



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

Economic Development Commission
Regular Meeting Minutes
March 7, 2022

Not Approved by EDC

Present:

Joe Mirra, Chair
Mark Gingras, Vice Chair
Jim Wolfe, Commissioner
Gary Fappiano, Commissioner
Hank Baum, Commissioner
Rosemarie Preneta, Commissioner
Rob Fritz, Alternate
Anthony Bracale, Alternate

Absent:

Patricia Cymbala, 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 6:30 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 31, 2022** – Jim Wolfe made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Mark Gingras seconded the motion. The minutes were unanimously approved.
3. **Review of Monthly Expenditure Report** – Jim Wolfe asked about the \$5,000 listed in the Capital Account. Ryan explained that those funds will be used for maintaining the EDC's billboards and will be carried over to FY 2022-2023. Hearing no other questions, Chair Mirra moved onto the next item on the agenda.
4. **ARPA Update** – Town Council members have formed an ARPA Subcommittee to oversee how the ARPA funds are going to be used. So far the Subcommittee has had two (2) meetings to discuss if the funds are to be used for small businesses, non-profits, and individuals who have been negatively impacted due to the Covid-19 pandemic, and/or for other uses such as town projects. The ARPA Subcommittee members have discussed different ways to use the funds, leaving the members divided. Some members discussed dividing the funds into percentages by category of use. Ryan stated that the government shut down businesses due to Covid-19, then the government created the ARPA funds to help these businesses recuperate from the pandemic. The EDC feels the intent of the ARPA funds is to help those that have been negatively impacted by the pandemic, and then if there are funds left over, those funds can be used for capital projects. Ryan noted that the ARPA Subcommittee Chair is doing a great job keeping the members together and on task. Mirra stated that he would like to see a time commitment from the ARPA Subcommittee that would include a date that the members would have to have a final vote to determine how the funds will be spent. This would force them to come up with a compromise sooner than later. The ARPA Subcommittee has asked the EDC to get together with Wallingford Center Inc. (WCI) to discuss the small business

54 portion of the application. The application received from UHY Consultants is almost verbatim to the
55 application EDC had originally submitted for review. Ryan informed the commission that the Town
56 Council ARPA Subcommittee has a meeting scheduled for Tuesday, March 15th. Jim Wolfe stated
57 that if the town needs help getting the application out to the small businesses, he is willing to go door
58 to door to reach the small business owners in Wallingford. It is the hope of the EDC to have an
59 application ready for approval/distribution sometime in April.
60

- 61 **5. Discussion and Vote – FY 2022-2023 Operating Budget:** Ryan reviewed the Operating budget
62 with the Commission, stating that the Mayor asked departments to level fund their budgets. There
63 was a discussion regarding funds allotted for Digital Marketing, transportation reimbursement, use of
64 funds for billboards, and a salary survey for the replacement of Ryan, Economic Development
65 Specialist position. **Gary Fappiano made a motion to approve the FY 2022 – 2023 Operating
66 Budget as presented. Rosemarie Preneta seconded the motion. Motion was unanimously
67 approved.**
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69 **6. Committee Remarks**
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- 71 ➤ **Marketing** – Mark Gingras gave a brief update from the Marketing Committee meeting on
72 Tuesday, March 1, 2022.
73 • The EDC Budget FY 2022 – 2023 was reviewed and approved for review and
74 approval by the full Commission.
75 • The Committee had a discussion on digital marketing for this spring. The committee
76 discussed the possibility of running ads with New Haven Biz, Hartford Business
77 Journal, Fairfield County Business Journal and Westchester County Business
78 Journal.
79 • The committee had a brief discussion regarding the Desk of Joe column in the
80 Wallingford Magazine – Winter Edition article, “*All Aboard*”.
81 • The committee had a conversation about the possibility of creating Wallingford Trivia
82 Nights and how it could be tied into the Wallingford Jubilee 350th. This topic could be
83 a possible column for the Desk of Joe.
84 ○ **Next meeting:** Monday, March 21, 2022 at 8:30 am
85 Town Hall, Room 205
86
- 87 ➤ **Planning & Zoning Liaison** – Baum reported that a Moratorium on Warehousing and/or
88 Manufacturing Uses in the Watershed Protection Overlay District was approved by the
89 Planning & Zoning Commission at their meeting on February 14.
90 • The PZC is meeting on Monday, March 14th which includes Public Hearing on the
91 Proposed Text Amendment to the PZC/Sec. 4.10 (Watershed Interchange District)
92 and modifications to §’s 2.2, 4.9, 4.13, 5.1C, 6.11 and 6.12. The amendment includes
93 proposed update to open space requirements in the IX zone to be lowered from 50%
94 to 40%. Ryan stated that the 40% open space allowance would be in the IX Zone, not
95 in the Watershed (WI) Zone. The changes would also allow more uses in the
96 Watershed (WI) Zone, including limited warehousing, and reduces the parking
97 requirements within the zone. The EDC agrees that this is a great benefit for the town,
98 more footprint equals more development opportunities. Hank stated that it may not go
99 to vote until April.
100 • PZC has a Special meeting scheduled for April 7th to discuss the Proposed Data
101 Center Text Amendment. This amendment is to allow data centers as a use in the
102 IX/I-5 (WI) zones through special permit. This amendment gives the PZC authority to
103 evaluate each applicant and either approve or deny. Ryan stated that there was
104 concern regarding whether there is a market for data centers in CT and found that
105 there are two (2) active applications for data center development with the state.
106 ○ **Next meeting:** Monday, March 14, 2022 at 8:00am (virtual meeting)
107

108 *Mark Gingras exited the meeting at 7:30 pm
109

- 110 ➤ **Retention/Incentives** – Gary Fappiano stated that the committee did not have a meeting in
111 February. He would like to discuss resuming the Company Visitation Program at the next
112 meeting. Ryan stated that the committee should also discuss the Class A Office Space
113 Incentive Program, and the Electric Discount Incentive for Town Center businesses.
114 ○ **Next meeting:** Tuesday, March 15, 2022 at 9:00am
115

116 7. **Staff Report** –Ryan gave an update of Activities from February 2022.

- 117 ➤ Proton Beam Therapy Center – Danbury’s proposed facility was denied by OHS. Ryan
118 anticipates a decision on the proposed Wallingford facility sometime in March (**see report**)
119 ➤ Historic Railroad Station RFP update – RFP went out and bid applications were received
120 from multiple architectural firms. Four (4) firms were interviewed for Part A by the panel.
121 Once the interviews were completed and scored, Part B was reviewed and scored.
122 Purchasing Department informed Ryan that after final calculations, the bid was awarded to
123 Silver/Petrucelli and Associates. Ryan, Chair Mirra and Public Works Director-Rob
124 Baltramaitis will go in front of the Town Council on Tuesday, March 8th to ask for funding in
125 the amount of \$61,800 to move the project forward. The amount requested will cover the
126 Building Survey & Schematic Design costing \$24,800 and the Design Development and Final
127 Design Phase costing \$37,000 totaling \$61,800. Rosemarie Preneta asked what will
128 determine the type of business that will lease the building. Ryan stated that the community
129 will have input and we will have to see what the market can support before determining any
130 possibilities. It is the EDC’s hope to generate more foot traffic to the lower portion of our
131 Town Center. **Jim Wolfe made a motion that the EDC goes in front of Town Council to**
132 **ask for the \$61,800 in funding for the Design and Contract Administration for Reuse of**
133 **Wallingford’s Historic Railroad Station. Rosemarie Preneta seconded the motion.**
134 **Motion was unanimously approved.**
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136 8. **Chair’s remarks** – Chair Mirra informed the Commission that the HUBCAP has dedicated one of its
137 rooms as a Podcast Studio. They are hoping that it will be a rentable studio, as well as a studio for
138 use with the town’s high school students. He also stated that it could potentially be an added use for
139 the EDC in some way.

- 140 ➤ Chair Mirra also stated that the HUBCAP would be willing to host an event for assisting
141 applicants with the ARPA application process; whether hosting an informational event or
142 simply helping applicants fill them out.
143

144 9. **Other community business** – None
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146

147 **There being no further business, Rosemarie Preneta made a motion to adjourn the meeting at**
148 **7:53 p.m.; Anthony Bracale seconded the motion. By unanimous vote, the motion carried.**
149

150 Sincerely,

151 
152 Stacey Hoppes, Secretary
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