



Economic Development Commission

Branford, Connecticut

Meeting Minutes

April 20, 2022

Joe Trapasso Community House - Church St – Branford

Present: Cathy Lezon (Chair), Elena Cahill, John Leonard, Alisa Waterman, Dee Jacob (Shoreline Chamber), Perry Maresca (Staff),

Call to Order: Chair Cathy Lezon called the meeting to order at 8:05am

Approval of Minutes March Minutes: Motion to accept by Alisa Waterman; second by John Leonard. Motion carried

Reports:

Staff Report: Live music on the Green mid-May through mid-October with the Jazz Series running from June 30th – August 25th. Month of July will feature “Way Back Wednesdays” with Car Show and DJ playing “Oldies”. July & August will add Musical Mondays (all events are weather permitting). On April 10th, the movie **Northern Shade** written, directed, produced by three Branford natives, received *Best Screenplay* award at the Phoenix Film Festival. Details on the CT premiere at the **Legacy Theatre** to follow. Wednesday, 4/13, **BACA** had another premier showing w/many new artists. Excitement and buying of art was prevalent. Town Center was bustling. Restaurants were busy. Tables on the green were occupied, and the newly planted Holiday Tree from **VanWilgen’s** was gaining attention. And this is only April. **Bespoke Design** recently opened and people were there in droves. **Pearl Wine Bar** will be toasting soon and **TAGS on Main** by the end of the month. The “speak easy” know as **1928 Cocktail Bar** is pushing to serve by mid-June. **Tweed** expands service with Avelo flying direct to Chicago, NC & DC. Major step towards improved business travel. **Alexion** expanding in New Haven. Branford Clean Energy Committee partnering up with EDC and EnergizeCT through Eversource to promote energy saving programs for businesses. Plans for an evening at the **Stony Creek Brewery** to discuss and present available programs to our many Branford companies are underway for June. CEDAS Webinar on 4/14 shows that shopping trends are bringing people back to stores. Brick & Mortar moving to hybrid (and vice-versa). Growth rate of online sales is slowing. 78% of retail purchases are still done in stores. Most successful offer service, personal contact, pleasant buying experience. Broadband company actively searching for place in town as their home base. Will primarily service residential initially, have been speaking with them about the ease of adding areas in important business sections of Town.

Planning & Zoning: Meeting held through **SCRCOG** with Town Hall personnel discussed Infrastructure Grants, Coastal Resiliency Fund Grants through DEEP and other possibilities. Warehouse space is being sought more than ever. 1000sq feet for newly established merchandising operation to 10,000sq feet for commercial use and distribution. Buckley Rd development is back before the Commission. Indoor recreation requested at 221 West Main for Fencing school was approved. **Amazon** last mile distribution

center is closer to approval. Burban Dr project still before P&Z. **McDonald's** requesting rework of Drive-Thru. Addition of Solar specific suggestions for Zoning Regulations will be open for PH on 4/21 meeting. **Thimble Island Brewery** requesting additional Patio & Landscaping. Affordable Housing Plan continues to be discussed with meetings and public hearings.

Chamber: Dee Jacobs reports that the return of Business After Hours has been incredibly received with the next one on 4/25 at the **New Haven Middlesex Association of Realtors**, 2730 Boston Post Rd, Guilford. Ribbon cuttings in abundance with **Your CBD Store** on 5/3 and **F45** Training on 5/5. Monitor (shorelinechamberct.com) website for more info and updates. Plans continue to go well with the Crafts Fair scheduled for Saturday at the **Branford Festival**. Fifty talented Artisans have already signed up to show their talents and wares. Additional information on the Shoreline Chamber website: [Branford Festival Artisan Marketplace Booth Sign Up - Mar 3, 2022 to Jun 1, 2022 - Shoreline Chamber of Commerce, CT \(shorelinechamberct.com\)](http://shorelinechamberct.com). The Chamber is still seeking assistance from Branford through BOS approval to help fund coaching/education programs for businesses. Programs through **AdvanceCT** include: Campus CT workforce development through colleges "Live here = Work here". CT Next Internship for Technology Talent Bridge can pay up to \$25k towards cost of pay during summer break. CCAP has grant of \$2million to assist matching Talent<with>Company.

Selectman's Report: (relayed from TCMA meeting of 4/12) Repaving of Hillside Parking Lot. Chestnut St Heading west. Sidewalks throughout town center. Boardwalk from Montowese to Indian Neck along Branford River in design and permitting process. Seeking funding through grants. New Christmas Tree on the Green was planted last week. Trista ordered additional tables & chairs for the Green.

Old Business: Annual Budget of \$19,150 was presented to the Rules and Ordinance Committee of the RTM on Tuesday night (4/19). Approved unanimously.

New Business: Demolition application notices were received for 132 North Ivy Street; 49 Summer Island Road; 10 Tyler Ave; 5 Summit Place and 13 Summit Place. No objections from Commission members on any of the requests.

No Public Comment.

Announcements: Next Meeting = May 18, 2022

Meeting adjourned @ 8:50am. Motion by John Leonard and seconded by Alisa Waterman.

Respectfully submitted,

Perry Maresca

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First Selectman Jamie Cosgrove [ex officio]

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