



**ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
DOWNTOWN COMMITTEE – Special Meeting
Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, April 28, 2021, 5:00 P.M.
Bristol City Hall, First Floor Meeting Room**

- ATTENDEES:** Commissioners Goldwasser, Mills, Rasmussen-Tuller, Mayor Zoppo-Sassu (ex-Officio)
- ABSENT:** - - -
- STAFF:** Justin Malley-City of Bristol Economic Development Director
Andrew Armstrong-City of Bristol Land Use
- GUESTS:** David Preleski, Bristol City Council
Peter Kelley, Bristol City Council
Tom Daly, Milone and MacBroom
Sabrina Trocchi, President and Chief Executive Officer, Wheeler

I. Commissioner Goldwasser called the ECD Downtown Committee meeting to order at 5:01 p.m. Committee, staff, and guest introductions were made.

II. Public Participation – There was no public participation.

III. Minutes

Commissioner Rasmussen-Tuller made a motion to accept the minutes of the special meeting of February 11, 2021. Commissioner Mills seconded the motion, motion was passed.

IV. New Business

A. Centre Square Proposal

Justin Malley introduced the subject. He briefly reviewed the committee handouts and drawings.

Wheeler CEO Sabrina Trocchi provided background on Wheeler and their facilities, as well as their health designation status. She summarized the range of services at their locations and the growth and challenges that were presented. New challenges have been presented this year upon continuation of in-person learning and she described their involvement in the Bristol school system. There is a need for one consolidated location. She provided statistics and these reflect their growth.

They are looking at a proposed 35,000 sq. ft. building. Ms. Trocchi described what would be located in this facility. The operations will be primarily as they are now at the 2 other downtown locations. She described the number of staff and the staff positions who would be working at the downtown facility, many of whom work at more than one location as needed.

As a non-profit they do not pay tax, however, the staff would be using many local services in proximity to their place of employment and this translates to a local investment.

Committee members asked questions and commented on the information provided in the presentation.

Wheeler added that they would now like to own more facilities as opposed to leasing space.

Mayor Zoppo-Sassu commented on the plan in general on Centre Square and how this project compliments the existing activity and that the ancillary services increased use would be beneficial to local businesses.

Ms. Trocchi answered additional questions and discussed their relationships with other Bristol health related services, especially with Bristol Health.

Timeline: they hope to have plan approvals by June/July and finalize their site plan in summer with groundbreaking in the fall with completion late summer/early fall 2022.

Commissioner Goldwasser inquired about their engagement in community services and brought up the subject of available parking, with the option of spaces available to the community as a subject to be discussed during the upcoming negotiations.

V. Take any action as necessary

This project will be formally introduced to the ECD Board next week. Justin requests that this committee undertake a motion to continue the City's due diligence and continue working with Wheeler being mindful of the City and our board's interest in creating a City green. It is usual upon entering into a Letter of Intent that an appraisal be done on the property as the purchase price will be reflected in the LOI.

Commissioner Goldwasser made a motion to continue negotiating with Wheeler and to do a full appraisal of the proposed location for their building project and report back to the full ECD board. Commissioner Rasmussen-Tuller seconded the motion. Committee voted in favor. Motion passed.

Justin advised that the appraisal now needs to be done and a Letter of Intent needs to be drafted.

The design of the building was briefly discussed to blend in with the nature of the surrounding buildings, the community's preferred look for the area, and upcoming building plans in the downtown environment as well as their landscaping plans.

VI. Adjournment

Commissioner Rasmussen-Tuller made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:02 p.m. seconded by Commissioner Mills. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Christine Cooper,
Recording Secretary