



## Town of Wallingford

Economic Development Commission

45 South Main Street, Room 311  
Wallingford, CT 06492

May 26, 2020

TO: Members of the Economic Development Commission

FROM: Tim Ryan, Economic Development Specialist 

SUBJECT: Regular Meeting Agenda VIA GOTOMEETING.COM – Monday, June 1, 2020, 6:30 p.m.

**THIS REGULAR MEETING WILL BE HELD REMOTELY ONLY AND MAY BE ACCESSED THROUGH:**

<https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/622506221>

**You may also dial in using your phone.**

United States (Toll Free): 1 866 899 4679

United States: +1 (669) 224-3319

Access Code: 622-506-221

An audio recording of this meeting will be available on the Town of Wallingford YouTube Channel:

<https://www.youtube.com/c/wallingfordgovernmenttelevisionn>

**NOTE TO ATTENDEES: Please be aware that this meeting will be recorded.**

**Chair Joe Mirra or EDC Specialist Tim Ryan will instruct the attendees as to how the meeting will be conducted.**

1. Pledge of Allegiance
2. Discussion and possible action on Regular Meeting Minutes dated March 2, 2020 **(Attach.) (VOTE)**
3. Review of monthly Expenditure Report **(Attach.)**
4. Committee remarks
  - Marketing
    - Report on March 23 and May 11 meeting minutes **(Attach.)**
    - **Next meeting: June 22 @ 9:00 a.m.**
  - P&Z Liaison
    - Update on committee activities
    - **Next meeting:**
  - Retention/Incentives
    - Update on committee activities
    - **Next meeting:**
5. Chair's remarks
6. Staff report/regional matters – March, April and May **(Attach.)**
7. Other community business

c: William W. Dickinson, Jr., Mayor  
Town Clerk's Office (for posting)

ec: EDC Members	Liz Landow, WCI
Town Council (via T. Clerk)	J. Farrell, Jr.
Kacie Hand, Town Planner	Richard McHugh
Dee Prior Nesti, QCC	Jessica Wysocki
GovMedia	Website and Newspapers

*Individuals in need of auxiliary aids for effective communication in programs and services of the Town of Wallingford are invited to make their needs and preferences known to the ADA Compliance Coordinator at 203-294-2070 five days prior to meeting date.*

tel: (203) 294-2060 • fax: (203) 294-2073 • e-mail: [edc@wallingfordct.gov](mailto:edc@wallingfordct.gov) • web site: [www.PlugIn2Wallingford.com](http://www.PlugIn2Wallingford.com)  
EDCRMag060120

**Economic Development Commission  
Regular Meeting Minutes  
March 2, 2020**

**Present:**

Joe Mirra, Chair  
Hank Baum, Commissioner  
Patricia Cymbala, Commissioner  
Gary Fappiano, Commissioner  
Anthony Bracale, Alternate/Voting Member  
Rob Fritz, Alternate/Voting Member

**Absent:**

Jim Wolfe, Vice-Chair  
Mark Gingras, Commissioner  
Rosemarie Preneta, Commissioner

**Others Present:**

Tim Ryan, Economic Development Specialist  
Lynn Wolff, Secretary  
Robert DeMaio  
Ed Hohmann

Chair Joe Mirra called the regular meeting of the Economic Development Commission to order at 6:31 p.m.

1. **Pledge of Allegiance** – Chair Mirra led the EDC in the Pledge of Allegiance.
2. **Discussion and Possible Action on Regular Meeting Minutes dated February 3, 2020** – Hank Baum made a motion to approve the minutes as drafted; Patricia Cymbala seconded the motion. By a unanimous vote, the motion carried.
3. **Review of monthly Expenditure Report** – There were no questions/comments on the January report.
4. **Discussion and possible action on 2020-21 Budget** – Hank Baum made a motion to approved the 2020-21 budget as drafted; Patricia Cymbala seconded the motion. Tim Ryan noted that the amount requested for Operating & Maintenance is the same as the current year (\$35,950); also included for 2020-21 is a capital request for \$5,000 for billboard upgrades. By unanimous vote, the motion carried.



44 **5. Committee remarks**

45 • Marketing

- 46 ➤ Report on February 20 meeting – Patricia Cymbala reviewed the meeting minutes (**copy**  
47 **attached**). Tim Ryan said that a new message “Why Wallingford... Innovation happens here”  
48 will appear in upcoming ads which are scheduled to be launched in April and any articles will  
49 also include quotes from some of our local businesses such as Hobson Motzer, Allnex and  
50 Ulbrich. LinkedIn GeoFencing was discussed with the EDC and guests. It operates on a pay-  
51 for-click basis and can be targeted to specific users. Tim mentioned that \$3,000 of 2020-21  
52 Promotional Expenses is budgeted for advertising through LinkedIn. Once the initial allocation  
53 has been spent, the Committee will evaluate to determine whether or not to continue using  
54 GeoFencing.

- 55 ➤ Next meeting: March 23 at 8:30 a.m.

56 • P&Z Liaison

- 57 ➤ Update on committee activities – Joe Mirra briefed the EDC about two recent PZC events –a  
58 workshop on the Town Center Zone, IX and I-5 Zones and a public hearing regarding the  
59 walkability study for the TOD area in late February.

60 At the PZC workshop, there was discussion about allowing more office space in the Town  
61 Center. WCI and EDC staff were asked to look into how CT towns (similar to Wallingford) with  
62 vibrant Town Centers have thrived. Tim Ryan and Liz Landow have contacted CT Main Street  
63 for assistance and hope, by Spring, to understand how to create a good mix of retail and office  
64 space. Joe Mirra said changes to the IX and I-5 Zones was also discussed. The use of  
65 Special Permits was mentioned but Joe expressed concern about overuse of that type of  
66 permit. Tim reminded members that it is unlikely that these topics will be considered by the  
67 PZC until after the Town Planner returns from maternity leave.

68 At the Public Hearing for the TOD walkability study concerning the area from Center/Hall to  
69 Parker Street, the consultant put forth several options including adding bike lanes to Route 5  
70 and undergrounding the electric lines. The EDC discussed both of these suggestions. Since it  
71 is quite expensive to underground power lines, Staff suggested reducing the overall area to  
72 better control project cost. **Patricia Cymbala made a motion that the EDC support**  
73 **undergrounding power lines from the Center Street/Hall Avenue intersection to the new**  
74 **train platform, contingent upon getting State money for assistance with this project;**  
75 **Anthony Bracale seconded the motion. By unanimous vote, the motion carried.**  
76 Regarding the option of adding or not adding bike lanes on Route 5, **Gary Fappiano made a**  
77 **motion that the EDC support the consultant’s option that did not include adding bike**  
78 **lanes along Route 5; Anthony Bracale seconded the motion, adding that bike lanes**  
79 **should be considered on Cherry Street instead. By unanimous vote, the amended**  
80 **motion carried.**

• **Retention/Incentives –**

- Update on committee activities – Since the Committee will not meet until April 3, Gary Fappiano said there was no report.
- Next meeting: April 3 at 8:30 a.m.

6. **Chair's remarks** – Regarding HUBCAP activities, Joe Mirra said another class will soon be graduating from the latest manufacturing pipeline. Also, HUBCAP will be offering a pipeline (April-May) for healthcare, manufacturing and hospitality. Joe said a flyer on this latest pipeline will be sent out soon and asked the EDC to disseminate it to as many people as possible.

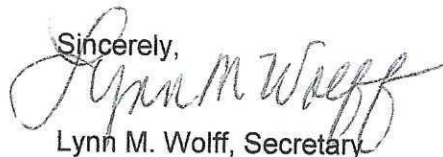
7. **Staff report/regional matters – February** – Tim Ryan highlighted a few items from the February staff report (*copy attached*). Discussions with Town staff and Proton Beam Therapy continue; no issues with PZC or IWWC are anticipated. EDC staff continues to discuss adaptive reuses for Wallingford vacant buildings. Tim mentioned an upcoming SIOR meeting on March 26 that will focus on adaptive reuses. He is unable to attend and asked if any Commissioners could go. Rob Fritz and Joe Mirra expressed interest in attending and will contact the office once they check their calendars.

The EDC also discussed the former Sears Hardware site; it has now been vacant for five years. Tim said the broker is actively searching for a tenant but has not been successful to date. Since ShopRite is in this plaza and has an exclusive on groceries, members discussed the other types of stores that might be interested in that space. Gary Fappiano said it would be nice to have a hardware store there again; Rob Fritz said that Hines Hardware in Cheshire is a great mom-and-pop run hardware store and wondered if they would be interested?

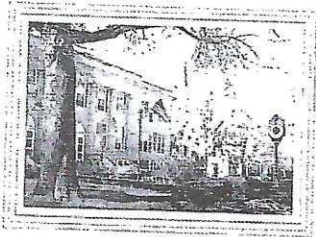
8. **Dates to Remember** – Members were asked to note those items on the agenda; Joe Mirra plans to attend the Budget Workshop on April 7.

9. **Other community business** – No report.

There being no further business, Gary Fappiano made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:29 p.m.; Anthony Bracale seconded the motion. By unanimous vote, the motion carried.

Sincerely,  
  
Lynn M. Wolff, Secretary





## Town of Wallingford

Economic Development Commission

45 South Main Street, Room 311  
Wallingford, CT 06492

### EDC MARKETING COMMITTEE Special Meeting Minutes Thursday, February 20, 2020

The Marketing Committee special meeting was called to order at 8:35 a.m. by Chair Gingras. Commissioners Cymbala, Chair Gingras, Commissioner Fritz and EDC staff member Ryan were in attendance.

1. Discussion and possible action on January 29, 2020 special meeting minutes - The January 29, 2020 special meeting minutes were approved as presented.
2. Discussion re: Spring promotional campaign - After detailed discussion, it was determined to engage in digital campaigns with the Hartford Business Journal, New Haven Biz and the Fairfield County Business Journal. Allocation amongst the three was left to the discretion of Staff.  
In addition, Staff was asked to speak with Wallingford Magazine about a story highlighting the 2019 EDC accomplishments. Staff was also asked to discuss with Wallingford Magazine about doing a regular feature column called "From the Desk of Joe" that would be used as a means of keeping the general public abreast of EDC happenings.  
Staff was asked to research the feasibility of an ad spend on LinkedIn using their GeoMapping technology.  
It was decided that innovation and location would be the two key message components to our ad campaigns. Staff will pursue getting quotes from several Wallingford key companies to include in these ads.
3. Discussion re: FY2020-21 Budget - Per the Mayor's request, the Marketing Committee has agreed to level-fund the promotional component of the EDC annual budget.
4. Next Meeting - March 23 at 8:30 a.m.

The meeting adjourned, by unanimous vote, at 9:30 a.m.

c: Town Clerk  
EDC Staff  
Website

MktgCommSMMin022020



## **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION**

### **Staff Report**

February 2019 Activities  
Presented at March EDC meeting

#### **Local Initiatives**

- The Engineering Department held a public workshop to share several scenarios being considered as the core of the Wallingford Pedestrian Connectivity Improvements Study. BSC Group, the contracted engineering firm, presented the scenarios. Engineering, Planning, Grants Administration and Economic Development are partnering on this endeavor to explore options to create a physical connection between the new railroad platform on North Colony Road and our Town Center.
- The Quinnipiac Chamber of Commerce, once again, did a great job in organizing the Mayor's State of the Town event held at Masonicare on 1/30. Radiall, Center Street Brewery, ASG Technologies and Micro Print Shop were invited guests of the EDC and recognized by the Mayor for their commitment to our community.
- Staff along with members of the Town Planners office met with the development team for the to-be-built Proton Beam Therapy Center on Northrop Rd. This preliminary meeting was held to introduce the client to the facets of the local approval process. This \$72MM project remains a significant opportunity for our Town and the region as this cutting edge cancer treatment is not presently available in CT

#### **Creating Opportunities**

- Staff was invited to address an Executive Orientation Class organized by the Greater New Haven Chamber of Commerce. Economic development values and processes were discussed as this group of entrepreneurs and business executives prepare paths for business growth
- Visited with a company looking to expand parking to accommodate growth. Subsequent meeting was held with the Town Planner to explore solutions
- Staff toured 135 North Plains Industrial Road and 3 Sterling Dr with the broker to brainstorm about highest and best use for these vacant sites.

#### **Marketing**

- Our spring promotional campaign will be launching soon and will run through early June. In addition to electronic advertising in the Hartford Business Journal's "News @ Noon" and New Haven Biz's electronic channels, we will be reaching into Fairfield and Westchester Counties via print and electronic messaging with the Fairfield Country Business Journal and Westchester County Business Journal. We are engaged in determining whether advertising with LinkedIn using their geo fencing tactic is a worthwhile investment
- Our spring ad campaign messaging will revolve around the tag line; *Why Wallingford...because innovation happens here!* We will highlight several companies located here to drive a "credible source" message. Secondary messages include low cost/reliable power and workforce access
- Technology resources from our Board of Education will design our Wallingford Trivia Game. June 24, 2020 has been designated as "Business Day" by the 350<sup>th</sup> Celebration Committee. The Marketing Committee is creating a Made in Wallingford Trivia Game aimed at informing all residents about the many notable products made in our Town.

#### **Trade Shows**

- None scheduled

**Website Page Views** – February Unique Page Views – 220 (1/30-2/26)

#### **Update on Town Center**

- As an update to the discussion held last month regarding the leasing challenges in the Town Center, Executive Director of WCI and staff met with CT Main Street Center in Hartford; it was suggested that vacant store windows be painted with a common logo (gazebo?) and catchy phrase (same on all vacant windows) and then add personalized contact information for a given space. SPLAT Art Studio has agreed to do the painting and the owner of the Sprafke's building would like to be the first to have their window painted. Ideas for the "catchy phrase" are being vetted.
- Changes to the Town Center include: Hit or Miss Pawn Shop relocated in January to 130 South Colony Road and in February, Cindy's Unique Shop expanded and moved to 65 North Colony Road; Allstate Insurance opened a new business at 186 Center Street; and Anna V. Salon expanded its business and moved to 42 Center Street.



### Miscellaneous

- Staff appeared on the Citizen Mike Show on 2/19. The show can be found on YouTube
- The Boston-based broker for the old Sears Hardware site (Shop Rite plaza) has had no success in attracting a tenant. The store has been vacant for almost 5 years and is now the longest vacancy he's experienced in his 30 years in commercial real estate

### In the News

- *Bank building sold downtown...*RJ, 2/1...New owner seeking a variance to open a holistic health center at 100 Center Street
- *Revaluation underway, Wallingford grand list grows...*RJ, 2/8...The town's 2019 taxable grand list increased by 1.01 percent; and the town is currently performing the decennial revaluation of every parcel of real estate in town.
- *Dealership to use Route 5 property for vehicle storage...*RJ, 2/12...The PZC granted a special permit to Executive Auto Group owner John Orsini which will allow storage of up to 120 vehicles at 1254 South Broad Street, a former Servpro location.
- *Sweet Cioccolata shop expanding...*RJ, 2/17...Sweet Cioccolata plans to double its size and add more items to the shelves in time for Easter by moving a few doors away into the space formerly home to Cindy's Unique Shop (which moved across the street in January)

### New & Expanding Businesses (December 2019 and January 2020)

#### December New

- Bangarang...71 North Turnpike Road, D
- Ocean Nails Spa...970 North Colony Road, B1
- Radiall USA...777 Northrop Road
- The Soccer Box of CT...950 Yale Avenue, #11
- Wallingford Discount Wine & Spirits...71 North Turnpike Road, 1

#### December Expanded

- Abrasive Finishing Industries...395 Washington Street
- CED-Greentech...34 Barnes Industrial Road South
- Ferraro Fitness & Nutrition...340 Quinnipiac Street, 24
- Pauway Corporation...63 North Cherry Street
- Ross Mobile Productions...228 North Plains Industrial Road

#### January New

- Facility Support Services...121 North Plains Industrial Rd, F
- One Stop Mart...68 North Turnpike Road, A
- One Stop Wings...68 North Turnpike Road, B

#### January Relocated

- Hit or Miss Pawn & Exchange...130 South Colony Road

### Results of EDC Marketing Activities

Advertising	1
Brokers/Site Consultants	4
Direct Contact	4
State/CERC/Chamber/REX	0
Trade Shows	0
Business Assistance	0
Total	9

Respectfully,

Tim Ryan

OK 5/12/20

#3



# Town of Wallingford, Connecticut

05/07/2020 16:46  
kcharest

Town of Wallingford  
EXPENDITURES THROUGH 04/30/20

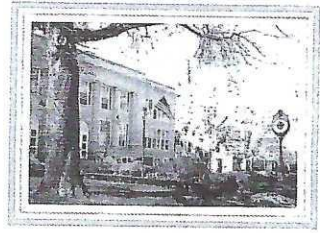
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FOR 2020 10

	ORIGINAL APPROP	REVISED BUDGET	YTD EXPENDED	MTD EXPENDED	ENCUMBRANCES	AVAILABLE BUDGET	PCT USED
10011050 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSIO							
51000 REGULAR SALARIES & WAGES	62,930	65,932	50,039.71	6,304.15	.00	15,892.29	75.9%
55110 TRANSPORTATION REIMBURSEMENT	2,000	2,000	808.24	225.63	.00	1,191.76	40.4%
55405 PROMOTIONAL EXPENSES	28,150	28,150	9,350.00	.00	300.00	18,500.00	34.3%
56100 OFFICE EXPENSES & SUPPLIES	2,400	2,400	295.41	.00	311.94	1,792.65	25.3%
58810 DUES AND FEES	3,400	3,400	1,133.60	307.60	.00	2,266.40	33.3%
TOTAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISS	98,880	101,882	61,626.96	6,837.38	611.94	39,643.10	61.1%
GRAND TOTAL	98,880	101,882	61,626.96	6,837.38	611.94	39,643.10	61.1%

\*\* END OF REPORT - Generated by Kathleen Charest \*\*





# Town of Wallingford

Economic Development Commission

45 South Main Street, Room 311  
Wallingford, CT 06492

## EDC MARKETING COMMITTEE Special Meeting Minutes Teleconference Monday, May 11, 2020

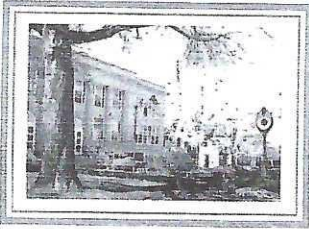
The Marketing Committee special meeting, conducted via the web-based platform GoToMeeting, was called to order via teleconference at 9:05 a.m. by Chair Gingras. Chair Gingras, Commissioners Cymbala and Fritz, EDC staff member Ryan, EDC Chair Joe Mirra, Steve Knight and Secretary Lynn Wolff were in attendance.

1. Discussion and possible action on March 23, 2020 special meeting minutes - The March 23, 2020 special meeting minutes were approved as presented.
2. Update on cancelled spring promotional campaign - Staff shared that all contractual agreements for the original spring promotional campaign have been cancelled. All firms were gracious regarding the cancellations and there were no financial consequences for doing so.
3. Update on 2019-20 Budget - Due to the cancellation of the spring promotional campaign, the EDC promotional budget will end the fiscal year with a balance of approximately \$13,000.
4. Discussion and possible action re: *Wallingford Magazine* article - We will be running the inaugural column "From the Desk of Joe" in the June issue of *Wallingford Magazine*. In addition, there will be a story chronicling the many changes in the Economic Development Office since the onset of COVID-19.
5. Discussion and possible action re: gazebo design for logo and letterhead - Discussion took place regarding the gazebo design for use as the EDC logo; the Committee requested that this be discussed further at the June EDC meeting.
6. Discussion and possible action re: promotional items - The Committee agreed, due to the budget surplus, that staff can look into procuring some promotional items for future distribution at events and trade shows.
7. Next Meeting - June 22 at 9:00 a.m.

The meeting adjourned, by unanimous vote, at 10:05 a.m.

c: Town Clerk  
EDC Staff  
Website

#4 - Mktg.



# Town of Wallingford

Economic Development Commission

## EDC MARKETING COMMITTEE

### Special Meeting Minutes

Monday, March 23, 2020

The Marketing Committee special meeting was called to order at 8:35 a.m. by Chair Gingras. Chair Gingras, Commissioner Fritz and EDC staff member Ryan were in attendance. Commissioner Cymbala was absent.

1. Discussion and possible action on February 20, 2020 special meeting minutes - The February 20, 2020 special meeting minutes were approved as presented.
2. Update re: Spring promotional campaign - Staff shared the advertorial that ran in both the *Fairfield County Business Journal* and *Westchester County Business Journal* as part of those publications' economic development section.  
 We then reviewed our spring promotional campaign schedule and, given the ongoing market disruption due to COVID-19, Staff was asked to move the promotional calendar activities out of the month of April and concentrate all messaging in the months of May and June.  
 We discussed an advertorial message scheduled to run in the next edition of *Wallingford Magazine* along with the contents for a column called, "From the Desk of Joe".  
 Staff shared that an RFP has gone out to get pricing for our social media pilot campaign.
3. Discussion re: I-91 North sign and location - Staff shared that he received notification from CT DOT claiming that our billboard on I-91 North was on State property. We have reason to believe, due to information in our file from August 2012, that said sign is on private property. Staff shared that finding with CDOT representative and has not heard back.
4. Next Meeting - April 27 at 8:30 a.m.

The meeting adjourned, by unanimous vote, at 9:40 a.m.

c: Town Clerk  
 EDC Staff  
 Website

MktgCommSMMin032320



## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION Staff Report

March 2020 Activities

Presented at April EDC meeting

**\*\*April meeting cancelled due to Covid19\*\***

### Covid19

- The unprecedented crisis brought to us by the coronavirus has our office constantly pivoting. It's almost hard to remember several weeks ago when the threat of the virus was just that...a threat. As the threat became a reality, we were working closely with our manufacturers (especially our chemical manufacturers) to lobby for their respective businesses to be exempt from what was eventually a "business shut-down" by our Governor. Economic developers from around the region worked collaboratively on that effort and continue to meet electronically several times a week to address a myriad of business needs. The pendulum has now swung to business sustainability. The Connecticut Recovery Bridge Loan Program was established on 3/26 to help businesses with 100 or fewer employees via a \$25MM state loan fund. The program received over 4,000 applications within the first 24 hours. The State immediately closed off the applications while increasing funding to a total of \$50MM. They are wading through the applications as we await further communication.

President Trump signed the CARES Act into legislation on 3/27 infusing over \$2 Trillion into the economy in part to aid struggling businesses. This represents a lifeline for many of our local businesses. The application process will be managed by SBA partner banks and begins on 4/3. This promises to be a "storm the doors" scenario as banks prepare for the deluge while their lobbies are closed. The degree of assistance our businesses need in determining whether the CARES Act funding is appropriate for their situation is driven largely by their size and sophistication. The Chambers of Commerce have done a great job in bringing clarity to all of these programs. Zoom meetings and webinars have been the primary method of communications and have averaged 2 to 3 per day. We've worked closely with WCI on communications to our Town Center businesses.

Next week will likely bring a different set of circumstances and we're ready to engage. We're contemplating "day after" scenarios in hopes that business life will begin returning to some level of normalcy within the next 4 to 6 weeks. We don't have the ability to quantify the number of business casualties but it would be wise to be concerned.

In summary, we've been triaging daily putting forth our best efforts to provide information and guidance to our business community. The strength of our regional and statewide economic development relationships have provided unprecedented opportunities for information gathering and clarity on the various programs now available. Like many, were not certain what the next few weeks will bring but stand ready to be of assistance in any way we can.

### Local Initiatives

- P&Z's public hearing regarding Amazon's request to open a "last mile" distribution facility at 425 South Cherry St was continued to their April meeting. Although the application appeared to have widespread support from the PZC, some additional clarity was needed regarding traffic movement. As of this writing, the April PZC meeting has been cancelled because of Covid19 public gathering concerns. The application will be heard at the May PZC meeting
- Communications with Calare Properties regarding market activities at 5 Research Parkway continue. There are active discussions taking place regarding the future use of the site

### Creating Opportunities

- Staff, along with several members of the EDC, attended the public hearing organized by the Engineering Department to introduce the Pedestrian Connectivity Study. Subsequently, the EDC voted unanimously to support undergrounding the utilities to allow for clearing of the sidewalks to maximize pedestrian walkability along with the scenario that least impacted vehicular traffic along Route 5
- Staff and the Town Planner met with a regional client to discuss the possibility of building a new 30k SF facility in our IX Zone
- DECD Commissioner, staff and members of the leadership team from Movia Robotics met at EC Stevens Elementary School to view a demonstration of how their new robotic technologies assist with challenged learners. Movia is hoping to expand their presence in CT and hopefully open a facility in Wallingford



- The Mayor met with staff, Public Utilities Director and leadership from the Water/Sewer Division to discuss expanding uses in the I-5 Zone. Sensitivity to protecting our watershed is a common goal while additional use categories are considered

#### Marketing

- Our spring promotional campaign scheduled to begin in April has been delayed to May due to market disruption caused by Covid19.
- Our spring ad campaign messaging will revolve around the tag line; *Why Wallingford...because innovation happens here!* We will highlight several companies located here to drive a "credible source" message. Secondary messages include low cost/reliable power and workforce access

#### Trade Shows

- None scheduled

#### Website Page Views – March Unique Page Views – 283 (2/27-3/31)

#### Update on Town Center

- Staff was invited to address the WCI Board of Directors to discuss EDC's role in working with WCI Executive Director on our Town Center profiling project. At the request of the Mayor, we will be working together to match and mirror Town Centers throughout CT and identify their business mix in hopes of assisting our Town Planner and landlords in fostering a vibrant Town Center

#### Miscellaneous

- The Amazon project on South Cherry St is the only project experiencing delays to date due to land use commissions cancelling meetings. We have three other active projects that remain on schedule...none of which are in need of land use approvals at this juncture

#### In the News

- *Amazon delivery service slated for S. Cherry Street warehouse...RJ, 3/5...Amazon wants to open a "last mile" delivery operation at 425 South Cherry St resulting in 125 jobs and 130 delivery vans leaving the site daily*
- *Director of Quinnipiac Chamber plans to retire...RJ, 3/10...Dee Nesti will retire at the end of June*
- *After 35 years, Praline's Ice Cream still considers Wallingford home...RJ, 3/11...Praline's serves 22 locations in CT and RI from there facility at 30 North Plains Industrial Rd*
- *Amazon facility decision delayed...RJ, 3/16...PZC continued the public hearing until April meeting due to needed clarity on the traffic study*
- *Decisions on land use face delays as meetings are cancelled...RJ, 3/19...regional story about land use project delays because of Covid19 related meeting cancellations*

#### New & Expanding Businesses

Calling suspended due to COVID-19 impact.

#### Results of EDC Marketing Activities

Advertising	0
Brokers/Site Consultants	3
Direct Contact	4
State/CERC/Chamber/REX	1
Trade Shows	0
Business Assistance	0
Total	8

Respectfully,

Tim Ryan



## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION Staff Report

April 2020 Activities

Presented at May EDC meeting

**\*\*May meeting cancelled due to COVID-19\*\***

### Covid19

- As described in last month's report, pivoting has become the new norm. As April came to a close, the number of inquiries regarding state and federal economic stimulus programs began to dwindle as eligibility parameters became clearer to applicants. Frustrations continue to run high for small- to medium-sized companies as the mechanism for applying for aid was deluged resulting in technical problems and lengthy delays. Money is beginning to flow as the SBA has made strides in separating those businesses in need from opportunists that were draining the fund earlier than anticipated. A second round of federal funding is in place and finding its way to struggling businesses.
- CT's Recovery Bridge Loan program dollars have begun to flow to businesses. The program was originally funded at \$25 million. Applications quickly out-paced funding so the funding was increased to \$50 million. The original cap of \$75,000 per business will not be fulfilled as total need exceeded the \$50 million mark. The State has taken the position that it wants to help as many businesses as possible with the \$50 million allotted thus has adjusted downward the amounts to be distributed to each qualifying applicant
- Although many businesses are closed per the Governor's executive order, there are equally as many trying to remain productive. New workforce safety protocols have become the norm. Some companies are challenged to get workers to return because the federal unemployment stipend of \$600 per week, when added to what the unemployed worker receives from CT unemployment insurance, grosses to more than they were making while working. The federal stipend broadens availability to the self-employed and independent contractors and is available to part-time workers as well. Although the federal stipend ends in late July, the amount of additional money has proven to be an impediment to getting employees to return to work in some cases
- Recent data shared by the CT Department of Labor shows that there's been 3,019 unemployment claims filed in Wallingford from 3/1/20-4/12/20. Further extrapolation of the numbers points to Wallingford's present unemployment rate at approximately 16%, comparable to surrounding towns

### Local Initiatives

- P&Z's April meeting was cancelled due to COVID-19 public gathering restrictions. A public hearing regarding Amazon's request to open a "last mile" distribution facility at 425 South Cherry St was scheduled to be discussed. Staff has been in discussions with the interim Town Planner, Amazon representatives and the Chairman of the P&Z to make certain all inquiries brought forth at the March P&Z meeting had been addressed. The P&Z public hearing is now scheduled for May 11 where we're hoping for project approval. The meeting will be held electronically and conform with established Town meeting protocols
- A Commercial/Industrial Broker Outreach Plan was executed during the last week of April. Brokers from OR&L, Cushman Wakefield, and CBRE were engaged to "crystal ball" potential changes in the commercial property arena. Concerns run very heavy regarding companies' ability to pay landlords resulting in landlords' inability to pay on debt obligations. Landlords and tenants are actively negotiating payment structures that are satisfactory to both parties driven largely on a landlord's capital position. Brokerage experts anticipate an increased level of "fall-out" resulting in increased vacancy rates
- On April 14 our Town Council voted to adopt a tax and utility payment deferment program. Tax, water/sewer and electric payments that become due between April 1 and July 1 will have a three-month grace period in which to pay without any penalty or interest. The EDC extends thanks to our Town Council for recognizing present market distress levels and taking action to extend temporary relief to our business (and residential) communities
- Staff spoke with Proton Beam International and the principal of the approved Miles Drive hotel project regarding status updates. Although these projects may be slightly delayed they remain active



projects. There are two other sizable projects that remain active as well but names cannot be disclosed due to confidentiality agreements. No projects have been formally cancelled as of this writing due to COVID19 related issues

### **Creating Opportunities**

- WCI in conjunction with EDC started the "Eat Local and Win in Wallingford" promotion to drive business to our restaurants that remain open for take-out orders. An idea we "borrowed" from the Town of Berlin encourages people to send their meal receipts to WCI to be entered into a drawing for \$25 gift cards to each of the 61 participating restaurants. There have been over 500 receipts received thus far

### **Marketing**

- Our spring promotional campaigns have been cancelled due to COVID-19 market disruptions. Consideration will be given to engaging the marketplace in early fall
- An article is being prepared to run in Wallingford Magazine's next issue. The street date is uncertain as deadlines have been pushed back several times

### **Trade Shows**

- None scheduled

**Website Page Views** – April Unique Page Views – 284 (4/1-4/30)

### **Update on Town Center**

- The PUC has agreed, with recommendation from the Water/Sewer Division, to extend the Town Center Zone Economic Development Program which could benefit a Town Center business that needs to increase the size or number of water meters. The first and only beneficiary to date has been the Center St Brewing Company. The EDC extends thanks to our Public Utility partners for this program extension.
- The Executive Director of WCI and staff are working with a volunteer intern to inventory every square foot of commercial and residential space in our Town Center. Each individual site will have accompanying photos of the outside of the building and include the type of business occupying the space. This is part of the WCI/EDC mutual project to better understand occupancy profiles in vibrant Town Centers throughout CT. The initiative to visit other town centers statewide has been temporarily sidelined due to COVID-19

### **Miscellaneous**

- The average of three daily Zoom meetings has waned as the month came to a close. Businesses and supporting agencies have become better informed regarding the nuances of available economic stimulus programs and are now beginning to receive assistance dollars

### **In the News**

- *Wallingford farm partners with online platform to boost sales...* NH Biz, 4/6... Farmer Joe's Gardens is partnering this season with Harvie, an online farm share platform, that will allow CSA members to pick the produce they want to receive, rather than get a standard box of food
- *Wallingford woodworking company makes face shields during crisis...* NH Biz, 4/15... In an effort to keep employees working, Sorrento Fine Woodwork LLC is temporarily working with plastic instead of wood to make protective face shields
- *Wallingford among municipalities eager for stimulus funding...* HBJ, 4/20... Wallingford plans to participate in the aid program CARES Act, as soon as they receive guidance on how the State will distribute the money
- *"Eat Local" contest supports area restaurants...* RJ, 4/21... WCI and the EDC encourage residents to order \$15 or more from one of the almost 50 participating local restaurants. Once a picture of the receipt is sent to WCI, the patron will be qualified to win a \$25 gift card from one of these participating restaurants. This contest will run until May 8.
- *Eat to the beat in Wallingford...* NH Biz, 4/21... The "Eat Local & Win in Wallingford" promotion (April 10 through May 8) challenges local companies to show support for their essential employees by ordering breakfast or lunch from a participating local restaurant and sending WCI a receipt totaling \$15 or more. The company will be entered into a raffle for a \$25 gift certificate from one of these participating restaurants.
- *Amphenol's 1Q profits down 9.4% as company withdraws forecast amid COVID-19 uncertainty...* HBJ, 4/22... The pandemic significantly impacted Amphenol's global operations. A 3-week shut-down of



operations in China where, according to the company's website, they have 52 locations. China constituted about 28% of Amphenol's net sales last year.

**New & Expanding Businesses**

- Calling suspended due to COVID-19

**Results of EDC Marketing Activities**

Advertising	0
Brokers/Site Consultants	1
Direct Contact	3
State/CERC/Chamber/REX	0
Trade Shows	0
Business Assistance	0
Total	4

Respectfully,

Tim Ryan

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

### Staff Report

May 2020 Activities  
Presented at June EDC meeting

#### Covid19

- Effective 5/20 the Governor's Executive Order 7PP repeals several previously enacted EO's to allow for safe re-opening of restaurants for outdoor dining while offices and retail establishments were allowed partial openings as well
- The Mayor convened a meeting of department heads (Health, Building, Fire, Police, Law, Economic Development, Engineering, Planning & Zoning and Public Works) to set the "tone at the top" for handling requests for partial business resumption from restaurants and retailers and to uphold compliance with Executive Order 7PP. The energy in the room was contagious! The focus was on assisting businesses via a streamlined...one call... process. Kudos to Building Official, Justin Rossetti, for agreeing to have his department act as the clearing house for ALL requests. He was the conduit to all other town officials as they collectively went on-site to expedite every business request for re-opening. For example; Executive Order 7PP allowed 10 days to approve or deny any business re-opening request. Our Town officials approved most every request with 24 hours!
- Workforce hurdles remain as some laid-off workers receiving CT unemployment compensation plus the \$600 per week stipend from the federal government. Workers have found it more lucrative to remain home. Adding to this dilemma is the limited amount of business restaurants can conduct due to constrained outdoor spaces and social distancing requirements. The federal stipend runs through 7/25. Although employers can file a complaint with DOL if employees refuse to return to work, they are not likely to do so as the result will be disgruntled workers in the workplace. This is the proverbial Catch 22.
- According to CT Department of Labor reports, Wallingford's unemployment rate is close to 12%...down from an estimated 16% in mid-April

#### Local Initiatives

- Amazon's "last mile" distribution facility was approved by the PZC at their May meeting. Amazon will occupy the vacant warehouse at 425 South Cherry St (across from BYK's North American Headquarters). The approval also included a lease for the parking lot owned by Allnex at 528 South Cherry St

#### Creating Opportunities

- We've been working with many small businesses to assist in their re-opening efforts. I'm happy to report that all that we've worked with have been able to enact some form of business resumption

#### Marketing

- "From the Desk of Joe", a column that will run in Wallingford Magazine, makes its debut in the June edition. In this regular feature Joe will speak to residents about the activities of the EDC. There will also be a story and an accompanying advertisement in the June edition.

#### Trade Shows

- None scheduled

#### Website Page Views – May Unique Page Views – 222 (5/1-5/25)

#### Update on Town Center

- WCI Executive Director reports that the "Eat Local and Win" restaurant promotion will be extended to 5/29. There are 75 participating restaurants and there have been over 500 entries. Entrants must email their receipt valued at \$15 or more to WCI to be entered into a drawing for \$25 gift cards. WCI, EDC, and generous donors will purchase a \$25 gift card from every participating restaurant.

#### Miscellaneous

- Communication with area economic developers continues to provide clarity and action-oriented outcomes as we all strive to help our businesses survive.



**In the News**

- Amazon warehouse plan OK'd...RJ, 5/13...warehouse located on the corner of South Cherry St and Ball Rd

**New & Expanding Businesses**

- Calling suspended due to COVID-19

**Results of EDC Marketing Activities**

Advertising	0
Brokers/Site Consultants	1
Direct Contact	3
State/CERC/Chamber/REX	0
Trade Shows	0
Business Assistance	<u>0</u>
Total	4

Respectfully,

  
Tim Ryan