

NEWINGTON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION  
SPECIAL MEETING  
NEWINGTON TOWN HALL  
131 CEDAR STREET  
NEWINGTON, CONNECTICUT  
CONFERENCE ROOM L-101 LOWER LEVEL, TOWN HALL  
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 2019

RECEIVED FOR RECORD  
IN NEWINGTON, CT

2019 FEB 11 PM 2:45

  
Town Clerk

#### I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

#### II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

#### III. ROLL CALL

#### PRESENT:

Chairman Theresa Avey  
Commissioner Maria Pane  
Commissioner Dana Havens  
Commissioner Scott Greczkowski  
Commissioner David Marsden  
Commissioner Fernando Rosa  
Commissioner Sharon Dunning  
Commissioner Robert Rioux

Town Council Liaison Gail Budrejko

Economic Development Director Andrew Brecher

#### ABSENT:

None.

#### IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Havens made a motion to accept the October 3, 2018 minutes. Commissioner Pane seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Greczkowski made a motion to accept the January 7, 2019 minutes. Commissioner Marsden seconded the motion. Commissioner Rioux offered a correction. Under Election of Officers, the minutes should have stated Commissioner Rioux nominated Commissioner Dunning to be Secretary. The motion passed unanimously with that change.

#### V. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Rose Lyons reported she recently read the EDC Action Plan from June 1, 1979 and noted several excerpts, including the goal of encouraging mass transit.

## VI. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Director Brecher congratulated Commissioners Havens and Greczkowski on spearheading the very successful Trick or Treat Stroll in the Town Center on October 29, 2018.

Director Brecher also reported on the following items.

--National Welding Site: The DOT's CT Transit Administrator agreed to coordinate the DOT response to the operations and maintenance details associated with turning over Myra Cohen Way to the Town. He also agreed to take the lead in reopening discussion of a potential parking structure to be leased by DOT for CTfastrak users.

--Villas at Cedar Mountain: 100% construction drawings are expected to be complete in a couple of months, following which they will be submitted to Newington's Building Department for approval. Construction could commence as early as May 2019.

--550 Cedar Street: Following denial by TPZ of Dakota Partners' applications to build affordable housing, Dakota Partners appealed in court. The Town has hired expert Counsel to defend.

--Train Station: Draft Transit Village Design District regulations are being prepared for review by the Town Council. Once accepted, the Town Council will make application to TPZ for their approval. A bill is being introduced in the Legislature to provide \$100,000 to Newington for station area planning.

--3333 Berlin Turnpike: The deal with Grossman Development was terminated. Grossman had trouble signing up retail tenants and Eversource was unwilling to grant more time without financial penalties.

--Best Market: LIDL announced they would be purchasing all the Best Market stores except Newington. The owners of Best Market Plaza have rebranded the store Local Market and intend to keep it open.

--Hartford HealthCare is nearing completion of its new 131 vehicle parking lot on Patricia Genova Drive. That will enable 100 employees to be relocated to Newington plus provide additional parking for Jefferson House across John Stewart Drive.

--Farmington Bank was purchased by Peoples United, who closed the branch on Main Street.

--Stay True Body Piercing is opening on the second floor of 1052 Main Street.

--1076 Main Street, principally occupied by Rooster Company, is for sale at a reduced price of \$659,500. The marketing sheet notes the building is approved to be expanded to four floors.

--TJ's on Cedar expanded into the space formerly occupied by Eye Opener Cards, increasing their patron space by 50 percent.

--Courage Counseling Center opened in the 1268 Main Street professional building.

--Gregorios Pizza opened in the space formerly occupied by Stretches Pizza on Main Street.

--Walgreens completed its makeover of Rite Aid on Cedar Street.

--Dilly's Café opened at 39-43 Market Square, the former location of Envy Café.

--Soft-as-a-Petal Massage opened above Dilly's at 39-43 Market Square.

--To continue the Town Center streetscape program, a bill is being introduced in the Legislature to provide \$500,000 to complete the improvements along Constance Leigh Drive.

--Build out is complete and furniture is being moved into 141 Willard Avenue, the new home for ProHealth Physicians Pediatrics, which is relocating from 505 Willard Avenue.

--The multi-tenant shopping plaza at 95-127 Fenn Road was sold for \$2,000,000. New tenants include Studio 109 and Awaken & Renew Day Spa.

--Truss Manufacturing is renovating 135 Fenn Road in advance of relocating their business from Stanwell Road.

--Two new flex buildings are being constructed at 324 Alumni Road.

--N Cortez Cleaning opened at 419 Robbins Avenue, formerly the home of Campbell Cooling.

--New Soothing Day Spa opened at 451 New Britain Avenue.

--Carrington Real Estate Services moved from above Steve's Place on Market Square to 354 Main Street, former location of The Rak.

--Balboni Custom Jewelers opened at 705 North Mountain Road.

- DiCioccio Brothers Landscaping and Construction, currently located at 176 Kelsey Street, purchased land at 188 Costello Road and has begun construction of a new 7,500 square foot building and yard in which to relocate their operations.
- Zach and Alyssa Brown appeared on Shark Tank and sold 100 percent of their Moki Doorstep company for \$3,000,000.
- Pane Road, Rockwell Road and Progress Circle were repaved at a cost of \$376,300, most of which was paid for by state and federal funds.
- At 136 Rockwell Road, Veolia Environmental moved from Building 1 to Building 2, B&G Mechanical moved from Manchester to Building 2, Lynn Welding expanded its operations into Building 1 and IDN Hardware relocated from 152 Rockwell Road to Building 1.
- Eversource has begun laying underground transmission lines in the north end of town as part of the Greater Hartford Reliability Project. The value of the Newington portion of the project is approximately \$12-13 million.
- Mattress Firm went into bankruptcy and closed two stores on the Berlin Turnpike, adding 16,000 square feet to the vacancy rate.
- The owner of the Toys-R-Us building has been recruiting new tenants and expects to decide between tenant proposals this month.
- Mortensen's garnered third place in the category of restaurants with less than 25 employees in the Hartford Business Journal's annual Family Business Awards.
- The Superclub building at 2170-2172 Berlin Turnpike is under contract for sale to Lifeway Church. Rumor is that the daycare operation will continue.
- Tony Boloney Deli is making application to TPZ to open in the former QSH Home Improvement store at 2186 Berlin Turnpike.
- One Nation Church moved into the former Mill Pond Church space at 2175 Berlin Turnpike.
- Nostrom Pharmacy opened in the MedCare Express building at 2272 Berlin Turnpike. Try-Zen Medical Marijuana Dispensary will also be opening on the lower level of that building.
- Turnpike Pizzeria opened in the former New China restaurant location at 2331 Berlin Turnpike.
- At 262 Brockett Street, Re:Nu MedSpa opened and Artichoke Basille pizza restaurant will be opening next week.
- Original Foot Spa opened at 2431 Berlin Turnpike.
- At 2594-2600 Berlin Turnpike, AAG Tax and Accounting moved into the second floor, and Clippers Barber Shop moved from the second floor into the first floor space last occupied by Old Towne Coin.
- Briary Salon received TPZ approval for façade renovations to the Style Salons portion of their building at 2719 Berlin Turnpike. Construction should begin in the Spring.
- ENL Nail Bar opened in the former Oasis Nails location in Price Chopper Plaza at 2997 Berlin Turnpike.
- Optimo Hand Car Wash opened behind the Sunoco station at 3191 Berlin Turnpike.
- UBREAKIFIX is renovating the former JT Ghamo Tuxedo space 3275 Berlin Turnpike.
- Chick-fil-A is moving quickly to complete construction of their new restaurant at 3240 Berlin Turnpike.
- The long vacant space behind Express Kitchens at 3310 Berlin Turnpike has been filled by Industrial Protection Products.
- The former Acorn Thompson building at 3311 Berlin Turnpike has been sold to Express Kitchens, who will move across the street and use the balance of the 12,339 square foot building for warehouse space.
- The former New England Safety Shoe/Carson Richard Kitchen and Bath building at 3443 Berlin Turnpike has been demolished and site work is underway for a new O'Reilly Autoparts store.
- The Town Assessor has stepped up efforts to identify personal property assets, resulting in nearly full compliance and collection of an additional \$82,000 in taxes.
- December 2018 statistics released by the CT Department of Labor indicate the unemployment rate in Newington has fallen to 2.9% with 17,167 residents employed.

In addition, Director Brecher requested that Commissioners reserve Saturday morning on March 30, 2019 for a CERC Municipal Economic Development Workshop. A formal invitation will be forthcoming from

the Mayor to the EDC along with the Town Council, TPZ, Chamber of Commerce leadership and select Town officials.

#### VII. OLD BUSINESS.

None.

#### VIII. NEW BUSINESS

Commissioners discussed revisiting how the EDC could have more of a social media presence. Director Brecher was asked to discuss the possibilities with the Town Manager.

Commissioners also discussed assigning "Districts" again to Commissioners who would have responsibility for monitoring commercial activity within specific geographic areas. Commissioners thought it essential that collateral material be prepared so that commissioners would have something to hand out when meeting one-on-one with business people within their districts.

#### IX. CHAMBER OF COMMERCE REPORT

Pete Forcellina, Executive Director of the Chamber, noted that membership has been increasing by 4-5 members a month, but he is concentrating equally on retaining the members the Chamber already has. He noted the ribbon-cutting for Artichoke Basille will occur on February 14, 2019, the Chamber is starting a new seminar series on February 26, 2019, a Comedy Night will be presented on March 1, 2019 at Indian Hill Country Club and the State of the Town breakfast will be held at the high school on March 7, 2019. In addition, he reminded the Commissioners that the 7:00 am network is held every Wednesday at Middlewoods of Newington at 7:30 a.m.

#### X. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Rose Lyons had several questions regarding National Welding, Myra Cohen Way, Dakota Partners and the grant requests for train station planning and Constance Leigh Drive.

Councilor Budrejko noted that the Town Council adopted goals for the Economic Development Director that included working with the EDC to improve the website and prepare promotional materials.


#### XI. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Commissioner Havens complained about the lack of information in the Economic Development section of the Town website and the difficulty in navigating within that website. Director Brecher advised that all of the links in the website had recently been checked and that many were found to have become inactive and are now being repaired.

#### XII. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Rosa made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Commissioner Greczkowski seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

  
Sophie Glenn,  
Recording Secretary