



CHESTER ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes - DRAFT

March 11, 2024 at 4:30 pm

Location: Chester Town Hall Meeting Room - Fl 2 and Microsoft Teams

1. Seating of members

EDC Vice-Chair Carlie Dailey called the meeting to order at 4:33 pm.

Commission members present: Carlie Dailey, Rebecca Mead (virtual), Heather Amara-Miles, Douglas Mahana.

Ex Officio: First Selectman Cindy Lignar.

Audience of Citizens: none present.

2. Approval of Meeting Minutes

Rebecca Mead motioned for approval of 2/12/24 Meeting DRAFT minutes with edits. Heather seconded.

Motion passed unanimously.

3. Audience of Citizens

No citizens present.

4. EDC Website Revisions and Links

There was a productive working session on the revisions and updates for the EDC website. There was discussion of acquiring permission for use of an attributable image for the page. Rebecca Mead will reach out to the photographer of the Yankee Magazine photo to see if we can get permission for its use. That image, consisting of the river and ferry, was taken by former resident Caryn Davis. Cindy found other potential images that the EDC might investigate. The merchants may have images available as well.

The main page text was revised. A section for ex-officio members will be added, and the call to action statement was revised. A summary of the EDC's goals and current initiatives will also be listed on this page.

There was an in-depth discussion of the 'Quick Links' section and its functionality. We will model our 'Quick Links' on the modern nested structure found on the Sustainability Team's page. The placement of several links within the list was also discussed, and the addition of Chester Rotary was suggested. The need to revise the "Town of Chester Business Guide (2013)" was pointed out for a future agenda.

5. Commercial Listings and Transactions Update

20 Water Street

No update is available regarding renting the building on this site.

Maple Street Parking Lot

Chester's Energy Team recently voted unanimously to pursue installing EV charging stations here.

59 Winthrop Rd (Kenyon Property)

The sale of this property was approved to proceed at the recent town meeting, and the sale itself is now in progress.

33 Liberty Street

The sale of this property is completed. The buyers are preparing to submit their site plans and applications for intended use to the town.

47 Middlesex Ave

There is no update on the status of the appeal.

3 Inspiration Lane

The incoming tenant is excited and motivated to move forward with plans to relocate their motorcycle business to Chester; however, the property owner is not responding in a timely manner. Next steps are awaiting the property owner.

6. Business Outreach Update

First Selectman Cindy Lignar and Selectman Pat Bandez met with James Quarto, owner of 6 Main Street (Grano location) last week. This week, they will meet with Steve Karlson, president of BLP, who own some of the marinas in Chester, Marker 37, and the Maple Street apartments. Meetings with Ryders Health Management (owners of Aaron Manor) and Astroseal are still pending.

7. Cell Tower Update

Cell coverage for residents and emergency services in and around downtown remains a key issue. EDC conversations with an alternative company are underway and they are currently conducting due diligence to understand the feasibility of a project in Chester.

8. Village Center Parking, Deliveries, Signage

Discussions with merchants and restaurants regarding deliveries and obstruction of emergency lanes are ongoing. EDC discussed outreach to downtown restaurants to increase their participation in these discussions. Several challenges have been identified including, business hours, delivery availability, and employee/ resident parking. All parties are looking for solutions. First Selectman Cindy Lignar will work with local police to assess downtown signage and safety needs.

9. First Selectman Report

There is a Town Talk scheduled for Wednesday, 3/13 at 6:30 pm at the meeting house. The agenda includes an open-ended Q&A.

Town of Chester
203 Middlesex Avenue
Chester Connecticut 06412

telephone: 860-526-0013
facsimile: 860-526-0004
web page: chesterct.org

Budget season is underway in Chester. There are upcoming workshops with the Board of Finance and town engineers to assess and prioritize public safety needs.

10. Commissioner/Tourism Updates

There were no updates available.

11. Adjourn

The next meeting will be held on Monday, April 8, 2024 at 4:30 pm.

Douglas motioned to adjourn. Heather seconded. Motion passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 5:43 pm.

Respectfully submitted by
Douglas Mahana, Recording Secretary