Town of Trumbull
Economic and Community Development Commission
Meeting Notes
August 7, 2018 - 7:15 p.m.
Trumbull Town Hall

Being there was no quorum, the notes are for discussion purposes only.

Director of Economic & Community Development: Rina Bakalar

Chairman: Ralph Sather, Commissioner Beryl Kaufman

Not Present: Jackie Galiani, Evelyn Zamary, Shelby LeVino, Michael Iaccarino, Eric Michel, Christopher Looram, Mark Smith

Also Present: Vicki Tesoro, First Selectman

Public: Paul Griffith

Chairman Sather called the meeting to order at 7:19 p.m. and since there was no quorum, the June 5th minutes will be presented at the September 4th meeting for approval.

Director's Report

Business Update

Seaquest – a 20,000 sq. ft. aquarium entertainment venue will be coming to the Trumbull Mall. The lease has been signed and construction will begin around Nov. 1st.

Ulta Beauty – will be opening Sept. 7th. They completed a million dollar renovation and a ribbon cutting will be planned.

30 Nutmeg Drive – a new baseball/softball academy has signed a lease. They will be occupying the space that was formerly Curves.

Devita Dialysis Center – has signed a 10,000 sq. ft. lease in the industrial zone by Reservoir Avenue and Lindeman Drive at 7 Cambridge Drive.

A special needs/transportation company has signed a lease at 12 Cambridge Drive.

Dolce Vida Medical Spa (140 Monroe Turnpike) – the company relocated from Shelton to Trumbull and there was a ribbon cutting in July. We are their third Connecticut location.

Major Properties

The next P&Z meeting will be held on August 15th which will be a continuation of the public hearing for the Mall's rezoning request for the Reservoir Avenue multi-family housing development and for the 55 or older independent living senior development

(101 & 109 Oakview Drive). It is a public meeting and Commissioners and the public can attend or submit written statements. There will be a pre-app at 7:00 p.m. for the building on the corner of Reservoir & Lindeman which has a performing arts dance studio. This building is under contact with a partial vacancy. A business plan is underway for occupancy of a for profit use.

A mini-master plan will be developed for the mixed use area near Planet Fitness. Stantec will be scheduling meetings with all property owners over the next month.

6 Cambridge Dr. – this blighted property is owned by a landlord in Abu Dhabi and a blight citation is moving ahead. A lean will be placed on the property for costs incurred for cleaning, mowing and landscaping if necessary. The condition of this building detracts from other properties trying to rent space.

48 Monroe Turnpike - the former United Health Care property is under contract.

7120 Main St. (Read's Warehouse) – is under contract for commercial use.

The Trumbull Tradesman Center - (Trumbull Corporate Park-55 Merritt Blvd) the 110,000 sq. ft. building was purchased. The new owner's concept is to create a shared workspace for the trades where they can locate their offices and vehicles and incorporate accessory uses that support their business. A website is in place and a ribbon cutting will be planned soon.

Educational Playcare – will open December-January.

Ms. Bakalar informed we have seven approved projects, in various stages of construction – close to 70M worth of development. We also have over $225 million dollars of development projects coming through our land use board.

Event Update

Annual Business Appreciation Breakfast – is planned for Friday, October 26th from 8:00 a.m.-10:00 a.m. at the Trumbull Marriott. The room is reserved for 160 attendees and the invitation will go out in early September. David Dixon, from Stantec (Vice President-Urban Places Group) and author will be our keynote speaker. His focus is on the future of malls and suburban evolution. His book will be also available for purchase.

Bridgeport Regional Business Council - will be having a showcase on October 16th at the Webster Bank Arena in Bridgeport.

Why Trumbull Promotional Piece – Ms. Bakalar commended Peralta Design, Mike Iaccarino, Kathy Champion and Gail Andreyka for their contributions. Peralta Design, our consultant, will now be using the banner to create a more upscale newsletter format that will tie to our branding.

QR Report –Trumbull has 6 of our approved projects listed in their report that have gone through the Land Use projects. This report is distributed throughout the region and promotes economic development activity.

Fairfield County Business Journal – featured a front page article on the Trumbull mall and the request for a zone change.

Henkel - completed an expansion of their facility in Trumbull and won an award for their renovation (CT Building Congress Award for Renovations).

Trumbull Center – meeting tomorrow on the 965 White Plains Road project. The building was razed and we are on track for the new 21,000 sq. ft. commercial center featuring a CVS and Starbucks. The owners of Trumbull Center are responsible for the land preparation and the building will be constructed by CVS. A rending is featured in the QR.

Chairman Sather suggested we undertake a communications campaign to educate the public regarding mixed use and "The Tax Abatement Program". He proposed a fact sheet and advised we should also rename the program. Ms. Bakalar recommended "The Tax Incentive Program" since this is how such tools are commonly referred to in the business. Also, three different cities and CCM (CT Council of Municipalities) have requested information about our program in order to model aspects of it. She advised that we have only given out two tax abatements (Unilever and Canon site redevelopment) since at least 2000 and noted (1) you have to make a major investment in order to be considered and (2) we will never lower the existing taxes on a site. We are only discounting a percentage of the incremental tax growth if it is an underperforming property or if the property is very expensive to get redeveloped.

The First Selectman requested the Commission create an informational guide to cover the basics of mixed use and the tax abatement program for the public. Ms. Kaufman suggested we use a Q & A format. Ms. Bakalar will submit a draft.

Planning Update

We have completed the Long Hill Green plan and copies will be handed out at the next meeting. We will be implementing a $475,000 grant and have a fully executed contact with the State. The 319 grant, in the amount of $100,000, will cover costs to install a patio in front of Franco Gianni's and the Mici's Asian Bistro and to flip the parking lot across the street.

Community Connectivity Grant – (sidewalks, crosswalks) has been unfrozen at the state level and we should find out the end of October if we received funding.

We applied for funding through the DEEP Trail Program to create a trailhead at the commuter parking lot next to Christian Heritage and a sidewalk trail connector up to Twin Brooks. We were initially flagged for funding which was frozen and is now unfrozen. They will reconsider out grant for funding. We should hear on this by the late fall.

The First Selectman commended Ms. Bakalar for her responsiveness and diligent efforts regarding all the new development. Ms. Bakalar added she is very appreciative to members of the Commission who have represented ECDC at various functions.

Opportunity for Community Input

Paul Griffith - suggested we name the new tax abatement program “The Value Enhanced Property Program”. He also recommended naming the new section of Trumbull “Brevity”.

There being no further business or community input, Chairman Sather closed the meeting at 8:15 p.m. The next meeting will be held on September 4, 2018 in the Long Hill Room.

Respectfully submitted,

Gail Andreyka
Clerk

cc: Rob Librandi, Doug Wenz