

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE REGULAR MEETING

Essex Town Hall – Essex, CT

August 14, 2019 4:00 pm

In attendance: Chairman Janet Peckinpaugh, David Winstead, Brian Weinstein, Peter Decker, Betsy D'Amico, George Sexton, Ed Cook and Susan Malan.

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chair Peckinpaugh at 4:02 pm.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion made by Peter Decker to approve the June 12 meeting minutes. George Sexton seconded the motion. All in favor.

INTRODUCTION

Visitors: None.

Commissioners: No additional comment.

REPORT FROM EDC CONSULTANT/SUSAN MALAN

A school was approved to lease the majority of 192 Westbrook Road. 58 Saybrook Road for retail use was approved after miscommunication between Zoning Official and owner. The Centerbrook sidewalk work is nearing completion. The acreage on Plains Road has sold. Carlson's Landing is set to open soon. Swanky's is set to open soon. A Thai restaurant is considering opening in Essex. TownSoup <https://townsoup.com/> has moved into 15A Main Street. The former congregational church in Ivoryton is fully leased, TI is in process. A financial services company is looking for approximately 3,000 square feet of storefront space in Essex. Cait Shea will be opening in Ivoryton, in the former (the former Gather). A simulation Golf Center is working on approvals.

Zoning Officer Report

Approves Zoning Permits:

- Application No. 19-74 – Accessory use: Service bar added to 2nd floor at Los Charros, 30 Main Street, CTBK.
- Application No. 19-75 – New use: Business office for counseling services, 8 Novelty Lane.
- Application No. 19-78 – New signage, Essex trust, 176 Westbrook Road.
- Application No. 19-77 – New use: Siren Kitchen and Bar, 11 Ferry Street (the former Marley's).

Special Exception:

- Application No. 19-16 – Nick Sapia, 130 Dennison Road, Essex. Application to locate a new 7,000+ square foot office building on a vacant property.
- Application No. 19-18 – Scott Harger, 23 Saybrook Road. Application to locate an indoor gold center within a commercial space. To include an accessory bar, and with food truck service.
- Application 19-8 – Gary Dayharsh, 57 Main Street, IVTN. A proposal to locate a wellness center d/b/a/ Prive-Swiss within the former Ivoryton Congregational Church. APPROVED on May 20.
- Application No. 18-15 – Colt Taylor, 30 Main Street, CTBK. An application to modify a prior approval to allow a service bar to be open to patrons.

- Application No. 19-12 – Connecticut Coastal Academy, 192 Westbrook Road. APPROVED on July 15th.

Site Plan Review:

- Application No. 19-9 – MacBeth Ventures, LLC, 6 Main Street, CTBK. A minor change to a previously-approved special exemption changing the concept of a brewpub to now include a tasting room and kitchen with a restaurant. To be heard on Monday, June 17, 2019. APPROVED on July 15th.

Petition for Text Amendment:

- Application No. 19-14 – Essex Zoning Commission. A text amendment to allow “Pet Grooming Facilities” as an allowed use in most commercial districts.
- Application No. 19-15 – Essex Zoning Commission. A text amendment to allow Cottage Food Operations as an exception to the current definition for Customary Home Occupations.
- Application No. 19-10 – Essex Zoning Commission. A text amendment to add “golf centers” and “batting cages” to the existing list of uses under Indoor Recreation Facilities. Public hearing to be held on Monday, June 17, 2019. APPROVED on June 17, 2019.

News:

- 63 Main Street, Essex – Carlson’s Landing could be opening in September.

ACTION ITEMS:

Essex Video

- The First Selectman would like a video to be created displaying Essex. This video could be put on the town website, as well as other platforms, for marketing, etc. Ms. Peckinpaugh will create a subcommittee to discuss and decide on the particulars of what will be covered in the video.

DISCUSSION ITEMS –

- UConn’s Engineering School approved the application for Essex to be choose for their senior project this upcoming year.
- Ms. Malan voiced her concern over the signage in town. There is little to no enforcement of the signage regulations. Ms. Malan also voiced concern over the selling of personal items on public streets, also with little to no enforcement of this issue. She mentioned making Essex more digitalized regarding paperwork, forms, etc. and thought it might be a good point to bring up while new zoning regulations are being discussed.
- Mr. Decker suggested distributing surveys to local businesses to ask them what their needs are regarding connectivity, infrastructure, etc.

New Business:

- There were 33 new businesses opened between 2017 and 2018, with a net loss of 68.

Upcoming Guests and Meeting Locations

The next meeting will be on September 11, 2019 at 4:00 pm at the Essex Town Hall.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion was made by David Winstead to adjourn the meeting at 5:03. Peter Decker seconded the motion. All in favor.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kate Tucker, Commission Clerk