



**TOWN OF MADISON
CONNECTICUT 06443
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION**

Draft

Minutes of the regular meeting of the Economic Development Commission held on January 12, 2017, 7:30 p.m. at the Town Campus

Present: Commissioners Anne Foley, Jim Ball, Chris Weiler

Also present: Dave Anderson, Town Planner; Tom Banisch, First Selectman; Ron Clark, Jim Matteson, Tom Burland, Planning and Zoning Commission; Eileen Banisch, Chamber of Commerce; Barbara Mainberg, REX

Ms. Foley called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

1. Approval of minutes of regular meeting, November 10, 2016. There was not a quorum present so the minutes of the regular meeting of November 10, 2016 could not be approved.
2. Public comment. There were no items discussed under public comment.
3. Presentation from REX. Barbara Mainberg was present to review Regional Economic Xcelleration (REX) Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Outreach efforts. She explained that in addition to preparing the Regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy, REX also develops an action agenda and outcome measurements. The towns are encouraged to provide input as a partner throughout the process.

Ms. Mainberg reviewed completed regional projects including the Pearl Harbor Memorial Bridge, Downtown Crossing Phase 1 and Meriden Green project. Projects underway include TOD along New Haven, Hartford, Springfield rail line in North Haven, Wallingford and Meriden, The Haven in West Haven which includes retail stores and restaurants at the old Bilko location, District, New Haven a Tech Campus at the old CT Transit District building, expansion of Yale New Haven Hospital, which is now the largest employer in the region and the State, expansion of Yale University which includes

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housing for an additional 800 undergrads and a campus center. Tweed New Haven Regional Airport litigation for a runway extension and the upcoming Pratt & Whitney site developer announcement.

Ms. Mainberg reviewed State and Federal Grants REX assisted with securing including Branfield grants for properties in Branford and North Haven, State Grant-In-Aid for Tourism and State Grant-In-Aid for Municipal Internships for Madison, Meriden, Milford, New Haven and North Branford.

Ms. Mainberg reviewed REX efforts in the area of business recruitment, retention and expansion. They responded to inquiries regarding hotel and bio-tech sites, clinical support systems, and system process automation. They also conducted a business retention and expansion survey, hosted venture clash participants and generated a Greater New Haven Relocation guide. Advocacy efforts included a CEFS presentation to the Legislative Commission on Economic Competitiveness, intervention in the plan to re-route Amtrak, attendance at the Shoreline Economic Development Summit, involvement in Legislative Tourism Caucus/tourism Marketing Funding, involvement in legislation regarding human trafficking compliance, support for TNHHS regarding Lawrence and Memorial hospital, attendance at the AHLA Legislative Action Summit and at the U.S. Travel Association Tourism and Travel Roundtable with Senator Blumenthal. They have also attended Trade Shows to help identify businesses that would be a good fit for the region including health care, bio science, advanced technology and education. She noted that taxes continue to be an issue in attracting business to Connecticut. She also noted that budget cuts have eliminated Tourism Districts so now a limited amount of marketing is done at the State level.

Ms. Mainberg reviewed regional recognition for projects including the IEDC Gold Award for the New Haven Downtown Crossing, the IEDC Siler Award for Hamden's Newhall Neighborhood Revitalization projects, CEDAS awards for hosting the NEDS Conference, and CERC Celebrate CT for Downtown Madison and Meriden 2020.

In response to a question by Mr. Ball, Ms. Mainberg noted that more businesses express an interest in moving to the region than inquire about locating businesses to relocate to another area. In response to another question by Mr. Ball, Ms. Mainberg noted that she does not believe this area has been affected by the business recruiting efforts of Fairfax County, VA. Ms. Mainberg commented that Connecticut does not compete as hard as other States and counties. There are limited funds to recruit businesses although investment in business recruiting can pay off with additional revenue in the long run.

In response to a question by Mr. Weiler, Ms. Mainberg noted that there is only a minimal amount of funds at the State level to incentivize business to move to Guilford.

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Ms. Mainberg commented that, like in many areas, on-line shopping has impacted retail in the area. She also commented that REX would like to see a quality Welcome Center to provide information to visitors to the State.

The EDC members thanked Ms. Mainberg for her hard work in promoting economic development in the region.

4. Website Update. Mr. Anderson noted that the Town is now managing the EDC website and it is functioning well. He and the EDC are providing periodic updates.

5. Venue Management Update. Ms. Foley noted that the Beach and Recreation Department has provided available dates for the venue management firm to market for facility use so they will begin to move forward with scheduling.

6. Madison Center Project update. Mr. Banisch noted they the electric company still needs to connect Route 79 to the Cumberland Farm building and then the whole area will be connected. The plan is for them to pull wire the first week of February and then complete the hook-up. They will then make arrangements with the other business to re-service them. Once all of this work is completed and the weather allows, the poles can come down on both sides.

7. Update on advertising proposal. Mr. Anderson noted that he, Mr. Duques and Ms. Miksis continue to work on the advertising proposal. The intern is also assisting with this project with drafting a list of reasons why people should want to move to Madison and with developing a fact sheet with details about Madison. They will be targeting relocation firms and reaching out to other real estate firms with an e-mail and post card campaign. The packet will be completed by the end of January to be sent out in February.

8. Discussion on Waste Water Disposal System options. Mr. Banisch noted that discussion on the waste water disposal options continues to move along. There has been discussion with three firms to help with a cost benefit analysis with a special look at the long term benefits. They are also looking at fuel cell technology with the idea of the option of a downtown power authority. They will look further at the Stop and Shop system to consider any ideas to tie in for a regional facility. They will be looking at options for assistance with maintenance costs for neighboring property owners. Some businesses in the area have already invested in improvements to their system so might not be as interested in further investments in a regional facility. Businesses that could especially benefit are facilities that would be able to expand to provide a restaurant facility if appropriate septic was available.

9. Planning and Zoning Report. Mr. Clark was present to discuss ways the Planning and Zoning Commission and Economic Development can improve the dialogue between

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these two Commissions. He believes it would be helpful to have EDC input on some proposed projects to be able to show a different side of an issue that could have an economic benefit to the Town. One issue that will be coming up is possible changes to the sign regulation and the Planning and Zoning Commission would like EDC input and participation in this discussion.

Ms. Foley noted that, on occasion, the EDC writes a letter of support for a project that it believes would be beneficial to the economic development of the Town. Another issue that has an impact on both Commissions is the Academy School. They would also welcome EDC input on any business proposals that will be brought before the PZC.

Mr. Banisch noted that he has had discussions with Mr. Duques and Mr. Clark about scheduling joint meetings periodically during the year as one way to improve communication. Mr. Anderson noted that he will work with Mr. Duques and Mr. Clark to arrange for these joint meetings.

10. BOF Report. No Board of Finance report.

11. BOS Report. Mr. Banisch noted that the Board of Selectmen is currently focusing on development of the FY 17-18 budget. There is also a focus on the CIP as they start to prioritize projects based on need. The Town is going into the budget process in good shape although there is concern regarding the State's recent reduction in the ECS grant by \$149,000 for FY 16-17. The Town might also lose approximately \$109,000 in State Capital Improvement Program funding which has been very helpful in completing some public works projects in the past. Departments will be watching spending carefully and making cuts where possible. There have been some changes to the purchasing policy.

12. Old business. There were no items discussed under old business.

13. New business. There were no items discussed under new business.

14. Adjournment. On motion made by Mr. Ball, and seconded by Mr. Weiler, the Commission voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 8:40 p.m.

Terry Holland-Buckley
Clerk

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