



Town of Simsbury

933 HOPMEADOW STREET

SIMSBURY, CONNECTICUT 06070

Economic Development Commission **Regular Meeting** **Minutes - Adopted**

Wednesday, January 27, 2021 at 5:30pm
Virtual Meeting Broadcast Live via SCTV

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Bob Crowther at 5:32pm. Commission members Peter Van Loon, Ron Jodice, Charmaine Seavy, Tom Earl and Lori Wagner were present. Ex officio member Bill Rice (Planning Commission) and Board of Selectmen liaison Jackie Battos were also present. Staff members in attendance included Maria Capriola, Town Manager, Melissa Appleby, Deputy Town Manager, and Mike Glidden, Director of Planning and Community Development. Morgan Hilyard, Executive Director for the Chamber of Commerce, was also present.

1) Development Update Presentation

Mr. Glidden gave a presentation that provided an overview of projects that are currently underway, those that have been approved, preliminary projects, and other development matters that are on the horizon. This included: Ridge at Talcott Mountain; McLean; 15 Albany Turnpike; Big Y; Andy's Plaza; Gibbs Mobil; Simscroft Echo Farms; the Coffee Spot; The Rioux; Northwest Community Bank.

Mr. Glidden also reviewed the impact of COVID-19 on building permits. He said that the Town has already exceeded FY19-20 permit fees, noting a high level of residential investment. Construction activity continues to be strong. Discussion ensued regarding general sentiment in the community around development, and striking a balance between increased development activity and maintaining a small town feel.

2) Business Recovery

a) Oral Report from Main Street Partnership

Mr. Crowther gave a report in Ms. Nielsen's absence. He said that Ms. Nielsen relayed that she continues to send out regular updates on COVID-related programs, funding, rules, etc. She relayed that the secretary of the Main Street Partnership sends out updates on business activity and closings. She is working with several property owners on new plans.

b) Oral Report from Chamber of Commerce

Ms. Hilyard said that the Chamber saw an increase in membership in January, including new and renewed members. She noted that there are a lot of remote workers looking to connect. She said there are many events coming up, including the February 26 development update and the Scholar Sip fundraiser on February 16.

c) Oral Report from Business Resource Librarian

None

d) Other

None

3) 2020-2021 Work Plan Updates

a) Business Incentive Policy

Ms. Capriola said that the final draft will be on the Board of Selectmen agenda in February.

b) Marketing

The work group is wrapping up the edits to the contract.

c) Co-working Spaces/Supporting Entrepreneurs

The work group is continuing to lay the groundwork for engaging landlords in this initiative. Ms. Hilyard said that at the very least, it would be extremely helpful to have a central location for people to search for space. Ms. Battos noted that this type of list exists on a Facebook page.

d) Business Outreach

Mr. Crowther said the next few appointments are being scheduled, and that a quarterly roundtable with the Chamber's government affairs committee is being planned for March or April.

4) Liaison Updates

a) Zoning

Mr. Jodice said Zoning continues to work on permits that come through.

b) Design Review

Ms. Wagner noted the recent projects that have gone before Design Review, including the outdoor expansion at Iron Horse Pub, and changes at Fiddler's Green with The Rioux coming in.

c) Sustainability

Mr. Crowther said that the group continues to update its certification efforts, and that one new element is housing. The questions center around what the Town is doing in regards to homelessness and affordable housing. He noted that there is a community conversation on housing scheduled for February 4.

d) Development Projects

None

e) Other

None

5) Minutes - November 18, 2020

Mr. Jodice made a motion to approve the minutes for the November 18, 2020 meeting as presented. Mr. Earl seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 6:47pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Melissa Appleby
Deputy Town Manager