TOWN OF MANSFIELD
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
Thursday, August 27, 2015 ▪ 5:30 PM
Council Chambers
Audrey Beck Municipal Building
4 South Eagleville Road

Regular Meeting Agenda

Call to Order/Roll Call

Opportunity for Public to Comment

Approval of Minutes
- June 25, 2015 – Regular Meeting

Old Business
- 2015 Work Plan

New Business
- Business Recognition
- Priorities FY 2016
- Next meeting/agenda items

Reports
- Staff Update
- Business activity
- Events
- Chamber of Commerce/Mansfield Business and Professional Association (MBPA)
- Other

Communications

Adjournment

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DRAFT MINUTES
MANSFIELD ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
Special Meeting – Regional Economic Development Forum
Thursday, June 25, 2015
Council Chambers, Audrey P. Beck Municipal Building

Members present: S. Ferrigno (Chair), J. McGuire, M. Hirschorn, R. Beebe, G. Thompson (5:46 p.m.)
Staff present: Linda Painter, Director of Planning and Development

Ferrigno called the meeting to order at 5:45 p.m.

Public Comment: No public comments received.

Approval of Minutes: M. Hirschorn MOVED and R. Beebe seconded approval of the March 26, 2015 regular meeting minutes and the May 28, 2015 special meeting minutes as written. The motion passed unanimously.

Old Business:

1. **2015 Work Plan:** Painter updated the Commission on the budget allocation for an economic development intern for FY16 and noted that Kevin Filchak had been hired for the position. She updated the Commission on current activities, including a permitting guidebook being developed by Filchak. Members would like to review the guide before it is finalized and also have input into other intern projects. For the next meeting members wanted to identify priorities for the year and assign tasks to Filchak and other members. Hirschorn noted that he did not agree with all of Hart's recommendations from the previous meeting. It was suggested that members priorities and assign tasks at the next meeting.
2. **2015 Regional Economic Development meeting:** Members discussed the May forum and ideas generated including whether the staff could share press releases on events such as Live Music Wednesdays with other towns and using *The Patch* as an advertising and marketing tool. Painter noted that a thank you note was being sent to the Deputy Commissioner for his attendance and participation.

New Business:

1. **Update – Business visitation survey:** Currently about 38 interviews have been completed. Common themes are emerging including a reputation as not being business friendly. The members want to draft a letter to the businesses inviting them to a discussion on common themes.
2. **Marketing in Mansfield:** Members discussed having Filchak research best practices when he returns. McGuire discussed creating welcome plaques for business. Thompson suggested that this could also be done with existing businesses for "milestone events."
3. **Next meeting/agenda items:** The focus of the next meeting will be on identifying priorities and tasks for the economic development intern and members over the course of FY16.

Reports: Painter provided updates on the CWC water project, Senate Bill 1 and a potential new member for the Commission.

Communications: None received.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 7:15 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Linda Painter, AICP
Director of Planning and Development

EDC 2015 Work Plan

Draft – February 24, 2015

Updated – August 20, 2015

No.	Action	Assigned To	Timeline	Status
Goal 6.1: Mansfield has balanced economic development efforts with sensitivity to preserving the town's unique blend of rural character and college town amenities to create an attractive location for businesses, workers and residents.				
Strategy A: Ensure Mansfield has sufficient resources and capacity for economic development.				
1.	**Collaborate with local, state and regional entities to advance economic development efforts.** *Potential partners include Mansfield Downtown Partnership, UConn, MetroHartford Alliance, Small Business Development Center, DECD, CT Department of Agriculture, Northeast Connecticut Economic Alliance and CT Innovations*			
	▪ Identify current economic development projects of potential partners	EDC / Staff	2015-2016	
	▪ Select and participate in project relevant to Mansfield's business goals	EDC / Staff	2015-2016	
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2.	**Expand economic development capacity of Town staff.** *Given their extensive other duties, it will be difficult for either the Town Manager or Director of Planning and Development to play a lead operating and staff role in economic development efforts. Consequently, if practicable, the Town should consider creating a staff position or contracting for these services. This expansion of service could be done independently or by partnering with neighboring towns to fund a joint position or contract.*			
	▪ Use FY15 budget to hire economic development intern	Matt/Linda	Winter 2015	Ongoing
	▪ Include funding for MPA intern in FY16 budget	Matt/Linda	Spring 2015	Ongoing
	▪ Identify project list for interns	EDC	Spring 2015	
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No.	Action	Assigned To	Timeline .	Status
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Goal 6.2: Mansfield has an entrepreneurial environment that supports business formation, expansion and creation.

Strategy A: Establish a business retention and expansion program (BRE).

1.	Develop a business visitation program using surveys or structured interviews to assess business status and identify outstanding or potential issues. *Items for consideration/inclusion in the program include:* ▪ *Identifying target businesses based on criteria such as size, location, growth potential, and possibility of the business relocating out of Mansfield due to existing concerns* ▪ *Developing mechanisms to address issues identified in visits, either directly or through referral to other organizations, and follow-up to ensure that issues are resolved* ▪ *Developing protocols for visits, tracking, and follow-up* ▪ *Identifying key issues and business needs based on surveys/interviews* ▪ *Identifying volunteers with business knowledge to conduct surveys and interviews* ▪ *Providing training for staff and volunteers to ensure consistency and program effectiveness* ▪ *Involving regional chambers of commerce in helping to recruit volunteers*			
	▪ Compile information gathered into a "Mansfield 2015 Business Report"	MPA Intern	Winter 2015	
	▪ Follow up with businesses from the survey and address any questions or concerns initially raised	EDC	Winter 2015	
	▪ Recruit and organize volunteers for BRE	EDC	2015-2016	
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2.	**Include agricultural enterprises in BRE activities.** *The Agriculture Committee can assist in targeting farm businesses for BRE outreach.*			
	▪ Identify agricultural enterprises	Intern	Fall 2015	
	▪ Develop an "Agricultural Visitation Survey"	Intern	Fall 2015	
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No.	Action	Assigned To	Timeline	Status
3.	**Prepare a Business Retention and Expansion plan with more specific strategies to foster entrepreneurship, small business development and talent retention.**			
	▪ Research other communities retention and expansion plans	Intern	Fall 2015	
	▪ Draft a Business Retention and Expansion plan	Intern	Fall/Winter 2015	
	▪ Publish guide for current/potential business owners	Intern	2015-2016	Drafted
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Strategy D: Promote local businesses and celebrate their success.				
1.	**Work with area businesses to reinvigorate the Mansfield Business and Professionals Association (MBPA).**			
	▪ Outreach with business leaders	EDC	2015-2016	Ongoing
	▪ Encourage participation in MBPA	EDC	2015-2016	
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2.	**Update the Town's website to include business and agricultural portals that showcase local businesses, farms and products.** *Information can include business listings, highlights of local products and experiences, and recognition of local business success stories, such as chamber awards.*			
	▪ Compile information detailing local businesses, farms and products	Intern	Fall 2015	
	▪ Develop Town's business website	Intern / I.T.	2015	Ongoing
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3.	**Include articles and features in the Town newsletter spotlighting local businesses and agricultural/forestry enterprises.**			
	▪ Publish articles in Town Newsletter	EDC / Intern	2015-2016	
	▪ Publish "milestone events" for new / existing businesses	EDC / Intern	2015-2016	
	▪ Include links to publications on Town website	Intern / I.T.	2015-2016	
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4.	**Develop local business and agricultural guides.** *A local business guide and map can help inform residents about the variety of goods and services available in the community.*			
	▪ Publish "Permitting Guidebook"	Intern	2015	Drafted

No.	Action	Assigned To	Timeline	Status
	▪ Publish a guide for current/potential business owners in Mansfield	Intern	2015	Drafted
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5.	**Continue to encourage residents to shop local through the Local First Mansfield business promotion program.** *Past efforts have focused on holiday shopping events. The program could be expanded to have a more year-round focus.*			
	▪ Coordinate with Local First Mansfield leadership	EDC / Intern	Fall 2015	
	▪ Link program to Town Website	Intern / I.T.	Fall 2015	
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Goal 6.3: Mansfield has a growing and diversified economy that helps to maintain the high-quality services desired by residents.				
Strategy A: Establish a regional business marketing program				
1.	**Collaborate with nearby towns on regional marketing efforts.** *Potential activities include:* o *Joint grant applications for economic development activities including marketing and shared staff* o *Development of regional marketing materials* o *Development of informal collaborative efforts such as cross-referral of prospects that are not a good fit with the initial contact community*			
	▪ Coordinate / Confer with surrounding EDCs	EDC	2015-2016	
	▪ Coordinate / Confer with surrounding Town's leadership	Matt	2015-2016	
	▪ Draft a Regional Marketing brochure/guide	Intern	2015-2016	
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2.	**Conduct outreach to commercial property developers that specialize in businesses aligned with the Town's marketing and development objectives.** *Lab space and multi-tenant space for early stage technology firms are potential targets for discussion.*			
	▪ Identify and meet with potential partners	Town/EDC	2015-2016	
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No.	Action	Assigned To	Timeline	Status
3.	**Target businesses in economic sectors that are strong and growing regionally, technology businesses related to UConn, agricultural-related businesses and businesses providing underrepresented consumer goods and services.** *Initial efforts should focus on firms that are well-matched to current commercial property inventory; targeting can be broadened as more specialized facilities are developed.*			
	▪ Identify and meet with potential partners	Town/EDC	2015-2016	
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4.	**Strengthen relationship with DECD to encourage referrals of firms and site selection consultants seeking a location in CT for businesses consistent with targeted economic sectors.**			
	▪ Maintain contact with DECD leadership and staff	EDC	2015-2016	
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5.	**Pursue state and federal funding to support economic development activities and projects.**			
	▪ Identify potential grant funding sources	Matt/Linda/Intern	2015-2016	
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6.	**Organize familiarization tours for businesses, site selectors, and commercial property developers to highlight available properties and the Town's assets and amenities.**			
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7.	**Develop a menu of state and local incentives to support development of businesses and properties aligned with Town objectives.**			
	▪ Publish a guide for current/potential business owners in Mansfield	Intern	Fall 2015	Drafted
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8.	**Work with the Town of Windham and DECD to explore creation of an Airport Development Zone for the Windham airport.**			
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No.	Action	Assigned To	Timeline	Status
Strategy B: Collaborate with UConn to maximize the local economic benefits of the University's presence.				
1.	**Increase efforts to capture businesses graduating from UConn's Technology Incubation Program (TIP) in Mansfield.** *Possible activities include:* o *Quantifying demand, both existing and previous, through documentation of TIP graduates that moved to other communities due to lack of space.* o *Updating zoning regulations to expand areas where R&D businesses are allowed and streamlining review procedures* o *Identifying potential funding sources and partners for a small scale R&D start-up/incubator facility*			
	▪ Identify TIP graduates that have moved to other communities			
	▪ Interview past TIP graduates and current businesses to identify space/location needs			
	▪ Update zoning regulations	Linda/PZC	Summer 2015	Ongoing
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2.	**Work with UConn to explore the potential for public/private partnerships to redevelop under-utilized state-owned land such as UConn's Depot Campus and the Bergin Correctional Facility for mixed public and private use.** *Possible actions include:* o *Establishing a joint town-university working group to explore reuse options, using the Mansfield Downtown Partnership planning process as a model* o *Conducting site and feasibility studies, including potential for adaptive reuse of historic buildings* o *Exploring potential for brownfields assessment and remediation grants to address possible contamination*			
	▪ Contact University regarding the formation of working group	Matt	2015	
	▪ Contact DECD regarding potential funding for brownfield assessments/grant programs	Staff	2015	
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Strategy D: Collaborate with surrounding communities to generate mutually desirable economic activity.				
1.	**Work with surrounding communities to convene periodic joint meetings of Economic Development Commissions to discuss economic activity, challenges and opportunities and potential collaborations.**			
	▪ Maintain contact with surrounding EDC's	EDC	2015-2016	

No.	Action	Assigned To	Timeline	Status
	▪ Host or support the hosts of the 2016 Regional Economic Development Forum	EDC	2016	
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2.	**Participate in efforts to update the regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS).**			
	▪ Determine which regional CEDS will apply with the transition to CRCOG	Matt/Linda		
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3.	**Explore potential for partnering with one or more nearby municipalities on a joint economic development project.** *Potential projects that may benefit from such an approach include:* ▪ *Technology incubator/start-up space* ▪ *Development of regional value added processing, aggregation and distribution facilities (such as meat processing) that would support local agricultural enterprises*			
	▪ Meet with surrounding Town's leadership to discuss possible partnering	Matt/Linda/EDC	2015-2016	
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TOLLAND
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
COMMISSION

WELCOMES

Camille's Wood Fired Pizza

OPENED AT

23 Fieldstone Commons

August 2013

Steven R. Werbner
Town Manager

Gregory Williams, Chair
Economic Development Commission

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