

**Town of Trumbull**  
**Economic and Community Development Commission**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**September 1, 2020 – 7:00 p.m.**  
**Electronic Meeting-Zoom**

A regularly scheduled meeting of the Economic & Community Development Commission of the Town of Trumbull was held via videoconferencing on September 1, 2020.

**The Pledge of Allegiance**

**Attendance**

Members present: Ralph Sather - Chairman, Beryl Kaufman - Vice Chairman, Evelyn Zmary - Secretary, Jeanne Gibbs and Shelby Levino.

Members Absent: Eric Michel, Eve McGrath and Marshall Marcus

Also Present: Rina Bakalar - Director of Economic and Community Development  
Vicki Tesoro - First Selectman  
William Maurer - Town Engineer  
George Estrada - Director of Public Works  
William Chin - Director of Information Technology

Presenters: Gary Sorge (Stantec), Kent Gannon (Stantec), Alfred Mascia (Tighe and Bond), Craig Yannes (Tighe and Bond), Matt Fulda (MetroCog)

Chairman Sather called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm.

**Approval of Minutes:** A motion to approve the June 2, 2020 minutes was made by Commissioner Levino and seconded by Commissioner Zmary. The motion carried unanimously.

**Presentations: Route 111/Traffic Light/Trail** - Rina Bakalar opened the presentation by introducing consultants for the project. She noted that First Selectman Tesoro has asked her to set up a Town Hall Meeting on public infrastructure projects and private development projects in order to update the community. Ms. Bakalar is in the process of scheduling and organizing the event and will forward information to Commissioners when available.

Alfred (Fred) Mascia presented an overview of the project. He noted changes from the original presentation to the community which address some of the input received from residents. He noted the design of the light, the changes to the parking lot associated with the Fitness Edge plaza, changes to the Woodland Hills entrance, and improvements to Old Mine Road and the Spring Hill Road cross. William Maurer discussed easements

and the retaining wall required along the 48 Monroe Turnpike side of Route 111. Mr. Mascia discussed the timeline. The project will be out to bid over the winter and go to construction in spring 2021.

Commissioner Jeanne Gibbs asked about lighting along the trail area. George Estrada noted the trail closes at dusk and the area is generally lit already. Commissioner Shelby Levino asked about the right turn on red coming out of the Fitness Edge parking lot. Mr. Mascia and Mr. Craig Yannes will look into that further. They noted the state policy on concurrent traffic for crosswalks.

**Long Hill Green Update** - Ms. Bakalar introduced the presentation and consultants. She discussed the Long Hill Green plan that was developed with community input in 2018. She noted this plan and the Route 111/25 plan conducted with Monroe, Trumbull, DOT and MetroCog were not just plans on a shelf. Those plans are actively guiding improvements and helping to secure grants.

Mr. Gary Sorge of Stantec gave an overview of the Long Hill Green plan. He noted projects that have been completed to date. Those projects include the right hand turn lane at Whitney and Main and the patio/parking redesign in front of Franco Gianni's.

He discussed projects currently in design. The sidewalk and retaining wall will be installed from the current commercial center to DunEllen Road. The project is fully designed, it was bid and a contractor selected. The project will be underway in September 2020. A depiction of the project was shown. Commissioner Levino inquired about the height of the wall and if folks can sit on it. Mr. Sorge noted the height of the wall due would not invite that so much.

Mr. Sorge and Mr. Gannon provided an overview of the sidewalk design for the Main Street area and the light at Whitney and Main. Both projects are currently slated for 2021 pending final approvals from DOT and the negotiation of easements along Main Street.

Commissioners noted their support for the ongoing improvements to the area.

### **Director's Report**

Ms. Bakalar discussed delaying the Annual Business Breakfast until Spring 2021. She was holding the date of November 6, 2020 however, it does not appear that capacity limits will increase at this time. The Commissioners were in agreement to delay the event. Ms. Bakalar noted other programming will occur electronically, like the Town Hall meeting on development she mentioned earlier in the meeting. She also mentioned the July 29 Town Hall meeting on jobs that received a good amount of viewership and follow up.

Commissioner McGrath was unable to attend the meeting, but Ms. Bakalar explained her efforts working with intern Madeline Marsh to promote our restaurants and small

businesses. Instead of a traditional Restaurant Week which all were looking forward to, they are promoting "Trumbull Celebrates Local" using the Restaurant Week Facebook page and website as well as other outlets. They are sharing offers at various local establishments and encouraging residents and community and civic groups to promote buying local all year.

Ms. Bakalar updated the Commission on the status of private developments throughout town noting that all continue to be on track and none have lost financing. In other area towns, some developments have stalled or been cancelled due to the current conditions. So far, Trumbull has not had such fall out. Ms. Bakalar did note that the next 4-6 months will be extremely difficult for our restaurants, retail businesses, entertainment businesses and hotel. The fact that a phase 3 opening is delayed indefinitely, as it currently appears, will make the economics of continuing to operate very difficult for some businesses. She noted efforts to apply for HUD Covid-19 Small Cities funding for a rent relief program, however, the State is not allowing the funds to be used for economic development. HUD does allow this use but the State Department of Housing has decided not to allow economic development initiatives under the funding. Ms. Bakalar noted First Selectman Tesoro's efforts to request the state reconsider their policy. The Long Term Recovery Committee and the State Legislative Delegation are also trying to assist in getting this policy revisited.

Ms. Bakalar shared the good news of recent business openings that need support. Unique Beauty Salon in Trumbull Center opened in July. Springtide, a company that assists individuals and families affected by Autism, opened in August at 126 Monroe Turnpike. She noted the Amazon opening and advised that Image First Healthcare Laundry is due to open in September. She is assisting with staffing and transit needs. Ms. Bakalar is working on scheduling ribbon cutting type events as appropriate. She is also working with the new owners of the Long Hill Barber Shop and Gulf Gas Station on Main Street to schedule grand opening type events. She will forward details as they become available.

Ms. Bakalar noted there will be a public hearing for the proposed multi-family housing at the mall on September 3rd at 7 p.m. Zoom details can be found on the Town of Trumbull website. She encouraged, as did Chairman Sather, Commissioners to try and attend in order to stay informed.

Ms. Bakalar noted two grant submissions in August. One is for a Local Meals type program for COVID vulnerable residents that would utilize our eateries. The other was a STEAP grant to support the first phase of the Veteran and First Responder Center project.

Chairman Sather underscored the importance of supporting our businesses at this difficult time. He encourage Commissioners to stop into businesses and leave business cards to let them know we are here for them.

First Selectman Tesoro noted that despite the difficult time there is a great deal of positive development underway in Trumbull. She thanked the Commission and consultants for their efforts.

Sustainable Trumbull Update - Trumbull submitted its application for Bronze status in August. Mr. Levino was not clear on the process post submission. He noted that if awarded it will open Trumbull up to grants and technical assistance for future sustainability issues.

**Other Business** - Chairman Sather noted that the October meeting would be a zoom meeting.

Commissioner Kaufman made a motion to adjourn and Commissioner Levino seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously and the meeting was adjourned at 8:54 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rina Bakalar  
ECD Director

cc: Rob Librandi, Doug Wenz