

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING via Zoom  
September 9, 2020**

**Present:** Chairman Janet Peckinpaugh, Brian Weinstein, George Sexton and Susan Malan.

**CALL TO ORDER:**

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

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Motion made by Brian Weinstein to approve the May meeting minutes. George Sexton seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion made by Brian Weinstein to approve the August meeting minutes. George Sexton seconded the motion. All in favor.

**INTRODUCTION:**

**Visitors:** None

**Commissioners:** None

**REPORT FROM EDC CONSULTANT/ SUSAN MALAN- August**

- The Town formed a “Reopen Advisory Committee” which meets bi-weekly now. The Town has been distributing notices of Lamont executive orders as they evolve to local businesses
- Town Soup looking to sublet their space on Main Street Essex. They have a fairly long term lease.
- Sullivan Financial has moved into 15 Main Street Essex
- 53-55 Main Street - Proposed new tenant for 53 Main Street (former Olive Oyl’s) should be opening soon. Looks like a food based presence.
- Abby’s Restaurant closed – Safe Harbors has several interested parties – nothing signed yet.
- Indoor golf center approved and is open. It now has a sign. Brian has been there, it has regular golf, miniature golf and skeet ball. It is for any age and seems fun.
- Dry cleaner in Centerbrook closed – hear there are still customers clothes inside.
- Gym currently operating in Middletown looking to relocate to Essex- looking for general sector partnership.

Attended:

- General meeting of the Essex Board of Trade; Essex, Board Meeting of Essex Board of Trade, Attend Reopen Advisory
- Committee meetings
- Middlesex County and New Haven Gen Sector Partnership a state led initiative being executed on regional level – first meeting

## **REPORT FROM ZONING OFFICER JOE BUDROW:**

Joe gave Susan the report. Susan reported on updates:

112 Mares Hill Road Road - Cottage Food Industry to Rose Merola: Pretzel baking

104 Main Street - New Use: "Gather Again", retail store. Looks like the same thing as "Gather" was.

61 Main Street - New Signage: "His and Hairs" (was Meaghan's Barber Shop...same owner)

35 Main Street, – New Signage: "His and Hairs" (was Meaghan's Barber Shop...same owner)

90 Plains Road: - New Signage: Exxon

124 Westbrook Road – Interior office renovations (where Scotch Plains Tavern is)

15A Main Street – New Use: "Sullivan Financial Advisors".

37 Pratt Street – New Use: "Dockside Seafood and Grill." (replaces Abby's)

68 Main Street – Two new office uses: "Celebrity Shuttle" and "Celebrity Home Care". (The sign is new and nonconforming and will need to be moved...or ZBA approved)

53 Main Street – Carlson's Landing removed The Red Balloon building and added parking spaces to that property.

Pocketful of Posies owner renovated 2<sup>nd</sup> floor into apartments. Owner does not live there.

1-3 North Main St- Talking with Town Soup owners about subletting.

Essex Marine Group established an inland marine use at a property on Industrial Park Road. Soon will be going to Zoning Commission for a Special Exception. They are awaiting their surveyor to complete a site plan.

The brewery is coming along. An outdoor patio was built, and the septic system underwent a major upgrade. Liquor Permit applications are in this office getting signatures. They will then be sent to the State for approvals.

Sirens plans to do breakfast- needs a water usage check before they give an ok for that.

Questions for Susan's and Joe's report? George wanted to know if the Black Seal is almost complete. Everyone said they see a lot of activity there- looks like it is closer to being done.

**ACTION ITEMS:** None

**DISCUSSION ITEMS:**

### **OLD BUSINESS:**

Susan wanted to know how we left it with the UConn students. She thought they were at least going to look at Ferry St. and Pratt St. Janet said this information was left off the Board of Selectman's meeting and then COVID hit and it has not been put back on- looks like it was permanently left off.

Discussion on how treacherous it was this past Labor Day weekend- we are lucky no one got hurt. Has anyone heard about the sidewalk to Heritage? No one heard anything regarding it. Question about the one-million-dollar grant? Yes, we have it, but they have the bridge down there too, that is going to be really expensive.

### **NEW BUSINESS:**

Janet wanted to be able to vote on making Essex Village into a Historic District but we can't vote as we don't have a quorum.

Susan explained that it is a honorary position that would put Essex on the National Registry. It would not be a historic district. The difference with this is the National Registry is not a district or commission so they cannot tell you what should be done. Janet had talked with Pete about it and he had some concerns regarding being told what you can or cannot do with your property. If that is the case and it is not what you can and cannot do, Janet, Brian and George all think it is a great idea and it does not seem to have any negative points. Janet is going to contact everyone to see if all members of the committee can meet for 5-10 minutes to vote on this within the next week or so as to not put it off until next month. We want to get it to Planning. Need 4 people for the quorum. Brian asked if Janet could create a letter that would be sent to Planning and then we can vote on the letter. Janet will work on that and find a time to meet to vote- by Zoom.

### **Upcoming Guests and Meeting Locations:**

The next meeting will be Wednesday, October 14, 2020.

### **ADJOURNMENT:**

Motion was made by Brian Weinstein to adjourn the meeting at 4:25. George Sexton seconded the motion. All in favor.

Respectfully Submitted,

Cindy Sadlowski, Commission Clerk