

**GUILFORD
Economic Development Commission
MINUTES**

April 2, 2019

8:00 A.M.

Town Hall, Selectmen's Meeting Room, second floor

Comissioners: Chair Mark Wasserman, Vice Chair Theodore Sands, Wendy Dockray, Amy Earls, Damian Gunningsmith, Fran Paranto, Michael Meisel, Tracy Brent Calafiore (Alt), Dave Egan (Alt)

Absent: None

Town Officials: Brian McGlone, Economic Development Coordinator
Erin Mannix, Zoning Enforcement Officer (ZEO)

Guests: J.P. Sullivan, potential member
Sheri Cote, President Chamber of Commerce

1. Communication and Public Forum (limited to 5 minutes) / Call to Order

At 8:03 am, Chair Mark Wasserman called to order the regular meeting. There were no comments for communication or public forum.

Approval of Agenda

Motion: Ted Sands moved to add to the Agenda speaker Erin Mannix, Zoning Enforcement Officer, seconded by Wendy Dockray.

Vote: Carried - Ted Sands, Wendy Dockray, Michael Meisel, Fran Paranto, Damian Gunningsmith, Amy Earls

2. Approval of March 5, 2019 Minutes

Upon review,

Motion: Wendy Dockray moved to approve the March 5, 2019 minutes with the following amendment: page 1, location was 'Town Hall, Selectmen's Meeting Room', seconded by Ted Sands.

*Vote: Carried - Wendy Dockray, Ted Sands, Amy Earls, Tracy Brent Calafiore
Abstained: Fran Paranto, Michael Meisel, Dave Egan (absent in March)*

Speaker Erin Mannix, Zoning Enforcement Officer (ZEO)

ZEO Erin Mannix provided a description of her responsibilities and those Town departments and agencies which she consulted or worked with on a regular basis. In addition to ZEO, she is also the Inland Wetlands Administrator. She works closely with the Planning and Zoning Dept. on regulation compliance and meets with developers and homeowners through the construction application process. The Building Dept. has up to 30 days to review, do a site walk and accept or deny the application for

further processing. ZEO reviews and adds her approval on building permits that will then go to Planning and Zoning Commission (PZC), Inland Wetlands (IWC), and potentially Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) or other departments before final approval or denial. She also conducts site inspections including erosion control, regulation compliance and posting of certificates of occupation. A weekly Town Departments' Meeting is held to review the permitting process for applications and to assist business and private owners. Departments are working on streamlining the compliance process and are resources for applicants. The Fire Marshall may participate in the inspections. Statutes require a 65 day deadline to act on applications though applicants can request approval of an additional 65 day extension.

ZEO Mannix recommended updating the Zoning Code language to clarify definitions for the application process. Time could be saved by administrators processing more portions of the application without commissions review until final approval or denial. This includes creating concise amendments from several, updating ownership and tenants list for existing small businesses, excluding wetlands in the size of building Lots. Parking lot changes and new applications could be processed without PZC. Size and locations of 'sandwich board' advertising signs on The Green and throughout Town could be updated. (The Town Green Committee and Board of Selectmen currently regulate signs on The Green)

Discussion reviewed EDC questions and how ZEO and EDC can support each other's work. Chair Wasserman and other EDC commissioners will meet with Ms. Mannix over the next few months to review the Sign Ordinance. EDC would like to experience the application process to understand it from a business owner's perspective and suggest changes to make the process easier. Compliance criteria includes septic, zoning, drainage, multi-family construction, Lot size, development sites and more.

Chair Wasserman expressed EDC appreciation to ZEO Mannix for reviewing her department responsibilities and offered EDC support.

3. Economic Development Coordinator's Report

Econ. Dev. Coord. Brian McGlone had emailed EDC commissioners his March report. Shoreline Chamber of Commerce president Sheri Cote advised that about 85% of recent business openings have been in Guilford.

Discussion included the Town could provide tax incentives for businesses. Econ.Dev. Coordinator McGlone will update a list of current property owners, sold and new properties and forward to EDC. North Branford, North Haven, Hamden, and New London offer tax incentives by deferring tax.

Coordinator McGlone's Report :

Business Update

Major Properties

- The former Plumbing Supply property (640 BPR) has SOLD, however, no information yet concerning the buyer and expected use.
- I have heard (not yet confirmed that the former Greene Gallery space and the building where MIX/apartments are has been sold as well. Details will be confirmed.

- The building which houses Breakwater Books, The Spice and Tea Company and the two apartments above is also for sale.
- No updates on the former Royal Printing building, still for sale.
- These examples combined with the recent sales of the former Beatty and Beatty Law building and the former Matura Whitfield-Water Streets properties, demonstrate the attractiveness of Guilford for commercial properties.

Ribbon Cutting

- Occurred to celebrate the new 16K sf building at 350 Goose Lane Office Park. Featured business included the Horton Group, who will be moving from New Haven to Guilford, One and Company - a real estate business, and Company Cube - a digital marketing company. Other portions of the building are occupied by American Cruise Lines and Altman Orthopedics. Construction has started on the 3rd building on the site a 24K sf building with completion expected by October 2019.

'Welcome to Guilford' Signage

- BOS approved the proposal at their March 18 meeting. All material has been submitted to the CT DOT and is being reviewed, approval expected soon. A Grant request has been submitted to the Guilford Foundation, with a response anticipated by April 15. Informally, we have been advised that the (nonprofit) Guilford Preservation Alliance (GPA) will also donate funds to support this initiative. The Sign Committee is researching additional sources of funds, including additional grant opportunities, private and business donations.

Tax Incentives

- Matt Hoey wanted the EDC to weigh in on this subject. "Is there enough total opportunity for growth to justify using incentives (advantages) and potential downside to same". Discussion for this meeting or agenda item for next meeting ?

4. Chamber of Commerce Report

President Sheri Cote reported :

- Reviewed Annual Meeting held February 22, 2019. Brian McGlone was honored with an annual Chamber Award for his community efforts to enhance Guilford by encouraging business and tourism.
- CTVISIT.com has tourism information.
- Submitted a list of upcoming events and ribbon cutting.

(At 9:15 am Damian Gunningsmith and Amy Earls left the meeting. Alternates Dave Egan and Tracy Brent-Calafiore replaced for voting)

Pres. Cote will add the EDC May 15, 2019 Business Forum to the Chamber website.

Discussion included:

- April 16, 2019, 7:30 am to 9:30 am, Guilford Community Center. No. Branford, Branford, Madison and Guilford will be hosting a forum, featuring the Small Business Administration (SBA).

The SBA provides access to working capital, entrepreneur development programs and available government contracts. Sheri Cote will contact SBA and pursue avenues to form a group of businesses to apply for programs, funding and promoting business.

5. **Chairman's Report**

Chair Mark Wasserman had no new information to report.

7. **Subcommittees/Board Liaison Reports**

- **Town Forum - (Gunningsmith, Paranto)**

Chair Wasserman had emailed commissioners a flyer for the May 15, 2019 8 am to 10 am, at the Guilford Community Center. The EDC Forum will discuss local economic development issues and opportunities with Town department officials and local business owners. EDC is reaching out to the community to better understand challenges that owners encounter during the Town application processes. Connecticut and federal regulations and statutes have a direct impact on Town ordinances, regulations and the process. Coordinator McGlone will email a Save the Date notice to businesses.

Discussion reviewed preparations for the Forum, discussion panel, flyer and agenda. Chair Wasserman will provide an article about the Forum to the Guilford Courier for publication. The event will be posted on the Town website and facebook page. EDC members will email Chair Wasserman questions to include in a list for panel members.

- **Land Acquisition Committee (LAC) (Paranto)**

Fran Paranto reported that the LAC March meeting had been held in Executive Session.

- **Signage (Meisel, Egan)**

Coordinator McGlone added to the earlier review of signage (during his March report) that the Welcome to Guilford signs are expected to cost about \$30,000.

- **Parking (Sands, Paranto, Orce)**

Coordinator McGlone reported that he will contact Town Counsel Pam Milliman and request that she email EDC commissioners the current draft easement agreement between St. George Church and the new owner of property adjacent to the church. The previous owner was in the process of an agreement to share a sidewalk with Whitfield Square parking.

8. **New Business** There was no new business.

9. **Old Business** There was no old business.

10. Approval of Bills

Motion: Ted Sands moved to approve payment of the Recording Secretary March invoice for \$103.50, seconded by Dave Egan.

Vote: Carried - Wendy Dockray, Ted Sands, Michael Meisel, Fran Paranto, Tracy Brent-Calafiore, Dave Egan

10. Adjournment

Motion: At 10:00 a.m., Ted Sands moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Michael Meisel

Vote: Carried - Unanimously

Respectfully Submitted,

Judith Anderson Castellano
Recording Secretary