

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING**

August 10, 2022

Zoom virtual meeting and in person at Essex Town Hall, Room B

Present: Chairman Susan Malan, Peter Decker and Jim Vineburgh in person. Robert Day, Brian Weinstein and Tom Pinkowish on Zoom.

Absent: MaryEllen Barnes and Tom Nichols

CALL TO ORDER:

The meeting was called to order by Chair Malan at 4:03 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Peter Decker motioned to approve the minutes. Jim Vineburgh seconded.

INTRODUCTION:

Meeting was held virtually on Zoom and in person at Essex Town Hall.

Visitors: None

Updates:

Susan asked Robert about any P&Z updates. Marijuana ordinance was discussed. It will be discussed again in October at the public hearing. It seems like the town wants to participate. It is taking a lot of time. It does not seem to be a big deal, doesn't look like Essex would be a big destination to purchase.

Essex Glenn was also discussed- off Bokum Rd.- been 15 years in development- still needs quite a bit done.

Discussion on Essex Pilates- they moved out of town but are now back in Essex. Spencer's Corner has been reinvigorated with the addition of housing.

Planning and Zoning Report:

Zoning Report for the
Economic Development Commission
August 10, 2022 Meeting
By: Carey Duques, Land Use Official

The following applications relating to businesses have seen activity since the last submission to the Essex EDC:

Approved Zoning Permits:

July

30 Main Street, Centerbrook, outdoor seating at Los Charros. (Per Act 22-1, an expansion of seating outdoors is allowed through April 30, 2023 with a zoning permit. Health, Zoning and

Building are working with local restaurants who have added outdoor seating since COVID to ensure compliance with the Land Use Departments.

10 Main Street, Essex, retail sales and professional offices. *Applicant: Heidi Kunzli and Prive Swiss*. Susan was told this was retail but is hearing that it is services- she will check into that.

85 Westbrook Road Centerbrook, replace existing sign with new non-illuminated sign.
Applicant: Nalas Engineering

Special Exception Applications:

July

WITHDRAWN 12 Plains Road *Applicant: Jenny Lyn Anderson; Owner: Charles and Janet Irving* proposed dog grooming facility to occupy approx. 4,000 sq ft of existing space. The reason for the withdrawal was there is not enough water for the business.

Site Plan Review Application:

None at this time

Approved Text Amendments and Zone Changes:

None at this time

Other updates:

Cannabis: The PZC discussed how to proceed and is proposing a text amendment and the public hearing is planned for October 6, 2022. A moratorium is in place until December 31, 2022.

Regional Housing Plan: The LCRVCOG approved the Regional Affordable Housing Plan on July 25, 2022. Susan asked if anyone attended this meeting. No one attended. It seems that it wasn't sent to everyone so no one knew about this meeting, will check in with Carey for information on meetings going forward.

ACTION ITEMS:

None

OLD BUSINESS:

POCD- Nothing to talk about on this yet. What are they looking at in terms of technology advancement? What are they doing for enhancements in communication broadband. There is a high need for infrastructure in town. Discussion on cell service in town.

Harbor Management Plan- our plan was assigned to a DEEP person, but they are very busy and not sure when they will get to it. We have not heard from the Army Corp.

River Road sidewalk- Susan has not heard anything on this- Robert has not heard anything from P&Z. Susan will ask Norm for an update.

Are they paving where they put water lines in? Yes, they are paving now- working their way around and will be doing a 2nd coat as well. Public Works have been doing a really good job.

NEW BUSINESS:

UConn Senior Student Project- The head of the group contacted Susan. Old project that Senior students did is currently stalled and there is nothing to work on there. It was suggested to improve the Park and Rec area, although a great idea, it does not fall in the EDC scope. Susan let them know that we did not have anything for them this year but maybe in the future.

1 Main St Window- Brian had suggested putting in a Welcome sign or artwork in the 1 Main St Window. Susan asked the owners representative and they said yes. A mural would be too time consuming and hard to get done. Susan contacted Board of Trade and they will get 3-4 photos blown up to put in the window with Experience Essex. Board of Trade will go through the Dreamscapes photos over the next few weeks to pick a few to blow up- there is no copyright issue with these photos.

Upcoming Guests and Meeting Locations:

The next meeting will be Wednesday, September 14, 2022.

ADJOURNMENT:

Peter adjourned and Brian seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 4:27 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Cindy Sadlowski, Commission Clerk