



TOWN OF ELLINGTON

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**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 14, 2018 7:00 PM
TOWN HALL ANNEX, 57 MAIN STREET, ELLINGTON, CT**

PRESENT: Chairman Sean Kelly, Vice Chairman Chris Todd, Regular Member David Hurley, and Alternate John Behrens

ABSENT: Regular Member Donna Resutiek and Alternate Stefanie Cunningham

STAFF

PRESENT: Lisa Houlihan, Town Planner and Acting Recording Clerk

I. CALL TO ORDER: 7:05 PM

II. PUBLIC COMMENTS (on non-agenda items): None

III. ACTIVE BUSINESS:

1. Report: Tolland County Chamber of Commerce (Chamber)
 - a. Recap of Legislative Breakfast Meeting - Thursday, January 25, 2018, 7:30-9:30 AM, CNC Software, Tolland, CT

Ms. Houlihan and First Selectman Lori Spielman attended the legislative breakfast. The Chamber organizes the event annually to provide local businesses an opportunity to meet with legislators before they head into legislative session. The event was well attended and included State Representatives Davis, Ackert, and Winkler. Attendees favored State spending controls and union contract reforms.

- b. Connecticut Business and Industry Association (CBIA) 2018 Government Affairs Agenda, 2017 Legislative and Policy Support, and Adopt a Legislator Program

The commission reviewed the information from CBIA.

The Chamber may establish a manufacturing focus group. Discussion ensued regarding diminished technical education offerings in local high schools, the evolution of manufacturing in Connecticut, and lack of apprenticeship programs and skilled workers.

- c. Business Showcase - March 13, 2018, 4-7 PM, Maneeley's, South Windsor, CT

Due to inclement weather, the Showcase was rescheduled to March 14, 2018.

2. Report: Agricultural Initiatives

Ms. Houlihan reviewed the status of the Cost of Community Services Study (Study). A final report is due in a few months. The Study analyzes expenses and revenues for fiscal year 17/18, and defines cost of services for three main land uses: industrial/commercial, residential, and farmland/open space/vacant lands. Findings will show that residential development costs more in services than it generates in revenue, and that industrial and working lands generate more in revenue than cost in services.

3. Report: Business Directory/Business Surveys and Site Visits

a. GoLocal – Ellington, CT Audience Review – January & February 2018 report

Chairman Kelly reviewed the Shop Ellington (GoLocal) reports. In January, twelve (12) new users visited Shop Ellington. In February, only seven (7) new users visited the site but viewed almost two and a half times more pages than in January.

Commissioners reviewed the proposed budget for fiscal year 18/19. Costs for Shop Ellington may increase 4%, and increasing the line item to \$2,800. Originally, Shop Ellington was chosen as an alternative to funding a paperback directory.

Ms. Houlihan reviewed data regarding system usage since inception of the program in 2013. Part of the commission's mission is to promote local goods and services. Shop Ellington is an interactive online and web-based application intended to connect local businesses and residents; however, not many businesses have claimed a microsite or use Shop Ellington interactively. The commission suggested seeking feedback from businesses. They suggested that a survey be issued and include questions like: Are you aware of Shop Ellington? If not aware of Shop Ellington, would you be interested in learning more about it? If you are aware of Shop Ellington, have you used it to connect with customers? If you are aware of Shop Ellington and have not used it, please explain why.

Ms. Houlihan will review the GoLocal site for a template survey and present a draft survey for further discussion.

4. Report: Business Directory/Business Surveys and Site Visits

a. 2018 Connecticut Local Economic Development Organization Survey

Ms. Houlihan explained that the survey was developed by the University of Connecticut Extension in partnership with the Connecticut Economic Resource Center (CERC), the Connecticut Economic Development Association (CEDAS) and the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities (CCM). Only one formal response is allowed per town. Ms. Houlihan has responded. The survey was shared with the commission for informational purposes and to generate discussion. Commissioners discussed their roles as economic development commissioners, responses to primary indicators for evaluating economic development success, and shared perceptions about barriers and challenges facing economic development in Ellington.

5. Report: Tax Incentive/Abatement Programs

Chairman Kelly explained the recent approvals for DESCO, 290 Somers Road, and the past abatement approved for a different phase of construction that has not been built.

The latest plan adds more area onto an existing building for manufacturing, warehouse, and administrative space.

6. Report: Current Economic Activity

There was no new activity to report.

IV. ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS:

1. Approval of the January 10, 2018 regular meeting minutes.

MOVED (BEHRENS) SECONDED (HURLEY) AND (PASSED UNANIMOUSLY) TO APPROVE THE JANUARY 10, 2018 MEETING MINUTES AS WRITTEN.

2. Correspondence:

a. Oakridge Times, January 20, 2018 and February 15, 2018.

b. Proposed amendment Ellington Zoning Regulations: Section 6.3.8 Temporary Signs.

Chairman Kelly explained that the revised temporary sign proposal has not changed significantly since the commission previously reviewed it. He shared comments from the public made during the first hearing of the Planning and Zoning Commission in February.

c. CBIA Government Affairs – Connecticut Business Day 2018, Wednesday, March 14, 2018.

Ms. Houlihan discussed the Plan of Conservation and Development (Plan) comprehensive review and update project. She shared details about an encore public information gathering meeting on April 5, 2018, Ellington High School, 7-9 PM. She distributed a flyer about the event and explained broad efforts to advertise it.

Ms. Houlihan also shared a web address to an online community survey and encouraged commissioners to complete it. The survey is another way citizens can share their ideas for Plan updates.

V. ADJOURNMENT:

MOVED (HURLEY) SECONDED (TODD) AND (PASSED UNANIMOUSLY) TO ADJOURN THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION MEETING AT 8:41 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Houlihan
Acting Recording Clerk