



# Town of Simsbury

933 HOPMEADOW STREET

SIMSBURY, CONNECTICUT 06070

## **Economic Development Commission** **Special Meeting** **Minutes - APPROVED**

Tuesday, November 27, 2018 at 5:30pm  
Main Meeting Room, Simsbury Town Hall – 933 Hopmeadow Street

### **Call to Order & Welcome**

The meeting was called to order at 5:30pm. Commission members Peter Van Loon, Bill Freeman, Lori Feldman, Bob Crowther, Brooke Freeman, Ron Jodice and Carrie Meckel were present. Board of Selectmen liaison Eric Wellman and Selectwoman Cheryl Cook were present. Bill Rice, ex officio member from the Planning Commission, and Jackie Battos, ex officio member from the Zoning Commission, were also present. Staff members in attendance included Town Manager Maria Capriola, Deputy Town Manager Melissa Appleby, Director of Planning and Community Development Mike Glidden, and Main Street Partnership Executive Director Sarah Nielsen.

### **1) Orientation**

Ms. Capriola welcomed the group, and suggested that all of the members and meeting participants introduce themselves. Each person provided his or her background and position, and each commission member discussed his or her interest in serving on the EDC.

Staff provided an overview of the materials in the orientation binder. Ms. Capriola reviewed the Freedom of Information Act brochure, and explained the basic rules that pertain to public meetings. She reviewed the economic development commission ordinance that was adopted by the Board of Selectmen in August 2018, including the basic charge to the EDC. She also reviewed the economic development commission policy resolution, which outlines the membership composition.

Mr. Glidden provided an overview of the Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD), which was last updated in 2017 and provides a roadmap for development in Town. The POCD includes a section on economic development. He also provided an overview of each of the land use bodies: design review board; zoning commission; conservation commission; planning commission; and zoning board of appeals. Mr. Glidden also reviewed the current initiatives that the Town is undertaking related to economic development, including support for the Main Street Partnership and Chamber of Commerce, investment in the Business Resource Center at the Library, the Tourism Committee, business visitations, the Doing Business in Simsbury Guide, various economic development trainings, and the POCD.

Ms. Nielsen provided an overview of the various studies and initiatives related to economic development that have been conducted over the years. This includes: 2008 Taxpayer Survey;

2013 Fairweather Report; 2015 Economic Development Task Force; and the 2017 Economic Development Strategic Activities Report.

## **2) EDC Work Plan**

Mr. Wellman reviewed the Board of Selectmen's brainstorming and goal-setting process for economic development, and explained that the presented work plan reflects the items that rose to the top of the priority list. The four categories include:

- *Business incentives* – review incentive programs used in CT and make recommendations regarding which options the Town should pursue
- *Strategic vision* – review the past studies conducted on economic development in Simsbury and identify items that should be implemented
- *Business recruitment, retention, and outreach* – develop a formal, coordinated process for communicating with businesses
- *Support entrepreneurs* – refresh the Town's branding and marketing materials to attract businesses

## **3) Housekeeping Items**

### **a) 2019 Regular Meeting Schedule**

The commission decided to schedule its regular meetings monthly at 5:30pm on the fourth Wednesday of the month starting in January 2019. A special meeting will be scheduled for December 2018.

### **b) Selection of Chair**

Mr. Jodice made a motion to appoint Mr. Crowther as the Chair of the EDC. Mr. Van Loon seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

### **c) Selection of Vice Chair**

Mr. Van Loon made a motion to appoint Ms. Meckel as the Vice Chair of the EDC. Mr. Crowther seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

### **d) Selection of EDC Member to Serve on Business Development Committee**

Mr. Crowther made a motion to appoint Mr. Van Loon to serve on the Business Development Committee. Ms. Freeman seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

### **e) Selection of EDC Member to Serve as Liaison to Zoning Commission**

Mr. Van Loon made a motion to appoint Mr. Jodice as the liaison to the Zoning Commission. Mr. Crowther seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

### **f) Selection of EDC Member to Serve as Liaison to Design Review Board**

Mr. Van Loon made a motion to appoint Mr. Freeman as the liaison to the Design Review Board. Mr. Crowther seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

The commission discussed the concept of public audience for its regularly scheduled meetings; there was consensus that the EDC will need to focus on getting off the ground with its work plan, and that public audience will be added to the agenda on an as-needed basis.

Mr. Jodice asked how the new EDC would be different from the former EDC. Mr. Wellman noted that the new EDC has specific membership requirements, as well as term limits. Ms. Nielsen emphasized that the EDC is advisory to the Board of Selectmen, and that the Board will give clear direction to the EDC. Ms. Capriola said that the new EDC can provide some much needed assistance with marketing materials, business visitations, and other hands on work that staff may not have the capacity to take on.

Mr. Wellman said that the Board of Selectmen is open to feedback on the work plan. He said that economic development is a high priority for the Board, and he hopes that there will be open dialogue between the EDC and the Board of Selectmen.

Mr. Van Loon made a motion to adjourn at 7:25pm. Mr. Jodice seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,

Melissa Appleby  
Deputy Town Manager