed the philosophy within the Town Hall!”* Noting all the amazing strides he has taken to maintain and improve the Economic Development Department, and the collaborations within all the departments and organizations within and around town.
- Mirra updated the commission on a Workshop starting February 22nd at the HUBCAP.
 - Entrepreneurs, Home and Small Business Workshop: In Person or Virtual Series. This is a 4 session workshop for those interested in starting a new business or improving an existing one.

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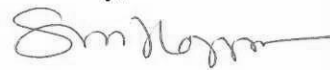
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9. **Other community business** – None

There being no further business, Jim Wolfe made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:17 p.m.; Anthony Bracale seconded the motion. By unanimous vote, the motion carried.

Sincerely,



Stacey Hoppes, Secretary