

Town of Trumbull
Economic and Community Development Commission
Meeting Minutes
September 3, 2019 - 7:15 p.m.
Trumbull Town Hall

Director of Economic & Community Development: Rina Bakalar

Chairman: Ralph Sather

Commissioners: Beryl Kaufman, Evelyn Zamary, Eve McGrath, Shelby LeVino, Jeanne Gibbs, Marshall Marcus

Not Present: Commissioners Eric Michel and Mark Smith

Public: Nina Boynton (107 Whitney Avenue, Trumbull)

Chairman Sather called the meeting to order at 7:15 p.m. and requested a motion to approve the August 6, 2019 meeting minutes. Commissioner Marcus made the motion, seconded by Commissioner Kaufman and the minutes were unanimously approved.

Director's Report

Business Update & Community Development Update

David Lehman, Commissioner of the Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development, will be visiting on September 6th to talk about our business community and his vision to attract more business in Connecticut.

Resort Lifestyle Community - River Valley Retirement Community/101 Oakview Drive – We will be having a ground breaking ceremony for the 55+ facility on September 19th. It will be held at Bianco Rosso and feature a presentation and lunch. Please RSVP and share the invite with the community.

123 Monroe Turnpike (10,000 sq. ft.) - There will be a ribbon cutting on September 25th at noon. Dr. Firgeleski, owner and developer, has relocated his business there. He will be leasing out the remaining space.

Ms. Bakalar informed that Rob Thomas, author of “Who Do You Need To Meet” invited her to speak on November 13th at his Networking & Diners meeting. Ms. Bakalar suggested inviting him in the spring to do something for our business community.

Bakery – We are working on a bakery outreach project and are inventorying abutting towns. Since our only full service bakery is Stop and Shop, we would like to recruit a full service bakery. We plan to produce a radius map indicating the placement of established bakeries as part of our recruitment package.

Recruiting – Ms. Bakalar is meeting once a month with the mall marketing and leasing team. She complimented, Nick Rossomando, the new leasing department employee.

Seaquest is doing well and the Mall marketing staff advised visitorship was up 17% during July which they attributed to Seaquest and mall events.

Lord & Taylor – Le Tote is purchasing Lord & Taylor. The parent company, Hudson Bay, is holding on to the real estate at this time. There are a lot of changes in relation to merchandising that are underway.

Community Development Update – They have not closed on the lumber property as of yet.

Sidewalks – We have been working on a grant to use the Christian Heritage commuter lot as a trailhead and connect the trail up to Twin Brooks. The new owner of the home on the corner of Shawnee and White Plains Road is full support of the sidewalk project that is underway. She also intends to relocate her behavioral health office there.

Ten Trumbull – Howard Rappaport will start leasing in September and residents will be moving in December or January. Commissioner Marcus added they were approved by P&Z last month for 90 carport spaces.

Planning Update

Long Hill Green – Right hand turn lane is completed. Next week the patio and parking project will begin and pavers will be installed to half of the roadway from the corner of Amici's past Franco Gianni's. The end of the road that once went through that area will also be green-scaped. A meeting is pending with property owners and the construction company to address staging. This project should be finished by the end of October. We are still in design for other projects.

Rob Librandi, Land Use Planner, and our consultant met last week on the final draft of the industrial zone plan for the Reservoir/Lindeman/Oakview area.

Trumbull Corporate Park planning process has sparked a group of property owners and businesses that are meeting on a regular basis in the park to push for improvements.

Make-A-Wish is planning activities and expanded services at their new headquarters. In August, they did a construction hat tour. They will be their expanding their staff and there will be client visits at their new location. They have been reaching out to businesses in the Corporate Park.

Intern – A new intern will be starting September 9th who will be involved in graphic design and mall projects as well as working on the boulevard study for Trumbull Center. Ms. Bakalar thanked Catherine Creager from the ZBA Commission who referred the new intern.

TAP Grant – Ms. Bakalar stated we ranked in the top three and will know in a month if we will be awarded the grant. She praised intern Sarah Henderson for her hard work and contributions. Ms. Bakalar noted we are seeking more sidewalk funding and looking to do a master sidewalk/bicycling plan for the town.

Restaurant Week – September 21-27th. Ms. Bakalar encouraged the Commission to share our Facebook page with their network. There will be a press release tomorrow and Facebook and Instagram are up. Twenty-three eateries are participating.

Commissioner McGrath and interns Gabriela Piekarczyk and Erin Racicot have been working on the social media and the calendar listing is featured in the CT Post, AAA Northeast and on the CT Restaurant Week Website. An interview with the First Selectman is scheduled for Thursday and Kathy Champion is looking into radio and TV coverage. The Trumbull Times will feature an article and Ms. Gibbs will be doing some videos.

Electronic signs are up at the mall. There will be category specific posts which will include a visual and images from the every participant's website.

Rina thanked our sponsors: Westfield Mall, Trumbull Chamber of Commerce and Newtown Savings Bank.

Chairman Sather suggested we feature a post release article. Ms. Bakalar proposed a human interest story about the interns who contributed and also recommended they be awarded certificates in a Young Talent category at the breakfast event.

Business Appreciation Breakfast - Nominations for small business and corporate success awards must be submitted by October 1st. The form is available on our website. Ms. Bakalar noted the nominee can be an owner or someone who has helped grow the business community. A review and vote will take place at the October meeting.

Disaster Committee – the meeting is planned for next week on September 12th.

Newsletter – Our summer newsletter will go out this week.

Strobel Road/Chestnut Hill/Moose Hill Project – Commissioner Zamaro inquired about this project. Ms. Bakalar noted it is primarily handled by Engineering and our contractors. A community meeting was held a week ago. Ms. Bakalar informed this project is grant funded thru the LOTCIP program and is a major investment in our infrastructure. Any information and updates can be accessed on the town website. First Selectman Tesoro has asked Ms. Bakalar to research additional sidewalk funding for a possible project in that area in the future.

ECDC Summer Meetings – Alternate meeting locations were discussed for months when concerts are occurring due to traffic issues. Possibilities include the Helen Plumb building, the medical center and the Henkel site. Commissioner Sather suggested we take this up with the establishment of our new schedule in January.

Bike Rack – Mr. LeVino suggested a bike rack be installed at the Town Hall.

Public Comment

Nina Boynton (107 Whitney Avenue, Trumbull) addressed the following concerns:

Sidewalks on Whitney Avenue - Ms. Boynton noted we have 3 park entrances and no safe way to get to them. She suggested parking on the grassy area to the left of the entrance at Indian Ledge which could accommodate a number of cars.

Bike trail – There are safety issues for bicyclists exiting the trail and hitting cars. It is a mutual concern for both bicyclists and drivers and is a line of site issue coming out of Old Mine Park approaching Whitney Avenue. The solution would be to weed whack inside the gate and trim some on the limbs on the trees on the embankment.

Ms. Boynton informed that people want to walk and conducted her own door to door survey. She advised that owners of the three homes between Dunellen Road and the bike trail all told her that they will cooperate with the town to use the part of their front yard for the sidewalks.

Bicycle Shop – Suggestions were discussed for a bicycle shop in Trumbull in various locations. Commissioner Marcus advised incorporating it into an existing space vs. a stand-alone retail operation.

BMX Nationals - Bob Murdock sent an email to the US BMX owners to inquire if they had interest in hosting the 2020 Nationals in Trumbull.

Opportunity for Community Input

There being no further business or community input, Chairman Sather requested a motion to adjourn at 8:45 p.m., accepted by Commissioner Marcus seconded by Commissioner Kaufman and voted in favor unanimously by the Commission. The next meeting will be held on October 1, 2019 in the Long Hill Room.

Respectfully submitted,

Gail Andreyka
ECDC Clerk

cc: Rob Librandi, Doug Wenz