

ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT  
MINUTES – Regular Meeting  
Thursday, February 4, 2021, 5:00 P.M.  
City Hall Council Chambers

ATTENDEES: Mayor Zoppo-Sassu, Council Member Preleski, 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

GUESTS: Cindy Bombard, President, Central Connecticut Chambers of Commerce  
Prema Vivekanandan, Raw Food Central, LLC  
Dwight Otis, Raw Food Central, LLC

I. Mayor Zoppo-Sassu called the meeting to order at 5:08 p.m.

II. Public Participation – There was no public participation.

VIII. Any Other Business

C. Downtown Committee

Attorney Timothy Furey summarized the plan which was presented at the Downtown Committee meeting for a mixed use project at Centre Square. They are now looking at 4 lots with a different design. There are some outstanding issues so there will be a revised plan presented at another meeting.

Commissioner Goldwasser (Downtown Committee Chair) thanked the Carrier Group for their interest and patience and said the concept fits into our plan for downtown and we will look at this over the next week.

III. **Commissioner Schmelder made a motion to accept the minutes of January 7, 2021, seconded by Commissioner Mills. 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 Rasmussen-Tuller. All present voted in favor and the motion passed.**

V. New Business

A. Grant Amendment

Justin summarized how the manufacturing equipment grants are handled and that we have received requests to change the equipment detailed in an agreement. Rather than amending the contract, it is proposed that the Director may alter the equipment specified under the contract under certain conditions.

**Commissioner Schmelder made a motion to include the following language in Manufacturing Equipment grant contracts: In the event that the grantee desires to change the equipment covered under this grant contract, the Executive Director of the Economic and Community**

**Development Department has discretion to alter said contract to reflect the new equipment purchases only if the new equipment meets guidelines for the Manufacturing Equipment Grant program and only if the new purchase(s) do/does not reduce the number of new full-time employment positions added as part of the originally approved project. Commissioner Rasmussen-Tuller seconded the motion, all present voted in favor and the motion passed.**

**Commissioner Rasmussen-Tuller made a motion to apply the practice of approving new equipment purchase changes to existing open manufacturing equipment grants to the open grant for Thompson Aerospace, also known as Precision Threaded Products. Commissioner Goldwasser seconded the motion, all present voted in favor and the motion passed.**

B. Industrial Update – SEBBP and Technical Assistance Grant

SEBBP

- Justin reported that two projects are well along for Lot 2 (BHF Logistics) and Lot 6 (EcoSmart Home Services). He has seen the site plans and building plans for each.
- Bob Desmarais is working on site plans for Lots 8 & 9. We should hear from him soon.
- A machine shop is looking at lots 10 & 11 and we will be hearing from them also. They are currently talking to contractors to look at pricing.

The Technical Assistance Program was launched on Monday and we have about 8 applications already. We would like additional funds for this program.

**Commissioner Goldwasser made a motion to approve the request to transfer \$50,000 from account 1044109-589300 Economic Development Expenses to account 1044109-589340 Technical Assistance for the Manufacturing Technical Assistance Program. Commissioner Rasmussen-Tuller seconded the motion, all present voted in favor and the motion passed.**

Justin provided an overview of the program. We work very closely with CONNSTEP, a manufacturing consulting service. It is a way for us to help manufacturers grow or improve their business.

C. Route 72 Streetscape “Light” Update

Justin reported that Public Works has funds to begin a study on a streetscape “light” project for certain portions of Route 72. He clarified what it is for.

D. Project Status Updates

- Charles Talmadge from Development Planning Solutions reported that the site plan for the Cyr & Wilson project on Centre Square Parcel 10 was submitted on Tuesday. There were two issues that have been resolved and the site plan is now finished. The Zoning Commission will have this on February 10. They are looking to begin construction around September of 2021. There have been no changes to the building design. He reviewed the design – the number of apartments and amount of commercial space. He then answered questions.
- Mayor Zoppo-Sassu reported that the Funck & Eagle Building is ready to close and is our first project using TIF. She summarized the project which is partly residential as well as daycare.
- Justin reported there is another SONIC going in the Sonic Drive-In space.
- Webster Bank: The Mayor reported that we were in touch early regarding the historical significance of the building. There were two parties interested. Yesterday they confirmed an executed Purchase and Sale agreement for a closing around June 1<sup>st</sup> with D’Amato Realty

Corp. She mentioned that they have taken 10 Main St. also for their corporate headquarters and will be branding the building with their name.

- There are currently no updates on KindCare.
- Justin reported that there is another proposal for Centre Square and we are currently just supplying maps, etc. This is not for residential use. It would be a large, 30,000 sq. ft. building.
- The Mayor has met with another Connecticut developer who may have interest in Bristol.
- The Mayor reported that Baskets and Foodies have some issues which are not currently resolved but they are working on a resolution. There is other interest in the space in case they cannot resolve those issues.

E. Economic Development Grant Policy

A question was brought up last month to have a policy about how many economic development grants a company can receive. A policy could be made with a limit every number of years except if they are adding square footage. This gives Justin guidelines to work with. **Commissioner Goldwasser made a motion to refer the matter of determining grant limits to the Economic Development Policy Committee, seconded by Commissioner Rasmussen-Tuller. All present voted in favor, motion passed.**

VI. New Business by Commissioners – There was no new business by commissioners.

VII. Old Business by Commissioners – There was no old business by commissioners.

VIII. Any Other Business

A. City Council Liaison Report – Council Member Preleski

- A proposed bridge rebuild will take place at the end of the Memorial Boulevard. A rendering was shown and the Mayor provided more detail.
- While there is still some demolition going on, construction has begun on the MBIAMS project – the floor has been laid on the top floor. The hazardous waste component is almost complete. A position is planned for an individual to work on the Arts and Culture in Bristol and to work with Josh Medeiros as well as coordination of the use of the building along with the Board of Education. This position will eventually be self-funded by intake of funds when acts are booked at the theatre as well as rentals for rehearsal or recital space in the school. The schools will also have use of the theatre during the day and will use the theatre for additional special events. Local musical groups will be invited to check the acoustics. A number of items have been salvaged from the old school and will be reused.

B. Budget Committee

Commissioner Cyr reported that the committee met last month and approved a proposal to submit to the Comptroller's office. Justin met with them yesterday. Many of the costs are fixed such as salaries and insurance. Marketing had an increase – funds were taken from trade shows as they will not be needed in this environment.

Justin reported that although the budget is rather flat, we usually can have no problem if additional funds are needed for special projects which come up during the year. He provided more information on the department 4102 and 4103 budgets. There are times we need to work with an outside group. This year we are working with Milone and MacBroom but those funds are coming from the COVID funding.

**Commissioner Schmelder made a motion to approve the ECD fiscal year 2021-2022 budget request as recommended by the Budget Committee on January 12, 2021 and submit to the Board of Finance for action.**

C. See page 1.

Cindy Bombard reported that she and Justin stay in close touch and she appreciates the communication between them as well as the Mayor's office. She stays in touch with her members, has written to all of them and has contacted many by phone. They stay on top of the available grants and she is in touch with Alex Johnson at Capital Workforce Partners who has received 10 million dollars which will be spread over the 5 Connecticut regions. She has requested a position on their board.

**The board went into Executive Session at 6:10 p.m.**

IX. Executive Session

**Upon motion Commissioner Schmelder, seconded by Commissioner Mills, meeting was reconvened at 6:30 p.m.**

No votes were taken in Executive Session.

A. Economic Development Grant Application

There was no action on this application at this time.

X. Adjournment

**Commissioner Schmelder made a motion to adjourn the meeting seconded by Commissioner Mills. Meeting was adjourned at 6:31 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,  
Christine Cooper,  
Recording Secretary