

TOWN OF MONTVILLE
Economic Development Commission
Regular Meeting Minutes – November 15, 2021 – 7:00 p.m.

All persons in attendance must wear a face mask if not fully vaccinated and remain within six feet from others.

Comments will only be accepted at times designated for public comment by the Chair of the meeting. The Montville Town Council Rules of Procedure, decorum, timeliness, and suitability shall be followed and enforced.

1) Call to Order

Vice-Chair Hewitt called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

2) Pledge of Allegiance

All stood and pledged the flag.

3) Roll Call

Present were Commissioners Sierra Davis, Meracus Hernandez, Walter Hewitt, Sheelagh Lapinski, and Christopher Napierski. Absent were Commissioners Tom McCarthy and Mickey Gillette. A quorum was present.

4) Alterations to the Agenda

Motion by Commissioner Napierski; seconded by Commissioner Lapinski to add Agenda Item 5a, Discussion of Plan of Conversation. Discussion: none. Voice vote: 5-0, all in favor. Motion carried.

Motion by Motion by Commissioner Davis; seconded by Commissioner Lapinski to add Agenda Item 5b, Election of Officers. Discussion: none. Voice vote: 5-0, all in favor. Motion carried.

Motion by Commissioner Hernandez; seconded by Commissioner Davis to add Agenda Item 5c, To consider and act on a motion to approve the 2022 EDC Meeting Schedule. Discussion: none. Voice vote: 5-0, all in favor. Motion carried.

Town Planner Burdick noted the minutes for Agenda, Item 6 should be for August 16, 2021, when the Commission last met.

5) Remarks from the Public regarding items on the Agenda (3-minute limit)

Vice-Chair Hewitt asked three (3) times for remarks. There were none.

5a) Discussion of Plan of Conversation.

Town Planner Burdick gave credit to former Town Planner Vlaun for her craftsmanship of the Plan specifically the economy and its findings as of 2021 having last been updated in 2010. The Plan gives an economic picture of the Town starting with Covid-19 and ends by speaking to goals. Three (3) items were in the 2010 Plan and another one (1) was added reflecting on

the economic resilience of the Town since September 2020. Regional issues such as EB expansion, gaps such as the lack of transportation, the suffering of local businesses, and the lost of hospitality and entertainment are the economic focus of Montville found on pages 79-82 of the Plan. The end of the Plan outlines implementation and economic development and the role of the EDC—updating the EDC brochure/profile, identify properties for Town purchase, and the addition of a local retailers program. Town Planner Burdick read through the Plan and stated highlighted items in yellow differ from 2010. She clarified a question by Commissioner Davis that the Commission was to work on the aforementioned items and stated she would attend Commission meetings at the request of Mayor McDaniel. Vice-Chair Hewitt inquired as to when the Plan would be adopted and the odds for getting changes. Per Town Planner Burdick explained application was made in September to the Council of Government (“COG”) and is not typically sent to hearing scheduled for December 14 at Planning & Zoning. She encouraged the Commission to read the Plan and prepare a report to the Town with comments and changes. She will have Assistant Badalucca send a copy of the Plan to the Commission and identified it as the most important document for the Town that guides it over the next ten (10) years in areas of funding, acquisitions, and grants.

Motion by Commissioner Hernandez; seconded by Commissioner Napierski to table discussion of the Plan of Conversation until the next Commission meeting. Discussion: none. Voice vote: 5-0, all in favor. Motion carried.

5b) Election of Officers.

Vice-Chair Hewitt reported he contact Commissioners Gillette and McCarthy by text who agreed to serve as an officer.

Motion by Commissioner Lapinski; seconded by Commissioner Davis to nominate Commissioner Gillette and Commissioner Hewitt as chair and vice-chair, respectively. No vote taken.

Motion to nominate Commissioner Davis and Commissioner Lapinski as chair and vice-chair respectively. Motion was modified, no vote taken.

Motion to nominate Commissioner Davis and Commissioner Lapinski as chair and vice-chair, respectively modified to nominate Commissioner Davis and Commissioner Napierski as Co-Chairs. Discussion: Possible officers prior to vote. Roll Call vote: *In favor*: Commissioners Davis, Hernandez, Hewitt, Lapinski, and Napierski. *Opposed*: None. 5-0, Motion carried.

5c) 2022 EDC Meeting Schedule.

Commissioner Davis proposed moving the meeting time to 6:00 PM instead of 7:00 PM. The Commission agreed to continue to meet on the third Monday of the month. Meetings in January and February will be held on the third Wednesday due to scheduled holidays on those Mondays. Town Planner Burdick agreed to have Assistant M. Badalucca check the schedule.

Motion by Commissioner Hernandez; seconded by Commissioner Davis to approve and follow the normal protocol for 2022 meetings on the third Monday of the month with the exception of January and February when meetings will be held on the third Wednesday at 6:00 PM. Discussion: Regarding a motion to update the EDC rules and procedures to reflect the changed meeting time. Voice vote: 5-0, all in favor. Motion carried.

Motion by Commissioner Hernandez; seconded by Commissioner Davis to update the EDC Rules and Procedures to reflect the meeting time change to 6:00 PM. Discussion: none. Voice vote: 5-0, all in favor. Motion carried.

6) To Consider and Act on a Motion to approve:

i) The Minutes of the Regular Meeting of August 16, 2021.

Motion by Commissioner Davis; seconded by Commissioner Lapinski to approve Regular Meeting Minutes of August 16, 2021. Discussion: none. Voice vote: 5-0, all in favor. Motion carried.

7) Unfinished Business

a) New Business Report

Vice-Chair Hewitt commented on the new business activity from September to present stating all are home businesses. They include a jewelry maker, K-9 cookies and cake business, sewing, and massage therapy. Town Planner Burdick reported a 10,000 – 20,000 sq. ft. pending, commercial retail space between McDonald's and CVS. The project will come before Planning & Zoning in January and the developer will be required to build sidewalks. Received today was an application for Village Apartments on Jerome Road for 80-plus connected apartments with access to Route 32. A report from the Town Planner will be added to the Agenda.

b) Quantella Zoom Meeting

Commissioner Napierski reported Mayor McDaniel noticed the Commission on Quantella and was present along with others for the Zoom meeting. Quantella is a tech company that assists towns/cities with improving its economy with automated lights, digital signage for advertisements, and waste management. No up-front funds are required and is based instead on funds saved used to pay off over the next ten (10) years according to a plan. If the town/city plan does not save funds, Quantella will absorb the cost. A form for further discussion and information was provided. The company website information was given to Mayor McDaniel. Commissioner Davis spoke of pandemic funds for signs, like the one in New London, that would be Town property. Town Planner Burdick referenced available funds for distressed properties in municipalities, \$800 million, information that she will bring to the Commission. Vice-Chair Hewitt asked if there is a wish list stating Route 32 must coordinated with the State as it's a State road. Town Planner Burdick discussed drainage issues concerning the sidewalk to the Stop & Shop gas station and reported the Town has partnered with Norwich concerning local transportation with the DOT and sidewalks down to the casino. Commissioner Davis identified a pothole on Route 32; Town Planner Burdick referenced a tree sightline issue; and Commissioner Lapinski asked what happened with the Passport to Norwich stating she gave the information for it to Vice-Chair Gillette.

8) New Business

Town Planner Burdick commented on the Ledyard Covid-related dine-eat promotion that includes a raffle to support its restaurants. Commissioner Lapinski added the promotion supports small businesses as well as restaurants. Vice-Chair Hewitt mentioned the Passport to Norwich a similar business promotion effort. Commissioner Davis reported her business is moving from the Grist Mill Plaza to 912 Route 32.

9) Report from Town Council Liaison

Town Councilor Yuchniuk introduced himself as being newly elected and spoke to the importance of the Commission and the key toward getting the Town to look like Route 12 in Ledyard. Tax incentives for new businesses and an upcoming economic development summit by the State of Connecticut requiring registration to attend were mentioned in addition to his intent to take an active approach in the Commission. Town Councilor Yuchniuk responded to Commissioner Davis about Town tax incentives and spoke of it as a means for bringing in more business and not raise taxes for residents. Commissioner Davis commented on discussion at the August Commission meeting when public water at Route 32 properties versus wells and the need for more bus routes were discussed. Commissioner Napierski commented the Quantella provides traffic monitoring; Town Planner Burdick added the DOT has traffic monitoring as well that she will locate. Town Councilor Yuchniuk asked the Commission to call him if anything is needed.

10) Remarks from the Public (3-minute limit)

Vice-Chair Hewitt asked three (3) times for remarks. There were none.

11) Remarks from the Commissioners and Town Council Liaison

Commissioner Lapinski remarked it was nice to have Town Councilor Yuchniuk present. Town Planner Burdick remarked she would be at the next meeting. Vice-Chair Hewitt was happy to have everyone present.

12) Adjournment

Motion by Commissioner Hernandez; seconded by Commissioner Davis to adjourn the meeting at 8:37 p.m. Discussion: none. Voice vote: 5-0, all in favor. Meeting adjourned.

**AN AUDIO RECORDING OF THE MEETING IS AVAILABLE ON THE
TOWN OF MONTVILLE WEBSITE.**