

ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
MINUTES – Regular Meeting
Thursday, January 7, 2020, 5:00 P.M.
City Hall Council Chambers

ATTENDEES: Mayor Zoppo-Sassu, Council Member Preleski (online) Commissioner Mills, Hick, Schmelder, Goldwasser, Cyr, Rasmussen-Tuller, Zammett (online)

ABSENT: - - -

STAFF PRESENT: Justin Malley, Executive Director; Dawn Nielsen, Marketing & Public Relations
Dawn Leger, Grants Administrator; Bob Flanagan, City Planner

GUESTS: Ernest Pitti
Konstantin Posehn, GMN USA LP

I. Mayor Zoppo-Sassu called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

II. Public Participation

Mr. Ernest Pitti of Bristol has a couple of questions. He inquired that for businesses who have shown interest in relocating and later have decided not to – do we ask them why. Justin Malley replied that he does unless he has not been made aware. Mr. Pitti also asked about companies that no longer appear on the grand list or do not show in the top 10 – does the City follow-up on these. Mayor Zoppo-Sassu replied that it may be a bit subjective and we do keep in touch with many companies and there could be reasons due to market and regulations.

III. **Commissioner Schmelder made a motion to accept the minutes of December 3, 2020, seconded by Commissioner Rasmussen-Tuller. The commissioners voted in favor and the minutes were accepted.**

IV. Consent Agenda

Commissioner Goldwasser made a motion to file the Consent Agenda seconded by Commissioner Mills. All present voted in favor and the motion passed.

V. New Business

A. Planning/Zoning Matters

Justin spoke about the link we now have between Planning and ECD with Andrew Armstrong's assistance and Justin also works very closely with Bob Flanagan. Bob and the Land Use boards then work on these projects and help them come to fruition. Bob provided a synopsis of the type of assistance his office provides and he explained Andrew's role.

Bob showed an example of one project and the steps involved. He explained what happens when a variance is needed. He reviewed another project per request of the Mayor – which provided some challenges and the type of issues which are brought up. These may involve other commissions such as wetlands, for example. He also reviewed the development of the assisted living project at the corner of Route 6 and North Main St. which involved many departments. Some minor changes can be approved by staff and reported back to the Zoning Commission.

Mayor Zoppo-Sassu remarked that all of the issues are introduced at the weekly site plan meeting. Bob then answered questions. The Mayor also explained how Andrew gets involved with other departments and how that is of help to Land Use and the projects.

B. Downtown Update

Justin spoke about a possible mural on Centre Sq. This would be to aesthetically help with the retaining wall which is actually an old foundation of a building from the old North Main St. Dawn Nielsen has contacted a muralist and they reviewed the area which currently has some graffiti. Some repairs are needed on the wall. The artist will look into cost for that. We want something simple and positive. The Arts Commission will be involved with the choice of artwork.

Justin reported that we are also working with Public Works on a fence on the embankment near the pathway. We will see if this extends to that area.

Justin reported that the City expects to have the site plan for Parcel 10 in a couple of weeks.

Justin reported that the City has been in touch with Webster Bank as soon as it heard about their plans for the branch on Main St. The Mayor reported that a meeting was held with them about the historic aspects of the bank building so when they look at offers to consider what is best for Bristol as well as for the Bank. They have accepted an offer which is also one that the City preferred.

C. 2021-2022 Budget Preview

The Budget Committee meets on Tuesday the 12th. ECD is planning a level budget. More funds will be in marketing rather than miscellaneous promotional items and so on.

D. Enterprise Zone Application

Justin reviewed this application.

Commissioner Schmelder made the following motion: Whereas, the property known as 50 Terryville Avenue is located within the boundaries of the Enterprise Zone established by the City of Bristol and State of Connecticut; Whereas, ZMA Real Estate LLC has purchased said property and will complete construction of a new gas station and associated retail store; Whereas, per Article XIV, Section 18-200 of the City of Bristol Code of Ordinances, assessments on commercial developments within the Enterprise Zone which are improved at a minimum cost of \$175,000 are eligible to be fixed for a period of seven (7) years from the time of such improvement and shall defer any increase in assessment attributable to such improvements according to the following schedule: Year 1 (100% deferral), Year 2 (100% deferral), Year 3 (50% deferral), Year 4 (40% deferral), Year 5 (30% deferral), Year 6 (20% deferral), Year 7 (10% deferral).

I hereby make a motion: To approve the Enterprise Zone application of ZMA Real Estate LLC requesting a seven (7) year Enterprise Zone tax abatement schedule for all improvements associated with the development of a new gas station and associated convenience store at 50 Terryville Avenue, subject to all conditions identified for commercial projects outlines in Article XIV of the City of Bristol Code of Ordinances. Be it further noted that this matter be forwarded to the Bristol Assessor's Office for action. Andrew Rasmussen-Tuller seconded the motion, all present voted in favor and the motion passed.

E. CDBG COVID-3

Dawn Leger reported that Shepard Meadows will be a guest at the City Council meeting next month. Please also visit the facility to see what they do.

The schedule for the CDBG year is in the packet under Communications. There is a proposal from Milone and MacBroom for additional work. She explained the need for assistance. The contract would be for current and future use up to \$25,000.

Commissioner Goldwasser made a motion to approve a consulting contract for project-based and on-call services related to the administration of CDBG-CV funds for up to \$25,000 with Milone & MacBroom, Inc; to authorize the Mayor or Acting Mayor to sign any necessary documents; and to refer this matter to the Board of Finance for contract approval and the appropriation of funds. Commissioner Hick seconded the motion, all present voted in favor and the motion passed.

F. Project Status Updates

The Mayor reviewed current projects:

- There was a site tour of the townhouses on Main St. The Mayor reported the units are beautiful and should go quickly. The developer is very happy with Bristol and the downtown area so there may be more to come.
- The Mayor provided an update on the neighboring property to the above mentioned jobsite.

VI. New Business by Commissioners

The Mayor would like to discuss the Small Business Grant for Café Real.

Commissioner Rasmussen-Tuller made a motion to bring this subject to the table, seconded by Commissioner Schmelder.

Justin reported that Eduardo Garces, owner of Café Real, is planning to roast beans as well and is leasing a downtown property. He is buying a coffee roaster and it has been ordered. To install it correctly, some work needs to be done at the property. Mr. Garces has asked if he can use the grant funds for the installation work and receive the funds up front.

Commissioner Goldwasser made a motion to allow Café Real to receive 50% of the small business grant funds approved on October 2, 2020 by Justin Malley upfront to begin installation work for the coffee roaster at his leased property and to receive the remaining funds when the work is completed. Commissioner Mills seconded the motion, all present voted in favor and the motion passed.

VII. Old Business by Commissioners

Commissioner Schmelder inquired about the status of the old Dodge Village property. Justin reported that a potential buyer was brought to the property but there are unknown environmental issues there. There is no new activity. Justin spoke in general about the Riverside Avenue corridor.

VIII. Any Other Business

A. City Council Liaison Report

- Council Member Preleski spoke about the Legislative Session which was recently hosted by the City. It was well organized and productive.
- John Smith and Ray Rogozinski have met to discuss options for City Hall renovations.
- The budget year is now beginning.

B. Industrial Committee

- Justin reported that we are expecting a letter from a developer for a 15,000-17,000 sq. ft. building on Lots 10 & 11 of the Southeast Bristol Business Park. We expect it by next month.
- The P & S for Lot 2 of the SEBBP has been extended to May and will be submitted along with the site plan within the next 2 months.
- Lot 3 of the SEBBP is the only lot not tied up but recently has been discussed with a company.

Commissioner Mills made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Schmelder, to go into Executive Session at 6:10 p.m.

IX. Executive Session

Meeting was reconvened at 6:15 p.m. upon motion Commissioner Rasmussen-Tuller and seconded by Commissioner Schmelder. No votes were taken in Executive Session.

A. Economic Development Grant Application

Konstantin Posehn introduced himself and spoke about his move to the U.S. and the company's plans to purchase additional equipment.

Commissioner Hick made a motion to approve a Manufacturing Equipment Grant in the amount of up to \$18,913 to GMN USA for the purchase of a grinding machine and to refer this matter to the Board of Finance for their information. Commissioner Goldwasser seconded the motion, all present voted in favor and the motion passed.

X. Adjournment

Commissioner Rasmussen-Tuller made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:23 p.m. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Hick, all present voted in favor and the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Christine Cooper,
Recording Secretary