

GUILFORD
Economic Development Commission
MINUTES
October 2, 2018
8:00 A.M.
Town Hall, second floor, Selectmen's Meeting Room

Commissioners: Chair Mark Wasserman, Michael Meisel, Michael Orce, Wendy Dockray, Fran Paranto, David Egan

Absent: Damian Gunningsmith, Vice Chair Theodore Sands, Brian McGlone, Economic Development Coordinator

Town Officials: None

Guests: Amy Earls, Page Hardware vice president, potential EDC member

At 8:05 am, Chair Mark Wasserman called to order the regular meeting.

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

There was no one present for Public Forum.

2. Approval of September Minutes

Upon review, under Old Business, second paragraph, should read "... Michael Meisel will contact the Guilford Courier to request whether EDC could periodically submit an article and the cost. Brian McGlone would prepare the article and Ted Sands and Michael Meisel would review before submission."

Motion: David Egan moved to approve the September 6, 2018 minutes, as amended, seconded by Fran Paranto.

*Vote: Carried - Michael Meisel, Wendy Dockray, Fran Paranto, David Egan, Mark Wasserman
Abstained - Michael Orce (absent in September)*

3. Economic Development Coordinator's Report

Econ. Dev. Coordinator Brian McGlone was unable to be present. He emailed the following report :

St. George Park Project - see also attached article by Zoe Roos that appeared in the Guilford Courier, 9/20/18. Zoe's comments were essentially based on a brief update I did to the BoS on Monday Sept 17. Upon my return from vacation, our EDC sub-Committee will finalize the agreement with the property owners/businesses so we can gain commitment from them to utilize the St George's lot to

help alleviate parking congestion behind the shops. As a side note, CT DOT is discussing with Town Engineering, the removal of a parking spaces along Whitfield Street (potentially 2-4), increasing the need for additional parking elsewhere.

Welcome to Guilford Signage – CT Dot has approved the location of the six(6) Welcome signs we plan to install coming off Rt 95 at exits 57, 58, 59. I have prepared the Encroachment Permits and GIS Maps for each location. I am getting updated artwork from our sign vendor for each location. We are preparing an information package to present to the BoS in the near future. The State DOT is requiring approval from the BoS as part of the process. Needless to say, funding is a critical issue and is being pursued through multiple efforts, including grants and donations from individuals, businesses and non-profit organizations.

Trash Around the Green / Whitfield Street – with the success of our downtown area and special events that occur around our Green, trash has periodically become a bit of a concern. Working with Park & Recreation, we are exploring the frequency of pick-up to utilizing different enclosures to eliminate this unsightly appearance. With the summer season coming to an end, and less activity occurring on the Green, this issue should be limited in the coming months.

North Branford / Sullivan North Property (essentially behind Tractor Supply) – at the request of the Sullivan family, I arranged a meeting with my EDC counterpart and the Town Planner in North Branford to open discussions about Land Use/Zoning changes for the portions that abut their Guilford property. Access to the North Branford portions would need to be through their Guilford property. We are in the “early stages” of discussions and the Sullivan’s will be taking some steps to better define the possibilities for this property.

BUSINESS UPDATE:

Much activity is occurring on Rt 1 East, including;

- **Royal Printing** has announced they have been acquired by TYCO Printing, with the Guilford operations being transferred to TYCO’s Branford location. This action will occur by the end of September. I don’t believe the building was included in the acquisition so it will become vacant/available soon.
- **Mattress Firm** appears to be moving into Guilford Commons as DDR has a location posted on their website. This has basically been supported by the landlord from the current building as he has not been able to get a lease renewed.
- **U Haul** – the formal sale of the Mannix properties to U Haul has been completed and the announcements were in the papers under real estate transactions. Most of the public didn’t understand that U Haul hasn’t owned the properties until now. U Haul will be moving forward on the current site with septic work, facility improvements and landscaping. It appears they will not start construction on the new storage building until the appeal process has been resolved.
- **Patriot Center** – has listed a new tenant, **Shoreline Endoscopy Center**, an affiliate to the Yale New Haven Health System. **Friedler Dental Group** moved in during the past three months as well, joining **Barnum Financial** and **CT Gastroenterology**.
- **The Spot – Guilford Acrobatic and Company** – moved into the former Boss Pizza location in the Guilford Plaza and **Three Girls Vegan** will be moving into the remaining space in that plaza. Three Girls

Vegan started in their home, moved to the small space in the Stepstone Hill Plaza (near Guilford Lakes) and continue to grow. Their new location will have a few seats for dining, along with their retail sale operation.

- **Kiddie Clubhouse LLC** – a childcare center for infants and youth opened in the Village Walk Plaza.
- **Central Hospital for Veterinary Medicine** – an emergency and referral center will be opening soon at the former Splash Restaurant location.

Other business activity:

- **Guilford Land Rover** will be moving the majority of their operations to North Haven, probably during November. The property owners are exploring several options for the Guilford facilities.
- **MIX Design** – after ten years of successfully operating and growing this business, the 3 co-founders had a desire to retire, thus they have sold the business to Maggie (Moffitt) Farrell. The co-founders are working on a limited basis as the business transitions to Maggie.
- **House of Fashion** – recently closed their doors.

4. Chamber of Commerce Report

Shoreline Chamber of Commerce representative Sherry Cote was not present to report. Chair Wasserman will contact Ms. Cote.

5. Chairman's Report

Chair Mark Wasserman reported that he had visited the new "CT Lunch" restaurant in Village Walk. The business is doing well. Brian McGlone will be requested to contact the owner of the Village Walk complex regarding repairs to the driveway and parking areas in front of the businesses.

6. Subcommittees/Board Liaison Reports

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

Fran Paranto reported on the plans to hold an EDC Public Forum on November 8, 2018, at the Community Center, second floor Quonnipaug Room, 8:00 to 10:00 a.m. Invited are First Selectman Matt Hoey, Health Director Dennis Johnson, Planning and Zoning Chair Phil Johnson and Economic Development Coordinator Brian McGlone, as well as, local business owners. Town Planner George Kral, Inland Wetlands Chair Kevin Clark and Zoning Officer Erin Mannix will also be invited. Discussion will focus on current working relationships between the Town and businesses owners, what is working and what needs improvement. There will be a review of additional ways to support businesses identifying home-based and entrepreneurs.

Chair Wasserman will send the Forum agenda to EDC commissioners prior to the November 6, 2018 regular meeting.

- **Town Profile on State Film Site (Meisel,Dockray)**

Chair Wasserman expressed appreciation to Wendy Dockray and Michael Meisel for their professional work on the Town Profile powerpoint presentation, which they submitted to the State of CT Film website. EDC will periodically review to update. Brian McGlone is listed as the contact person.

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

Fran Paranto reported that the LAC did not meet this past month.

- **Signage (Meisel, Egan)**

Michael Meisel reported for the Signs and Tourism Committee:

- Sign designs and wording require Board of Selectmen (BOS) approval. Signs designating Guilford as Historic require State of CT approval.
- A sign presentation will be provided to the BOS.
- Six signs are needed at \$5,000 to \$7,000 each. Fundraising is needed for this project. Grants will be pursued.
- A smaller sign displaying sponsors can be attached below the initial sign.
- A landscape architect is being consulted to advise on minimizing maintenance.

Discussion included :

- Funding options.
- Research is being done to post signs on Route I-95.
- Wendy Dockray will contact Econ. Dev. Coor. Brian McGlone regarding grant applications.

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

Discussion was held on difficulty with adequate parking around The Green and parking lots behind businesses. Michael Meisel will contact business owner Jim Kohn to provide a presentation on the potential to share parking lots in Town, especially St. George's lot.

7. New Business

There was no business.

8. Old Business

- **Review questionnaire provided by First Selectman Matt Hoey**

Chair Wasserman reported that he had reviewed responses to the Questionnaire provided by four of the commissioners. He will summarize those and the statements of the benefits of living and owning a business in Guilford.

Discussion reviewed each question (see previous minutes for questions). It was noted that EDC role is to work as a team with the Economic Development Coordinator whose responsibilities include encouraging new business. The EDC is responsible to meet some of the Plan of Conservation and Development (PoCD) goals.

Discussion on the PoCD strategy list will be added to the EDC regular meeting agendas. (Michael Meisel left at 9:15 a.m.)

Chair Wasserman requested that the EDC review one question at a time each month starting with the statement on the benefits of Guilford. He will email responses to all for discussion at the next meeting.

9. Approval of Bills

Motion: David Egan moved to approve payment of the Recording Secretary invoice for \$77.63, seconded by Fran Paranto.

Vote: Carried - Unanimously

10. Adjournment

Motion: At 9:23 a.m., David Egan moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Fran Paranto.

Vote: Carried - Unanimously

Respectfully Submitted,

Judith Anderson Castellano
Recording Secretary