

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE REGULAR MEETING

Essex Town Hall – Essex, CT

September 11, 2019 4:00 pm

In attendance: Chairman Janet Peckinpaugh, David Winstead, Brian Weinstein, Peter Decker, Betsy D'Amico, George Sexton, 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 David Winstead to approve the August 14 meeting minutes. George Sexton seconded the motion. All in favor.

INTRODUCTION

Visitors: Roger Salway

Commissioners: No additional comment.

REPORT FROM EDC CONSULTANT/SUSAN MALAN

Connecticut Coastal Academy has opened at 192 Westbrook Road <https://ctcoastalacademy.org/>. The Centerbrook sidewalk project work is scheduled for completion October 2019. Carlsons Landing is planned to open soon, hopefully within the month. Swanky's is planned to open soon, but no set date yet. Cait Shea on Main Street in Ivoryton is planned to open soon. There is no current update with Siren at Essex Island Marina. An antique book store is moving into 55 Main Street #2, called Pucks Antiquarian Books. The Essex received their approval for the upper level lounge, which will be open to patrons.

Zoning Officer Report

Approved Zoning Permits:

- Application No. 19-84 – New use: 55 Main Street, Essex.
- Application No. 19-85 – New use: Business office for “townsoup,” 19A Main Street, Essex.
- Application No. 19-88 – New use: Estate Treasures, 23 Saybrook Road
- Application No. 19-90 – New use: Professional office, “A New You” (electrolysis), 50 Main Street, Centerbrook
- Application No. 19-91 – New use: Business office, “Garric Properties,” 50 Main Street, Centerbrook.

Special Exception Application:

- Application No. 19-16: Nick Sapia, 130 Dennison Road, Essex. Application to locate to a new 7,000+ square foot office building on a vacant property. Hearing scheduled for September 16.
- Application No. 19-18: Scott Harger, 23 Saybrook Road. Application to locate an indoor golf center within a commercial space. Will include an accessory bar with food truck service. Hearing scheduled for September 16th.
- Application No. 18-15: Colt Taylor, 30 Main Street, Centerbrook. An application to modify a prior approval to allow a service bar to be open to patrons. Approved at meeting of August 19th.

Site Plan Review Application:

- No application at this time.

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. Hearing scheduled for September 16th.
- 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. Hearing scheduled for October 21st.
- Application No. 19-21: Essex Zoning Commission – Newly reformatted zoning Regulations with some additions and deletions. Being received September 16th.

News:

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

ACTION ITEMS:

- Roger, the economic development consultant from the Town of North Branford, joined this month’s meeting to discuss the video he assisted in creating to promote North Branford. The video was to promote the economic base of North Branford, expressing that the town would be a good location for someone to live. In the video they talked to business owners, small and large, and developed a storyline to attract people who are thinking of applying to jobs in the area. In the video they talked about the schools, recreation, and more. Since the video was created 300 jobs have been added to North Branford. Ms. Peckinpugh suggested that Essex create the same type of video promoting the town. She suggested gathering a list of people to potentially interview of various ages, who own businesses and are enthusiastic about the town. It was also suggested that anyone who has footage of town events share these videos.

DISCUSSION ITEMS –

- There have been frustrations regarding the timeliness for business owners to receive permits, etc. regarding opening new businesses. It is in mutual agreement from members of the EDC that something should be done to speed up the process for new businesses.
- Signage in town – as discussed in previous meetings, there is still an issue in town with signage. Businesses who were recently told to remove some of the signs outside their property still have not done so.

New Business:

None.

Upcoming Guests and Meeting Locations

The next meeting will be on October 9, 2019 at 4:00 pm at the Essex Town Hall.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion was made by Peter Decker to adjourn the meeting at 4:51. Brian Weinstein seconded the motion. All in favor.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kate Tucker, Commission Clerk