



Town of Simsbury

933 HOPMEADOW STREET

SIMSBURY, CONNECTICUT 06070

Economic Development Commission
Regular Meeting
Minutes - Approved

Wednesday, June 23, 2021 at 5:30pm
Virtual Meeting Broadcast Live via SCTV

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Vice Chairman Tom Earl at 5:31pm. Commission members Ron Jodice, Charmaine Seavy, and Peter Van Loon were present. Ex officio member Bill Rice (Planning Commission) was also present. Staff members in attendance included Maria Capriola, Town Manager, Melissa Appleby, Deputy Town Manager, Mike Glidden, Director of Planning and Community Development, and Andrew 'Sherm' Sherman, Business & Career Center Coordinator. Morgan Hilyard, Executive Director for the Simsbury Chamber of Commerce, and Sarah Nielsen, Executive Director for the Simsbury Main Street Partnership, were also present. Members of the SPIRIT Council in attendance included Chari Chester Anderson, Lloyd Huie, Nicole Kodak, Carol Clark-Flanagan, and staff liaison Kristen Formanek.

a) Welcome SPIRIT

Mr. Earl noted that members of the SPIRIT Council joined this evening's meeting.

1) Development Update (Planning Director, Mike Glidden)

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: 34 Hopmeadow Street (self-storage); 1603 Hopmeadow Street (Tractor Supply); Iron Horse Boulevard (multi-family housing); 20 Tariffville Road (self-storage); Andy's plaza façade renovation and new Mexican restaurant; Soma Grille patio expansion; Jersey Mike's; Town Hall parking lot and accessibility improvements; 250 Hopmeadow (north site of former Hartford property, conversion of previously approved commercial space to residential); 200 Hopmeadow (south site of former Hartford property, conceptual plan for mixed use).

Mr. Glidden also provided an overview of building permits. He said that this has been the best year for permit fees despite the pandemic.

2) Introduction to SPIRIT Council

Mr. Earl welcomed the members of SPIRIT Council in attendance. Chari Chester Anderson introduced herself and provided an overview of SPIRIT. She said that the members were in attendance today to learn more about housing issues, in order to inform the work of the housing sub-committee. Mr. Huie, Ms. Kodak, Ms. Clark-Flanagan, and Ms. Formanek also introduced themselves.

3) 2020-2021 EDC Work Plan Updates

a) Marketing

Ms. Seavy said that there was a meeting today to review the results of the survey. She said that one major takeaway is that the primary draws to Simsbury are the small town charm, recreational amenities, local hiking, and trails. While the school system is still a primary attractant, Simsbury's general lifestyle rose to the top as its strongest asset. Ms. Nielsen noted the need to do a better job telling our story about the diversity of housing opportunities in town. The results of the survey will be presented at the August 9 Board of Selectmen meeting.

b) Business Outreach

Ms. Capriola said that there have been no additional business outreach visits since the last meeting.

c) Co-working Spaces/Supporting Entrepreneurs

Ms. Capriola said that staff and the Chamber of Commerce are refining the proposal and cost estimates for the co-working website.

d) Other

None

4) Stakeholder and Liaison Updates

a) Main Street Partnership

Ms. Nielsen reported that she recently worked with Storyteller's Cottage on a picnic scavenger hunt. She said that she helped coordinate a North Village meeting earlier in June, in which the Director of Public Works and Director of Planning updated the business owners on the new sidewalk that will run from Antonio's to the commuter lot. She said that she is supporting Ana's with their move into the old Manny's Pizza space in West Simsbury, and that she is supporting the opening of Jersey Mike's and the new Mexican restaurant going into the Andy's plaza.

b) Chamber of Commerce

Ms. Hilyard said that the Chamber hosted its second annual joint golf tournament with the Granby Chamber of Commerce. She reported that many new members joined the Chamber last month. She informed the committee that the Chamber's Marketing Director is now a full-time position; this position focuses not only on marketing for the Chamber, but also supports members with their own marketing needs. She said that "Good Morning, Simsbury" will finally be in person tomorrow as opposed to virtual. Ms. Hilyard said that the Government Affairs Committee meets on the third Tuesday of every month, with the committee meeting from 9:00-9:20am and the public being invited to join at 9:20am for the guest speaker. She said that there will be a joint event in July with Popover's and Wine Etc. She also reported that the Chamber is continuing to post job openings for local businesses. Lastly, Ms. Hilyard said that the Visitor's Center has been very busy.

c) Business & Career Center

None

d) Zoning

None

e) Design Review

None

f) Sustainability

None

g) Development Projects

None

h) Other

Ms. Capriola provided an update on the status of the federal recovery funds. She noted that in regards to infrastructure, we can only use the funds on water, sewer, and broadband. She said that there are a lot of restrictions on the use of the funds. We will need to commit the funds by 2024, and the funds need to be spent by 2026. We are awaiting additional guidance on the approved uses for the funds.

5) Minutes May 26, 2021

Mr. Jodice made a motion to approve the minutes for the May 26, 2021 meeting as presented.

Ms. Seavy seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 6:40pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Melissa Appleby
Deputy Town Manager