

Colchester Economic Development Commission

Monday, January 21, 2020 7:00 p.m.

Colchester Town Hall, Room 2

Members Present: J. Walsh, B. Dennler, H. Perham, S. Nadeau

Absent: L. Suarez, M. Hinchliff, B. Goldstein

Others present: First Selectman – Mary Bylone (BOS Liaison), Town Planner Matthew Bordeaux

J. Faski – CBA, BOF Liaison A. Bisbikos

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1. Call to Order: J. Walsh called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.
2. Public Comments: NONE
3. Changes to the Agenda: Chair called for a change to the agenda: add 5 d.
4. Approval of the minutes from December 16, 2019. Motion to accept made by B. Dennler,, seconded by H. Perham. Abstain: S. Nadeau. Minutes accepted.
5. New Business: a. Discussion on EDC charge – First Selectman stated the EDC is here as a check and balance for elected officials and act as the representatives of the towns people. The commission also has a paid dept who's work is intertwined. Although the purpose stated in the bylaws: "to promote the business and industrial resources of the Town of Colchester and to serve as the development agency for the Town of Colchester." Through the Planning dept the EDC will work in conjunction to identify opportunities to help improve growth, and maintain our economy. The Commission should look for opportunities to fill empty buildings, and developable areas. The Commission needs to focus on decisions re: economic development opportunities. What do people want? It was recommended the EDC think of ways to assist in making Colchester a 'destination town' to effect the sharing of the costs to run the town with businesses, etc.

The EDC was polled for input. S. Nadeau agreed with this charge, B. Dennler suggested the EDC not compete with other commissions' work, but assist the Town Planner. H. Perham agreed. M. Bordeaux suggested bringing a sampling of applicants to come to the next EDC meeting to discuss the process they had gone through, what issues they had, with discussion on what the EDC could suggest to facilitate the process to make it easier/ better. J. Walsh will add this to the Feb 2020 agenda

c. conversation re the POCD and the town map / zones. M. Bordeaux suggested the EDC focus on section 4.5, and J. Walsh asked the EDC to read the POCD / and review the maps of zoning to come back to the feb meeting with comments, suggestions, issues. In the interim the Planner will look at other EDC sites for programs Colchester could adopt.

b. Planner reported on a meeting with SECOG, Amanda Kennedy, a sr. planner with the SE Housing Alliance re: affordable housing assessment. It was done in 2018, and the profile conditions for Colchester found approx.. 1 in 6 homes qualify as low income, meaning they pay more than 30% of their income for housing costs. The area mean income was determined to be \$101,000, with low income determined at 80%. The standard for towns is to have 10% of the housing stock identified as low income. Currently our inventory reflects 8.5% qualifying as affordable. Conclusion: this is a needed area of development, which will in turn stimulate the economy. More housing = more business.

New business report: Gh Trailers on Old Hartford Rd is expected to open spring 2020. Settlers Green on Lebanon Ave will be reviewing their initial application of mixed use. Citizens Bank does not want to sell, but would like to lease.

d. The EDC discussed changing the monthly meeting time to 6:30 on Monday meetings, and keeping 7:00 for any meeting to be held on Tuesdays. The members present were all in agreement. It was decided to postpone the vote till the February meeting when other EDC members may be present for input.

6. Old Business -

- A. Updates: News articles – list of ideas – S. Nadeau will work on ideas for content to be put on the website. 43 new businesses registered in 2019.
- B. Discussion on CTIP brochure – B Dennler presented the mock up of the tri-fold brochure, and it was sent to all EDC members electronically for review, and input at the February meeting.
- C. Wayfinder sign update – J. Walsh reported the wayfinder sign is ready to be picked up. It is 10' long, and a suggested location will be finalized before the February meeting. A picture and blurb will be put in paper and on website.

7. Adjournment Motion to adjourn at 7:55pm made by B. Dennler, seconded by H. Perham. All in favor.

Respectfully Submitted: Jean Walsh