



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

**Economic Development Commission**  
**Regular Meeting Minutes**  
**April 4, 2022**

Not Approved by EDC

**Present:**

**Joe Mirra, Chair**  
**Jim Wolfe, Commissioner**  
**Rosemarie Preneta, Commissioner**  
**Patricia Cymbala, Commissioner**  
**Anthony Bracale, Alternate**

**Absent:**

**Mark Gingras, Vice Chair**  
**Gary Fappiano, Commissioner**  
**Hank Baum, Commissioner**  
**Rob Fritz, Alternate**

**Others Present:**

**Tim Ryan, Economic Development Specialist**  
**Liz White, Publisher & Executive V.P. of RJ Media Group**  
**Dundee Benson, Bus. Development Mgr. of RJ Media Group**  
**Stacey Hoppes, EDC Secretary**

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

1. **Pledge of Allegiance** – Chair Mirra led the EDC in the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. **ARPA Initiative Presentation, Record-Journal** – Liz White and Dundee Benson from the Record

Journal presented their Marketing Grant Program to the Commission. The objective of the initiative is

to help as many Wallingford businesses as possible recover and thrive as the community emerges

from the pandemic by providing high impact multimedia marketing grants. Discussions took place

regarding the program plan, funding, and phases for the town and 150 Wallingford businesses.

There was a discussion on how this grant program is an allowable use for the town's ARPA funding.

The Commission agrees that this is a great program, and stated that we can revisit once the Town

Council ARPA Subcommittee is further along with their meetings.

41 **3. Discussion and Possible Action on Regular Meeting Minutes dated March 7, 2022 – Jim Wolfe**  
42 **made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Patricia Cymbala seconded the motion.**  
43 **The minutes were unanimously approved.**

44 **4. Review of Monthly Expenditure Report** – Jim Wolfe asked if the \$61,800 for the Historic Railroad  
45 Station Schematic Design RFP is coming out of the EDC Budget. Staff Ryan stated that it will not  
46 come out of the EDC Budget, the town will cover this cost. If the town is awarded the CT  
47 Communities Challenge Grant, the town counts the \$61,800 towards its match, which is a 50/50  
48 match. Hearing no other questions, Chair Mirra moved onto the next item on the agenda.

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50 **5. ARPA Update** – Staff Ryan informed the Commission that the Town Council will be discussing the  
51 ARPA funding at their next meeting scheduled for Tuesday, April 12. The Commission continues to  
52 support funding for its initial purpose of assisting small businesses, non-profits, and households that  
53 have been negatively affected by the pandemic.

54 **6. Committee Remarks**

55 > **Marketing** –In the absence of Mark Gingras, Staff Ryan updated the commission on the EDC  
56 Spring Ad Campaign. EDC will be running digital ads in Westchester County Business  
57 Journal, Fairfield County Business Journal, New Haven Biz, and Hartford Business Journal.  
58 Cost for these ads totals \$13,600 and will come from the promotional budget.

59 • Ryan informed the commission that Story Reel, a digital marketing firm gave a  
60 presentation to the committee on how to create more laser focused digital marketing  
61 initiatives. Outsourcing our digital marketing has been a topic of discussion  
62 throughout the year and the Commission will continue to discuss these options.  
63 Commission agrees it is wise to await Staff Ryan's replacement before moving  
64 forward.

65 • **Historic Railroad Station Update** – The working group had their kick-off meeting on  
66 March 28. The working group consists of staff from Silver Petrucelli, Town Engineer,  
67 Director of Public Works, a Local Building Contractor, EDC Chair, and Staff. The



68 working group will oversee the project and continue to adhere to our strict timeline, to  
69 ensure that we will be ready to apply for the CT Communities Challenge Grant.

70 • The committee had a conversation about the possibility of creating Wallingford Trivia  
71 Nights and how it could be tied into the Wallingford Jubilee 350<sup>th</sup>+2.

72 ○ **Next meeting:** Thursday, April 21, 2022 at 9:30 am

73 Town Hall, Room 205

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75 • **Planning & Zoning Liaison** – Jim Wolfe reported that at their 3/14 meeting, the PZC approved  
76 new regulations for two of our industrial development zones. The changes eliminate the I-5 Zone  
77 and replace it with a WI (Watershed Interchange) Zone. The outcomes give us better protections  
78 in our watershed while expanding the uses in the new WI zone, (when compared to what was  
79 allowed in the I-5). The changes also fulfill a decade’s long initiative of this commission by  
80 reducing minimum open space requirements in the IX Zone from 50% to 35% and allowing the  
81 building coverage ratio to increase from 25% to 40% thus providing additional development  
82 opportunities. The amendment will go into effect on April 12, 2022. Staff Ryan gave special  
83 recognition and appreciation to commissioners Wolfe and Mirra for their tireless pursuit of these  
84 development opportunities. Stating that, “the town owes them a debt of gratitude”.

85 • PZC has a Special meeting scheduled for April 7<sup>th</sup> to discuss the Proposed Data  
86 Center Text Amendment. Ryan stressed that the amendment is to only allow the use  
87 in the IX and WI zones, and that the town is taking every perceivable step to protect  
88 the public.

89 ○ **Next meeting:** Monday, March 14, 2022 at 8:00am (virtual meeting)

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91 ➤ **Retention/Incentives** – Rosemarie Preneta reported that the Committee is discussing  
92 restarting the Company Visitation Program sometime this spring. The Committee is open to  
93 suggestions from the Commission on potential businesses to visit.

94 • Prenteta also stated that the Committee reviewed the Incentive Programs for  
 95 businesses offered through the EDC. They will have further discussion on the  
 96 Incentive Programs prior to their expiration dates in 2023.

97 ○ **Next meeting:** No meeting scheduled

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99 **7. Staff Report** –Ryan gave an update of Activities from March 2022.

100 ➤ **Update from January report:** The proposed text amendment allowing data centers as a use  
 101 category in the IX and newly formed WI zone, via special permit, will be the single agenda  
 102 item for the PZC’s “special meeting” on 4/7 @ 7:00pm. Ryan stressed that the amendment is  
 103 to only allow the use, and that the town is taking every perceivable step to protect the public.

104 ➤ **Update from the March report:** Proton Therapy Center proposed for Northrop Rd: CON  
 105 (Certificate of Need) has not yet been rendered by the OHS (Office of Health Strategy) in  
 106 Hartford. We now anticipate a decision sometime in **May**. This application has been active for  
 107 2 1/2 years!

108 ➤ Ryan informed the Commission that the ZBA declined a variance application for a car wash  
 109 development at 654 North Colony Road (next to Colony Diner). The ZBA is being sued by the  
 110 applicant Gallo for their variance denial.

111 **8. Chair’s remarks** – Chair Mirra publicly thanked EDC Secretary, Stacey Hoppes for her  
 112 professionalism with the projects she is working on, including coordinating and attending meetings  
 113 for the Historic Railroad Station.

114 **9. Other community business** – None

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117 **There being no further business, Jim Wolfe made a motion to adjourn the meeting at**  
 118 **7:55 p.m.; Patricia Cymbala seconded the motion. By unanimous vote, the motion carried.**

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Sincerely,

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Stacey Hoppes, Secretary

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