

**Economic Development Commission  
Regular Meeting  
October 21, 2019 — 7:00 PM  
Town Hall**

**Members Present:** Vice-Chair Bernard Dennler, Heide Perham, Bruce Goldstein, Michael Hinchliffe, Lisandro Suarez, Sean Nadeau (Alternate)

**Members Absent:** Chair Jean Walsh, John Dion

**Others Present:** Town Planner Matthew Bordeaux

**1. Call to Order**

B. Dennler called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

**2. Public Comments**

There were no public comments.

**3. Changes or Additions to the Agenda**

B. Dennler welcomed new Town Planner Matthew Bordeaux and suggested they have introductory discussions before moving on to other business.

*B. Dennler MOVED to add to the Agenda "Introductions with Town Planner" as Item 3.1. B. Goldstein SECONDED.*

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

**a. Introductions with Town Planner**

Town Planner M. Bordeaux introduced himself. He stated that he had worked for 11 years in Manchester, starting work with environmental/wetlands issues, and then moving up to senior planner. He came to Colchester to pursue greater responsibility and commented on the positive buzz he had heard about Colchester.

He stated there was a strong base for preserving the rural character of the town, a good Plan of Conservation and Development, and a very simple zoning map with majority rural-use zoning district. He said Manchester had a challenge preserving its agricultural economy, but Colchester has good assets in this area and there are ag-tourism possibilities. He noted the concentrated development in the village district and suburban use around it. He also mentioned that improving web presentation will be a priority to give prospective entities and individuals a better first impression.

B. Goldstein discussed the history of the EDC, starting with evaluating tax incentives from the CTIP program and how it morphed into more of an economic development commission. He said previous administrations gave some tasks to the commission such as grant work and mentioned there have been minimal tax incentive applications recently.

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Heide Perham  
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M. Hinchliffe discussed the relationship with the Colchester Business Association of which he is a member. He also discussed the possibility of pursuing grants that could assist with future development.

H. Perham discussed her perspective on the needs of the town and the need for the EDC to have a stronger charge. She mentioned wanting to preserve the small, community businesses and worries a business like a Walmart would destroy many small businesses.

M. Bordeaux asked the commission members about their strengths and backgrounds and said he could see the commission playing a useful advisory role. L. Suarez mentioned his work with DEEP and discussed possible brownfield and remediation needs at sites in town.

#### **4. Approval of Minutes**

##### **a. September 16, 2019**

*B. Goldstein MOVED to approve the Minutes of September 16, 2019. H. Perham SECONDED.*

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

#### **5. New Business**

##### **a. New Business and Projects — Town Planner, First Selectman**

M. Bordeaux stated a new solar farm was coming to Colchester. B. Goldstein noted that this was the first the commission had heard of the project and he wondered if the company was even aware of the CTIP program.

#### **6. Old Business**

##### **a. UPDATES: News Articles — Sean — list of ideas**

S. Nadeau said the solar farm project would make a good news release if the commission can get more information on it.

##### **b. Discussion on — CTIP brochure**

B. Dennler said he had laid out a rough draft and incorporated some materials that Chair J. Walsh had provided. He said that the biggest issue will be getting it printed because the commission does not have a budget and the cost of printing would either need to be approved by the Board of Selectmen or Finance or come from the Town Planner's budget. M. Bordeaux said he would look into the options.

H. Perham and M. Hinchliffe said the brochure should focus on the benefits of the town not just CTIP. B. Dennler said that it does but asked for M. Bordeaux to provide more feedback at a future meeting about what he sees as the town's strengths so they can have a consistent messaging plan. S. Nadeau said whatever is in the brochure needs to be on the website.

##### **c. Wayfinder Sign**

No update or discussion.

**d. Montville Small Business Forum — recap — Colchester Fair plans**

M. Hinchliffe said he had attended the small business forum and noted it was very similar to the panel the Colchester EDC did this spring. He said he spoke to a hotel promoter while he was there and would follow up. H. Perham said she thinks lodging in Colchester is something the town needs.

Members discussed possible plans for a fair. H. Perham said she's not sure the EDC should be planning events. B. Dennler said he thinks it would be positive to get small and home-business owners together. M. Bordeaux agreed that it would be positive but said it would take time to plan. Members agreed it was unlikely to happen in January and agreed to discuss it again with M. Bordeaux.

**7. Adjournment**

*B. Dennler MOVED to adjourn at 8:20 PM. H. Perham SECONDED.*  
MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Respectfully submitted,

Bernard Dennler, Vice-Chair

