

MINUTES

Members Present: Chair S. Ferrigno, K. Dilaj, N. McKenney, V. Souter-Kline, L. Watson

Members Absent: C. Chukwuogor, A. Raggi

Ex-Officio Members Present: B. Coleman, A. Moran

Staff Present: C. van Zelm, Executive Director, Mansfield Downtown Partnership

1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Chair Ferrigno called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m.

New EDC members Nancy McKenney and Brian Coleman, and current EDC members, introduced themselves.

2. OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Souter-Kline MOVED, Watson SECONDED to approve the January 20, 2022 regular meeting minutes as presented. Motion PASSED unanimously.

4. REPORTS

A. MEMBER UPDATES

No report.

B. Staff Updates

Van Zelm said Mansfield-Willi Restaurant Week launches on January 21 and will last until March 6 (taste2towns.com).

She said 18 restaurants are participating including the following from Mansfield: Coyote Flaco, Dog Lane Café, Fenton River Grill, Fresh Fork Cafe, Gansett Wraps, Hops 44, Little Aladdin, and Stix n' Stones Market Place. Van Zelm thanked McKenney for participating from Hops 44 and Ferrigno for sponsoring Restaurant Week.

Van Zelm also thanked Margaret Chatey, the Town's Communications Specialist, and Kathleen Paterson, the Partnership's Senior Communications Manager, for all their promotion efforts.

Van Zelm also mentioned that the Tolland County Chamber of Commerce is hosting its Business to Business Showcase on April 5 from 4 pm to 7 pm at Georgina's in Bolton. The cost is \$200 to \$250. The EDC may want to have a presence.

She also noted that April 12 is CT Business Day with events at the Bushnell.

Van Zelm said she, Ferrigno, and Paterson met on the business list and the first iteration is almost complete.

C. Housing Updates

See updates below.

D. Business Updates (Closings/Opening)

Van Zelm said YAMATO did not close. She said Brooklyn Dumpling Shop will open soon in Downtown Storrs. Van Zelm noted that she spoke to the owner of Fine Fettle and they did lease the former Nature's Medicines site but are not operating retail medical marijuana at that site.

Ferrigno said Chompers is now located in the former Wally's Chicken site on North Eagleville Road.

E. EDC Calendar

There are no significant updates.

5. DISCUSSION ITEMS AT MEETING

A. Update from Development Project Support Subcommittee

Ferrigno said the Subcommittee, which includes Watson, met with Linda Painter, Town Director of Planning & Development, and van Zelm.

Ferrigno said Painter provided the following updates:

The Planning and Zoning Commission closed the public hearing on The Standard at Four Corners mixed-use project. The PZC may vote on the project on February 22.

There is also a proposed multi-family development between 1768 Storrs Road and 9 Timber Road. The PZC held a non-binding pre-application meeting on this property. The property is approximately 20 acres and is proposed to be townhomes and office space.

The owner of the Villa Hills 3-hole golf course is looking to re-design its proposed housing development, in light of some slope and wetlands issues.

There is still a proposal for mixed-use development on the property where Hops 44/Toast is located (would not affect Hops 44 or Toast). The proposal is for approximately 12,000 square feet of a stand-alone commercial building and 102 units of residential development.

Coleman asked about vacancy rates in dorms at UConn. Ferrigno said it has changed over the years vis-à-vis enrollment levels and trying to space people during COVID-19.

Ferrigno said there is also a proposal to take down part of Champagne Motor Car Company in the southern part of Mansfield to create new commercial space with two drive-throughs. He said once there is more information on the proposal he can bring it to the Subcommittee for review.

B. Overview of Presentation to Town Council on FY22-23 Budget

Ferrigno said the EDC Chair and Vice Chair have updated the Town Council on its activities, goals, and budget request for the last few years. A meeting date for 2022 is to be determined.

There were no comments on the presentation draft that van Zelm provided.

C. Taste of Mansfield Champion Award

Van Zelm shared the outline for the Mansfield Champion (formerly Hero) Award nomination process. She said the Taste of Mansfield staff team is recommending that the EDC and Agriculture Committee each provide a delegate to serve on the review committee for nominations. No one volunteered at the meeting but van Zelm asked for any member to get back to her if they want to volunteer.

D. Referral from Planning and Zoning Commission on Temporary and Limited Moratorium on Cannabis Establishments

Ferrigno said the Planning and Zoning Commission has referred its proposed extension of the temporary and limited moratorium on cannabis establishment to several Town committees/commissions including the EDC. The extension would be until December 31, 2022. Ferrigno relayed that Painter indicated that it is unlikely that an extension that long will be needed.

Ferrigno said the PZC is focused on the allowance of retail establishments but probably not cultivation.

Coleman asked why more time is being considered and Ferrigno said the PZC needs more time to craft the regulations.

E. Four Town Economic Vitality Plan Implementation and EDC Member Involvement

Van Zelm encouraged EDC members to attend the Four Town steering committee meetings. She will send an invite for the next meeting. McKenney volunteered to attend the steering committee meetings.

F. Town/UConn Collaboration

Moran said the monthly Town/UConn framework meeting was held today. A smaller group will draft an outline for a framework to review particular development projects as they are proposed.

6. COMMUNICATIONS

All noted.

7. FUTURE MEETINGS

A. Upcoming Meeting Schedule

Next regular meeting is scheduled for March 17, 2022 at 6:00 p.m.

B. Future Meeting Topics

Ferrigno will meet with staff to discuss future topics.

8. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 6:52 pm.

Respectfully submitted by:
Cynthia van Zelm
Executive Director
Mansfield Downtown Partnership, Inc.