

## MINUTES

**Members Present:** Chair S. Ferrigno, A. McPherson, D. Fecho, M. Hirschorn, L. Watson, W. Okeson

**Ex-Officio Members Present:** Toni Moran

**Ex-Officio Members Absent:** Ben Shaiken

**Members Absent:** C. Chukwuogor, D. Dorfer

**Staff Present:** C. van Zelm, Executive Director Mansfield Downtown Partnership and M. Ollenu, Administrative Assistant, Mansfield Downtown Partnership

### 1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

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

### 2. OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

### 3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Hirschorn MOVED, Fecho seconded, to approve the May 21, 2020, August 20, 2020 and September 17, 2020 regular meeting Minutes as presented.

Motion PASSED unanimously.

### 4. DISCUSSION ITEMS AT MEETING

#### A. EDC Annual Report

Van Zelm took members through the EDC's Annual Report which was to be presented by Chair Ferrigno and Vice Chair MacPherson to the Town Council in March 2020. Unfortunately due to the pandemic the presentation was cancelled. Van Zelm asked for comments, edits, questions or suggestions in this regard. Van Zelm will include the Annual Report in the next Town Council packet as a communication. Members had no comments on the Report has presented. Van Zelm said she continues to meet with developers interested in coming to Mansfield and has another call tomorrow with an interested developer.

#### B. Prepare for Small Business Saturday

Van Zelm commented on research undertaken by Kathleen Paterson in the Partnership's office on materials available on the Small Business Saturday's website that can be shared with businesses in Mansfield. Of particular interest is their Neighborhood Champion program aimed at intensifying the push for local business patronage. The partnerships has reached out to prior

participants to gauge their interest for this event. Chair Ferrigno encouraged members to visit businesses, and in particular, on Small Business Saturday.

## **5. EDC BUSINESS**

### **A. Move to approve 2021 meeting schedule of the EDC and its subcommittees as presented.**

Van Zelm updated members on the meeting schedule of the Commission and its subcommittees. Also discussed was the transitioning from live video streaming to audio streaming for the public in order to save costs and to reduce staffing needed which has been approved by the Town Council. Van Zelm also suggested a hybrid for the coming year which might involve a tentative in-person meetings. Moran said all members need to agree on whether a meeting in person is necessary. She does not encourage meeting in person. McPherson MOVED to approve the schedule and was seconded by Okeson.

Motion PASSED unanimously.

### **B. AGENDA ITEM CALENDER**

Members agreed to keep the same structure of calendar planning.

## **6. OTHER BUSINESS**

### **A. Member Updates**

Ferrigno asked members to suggest individuals at the next meeting to fill the current vacant spot on the EDC.

### **B. Staff Updates**

Van Zelm shared information about \$5000 CT Cares Grant Program for business which the State is aggressively pushing and encouraged members to contact businesses directly about the program. She informed members to be on the lookout for emails from Kathleen Paterson, Senior Communications Manager of the Partnership, on information for this program before reaching out to businesses.

Van Zelm informed members on the Partnership's work in developing a QR Code for restaurant menus that will ensure safety, reduce waiting time and speed up orders and takeout. Also discussed was the provision of decals at no cost to restaurants for social distancing.

Also shared was the trends in keeping restaurants afloat this winter including the use of heated lamps, which are already in use by some businesses in Mansfield.

The Partnership's Winter Welcome event will be a drive through event similar to the Town's Halloween's "Trick a Trunk" and will feature some lighting displays, pre-recorded songs from EO Smith High School, and a display of businesses in Mansfield.

Also discussed is the fine-tuning of the overall business list by the Partnership's staff as well as the comparative analysis been done on other town websites in Connecticut to generate ideas on revamping the Town of Mansfield's website.

### **C. Business Updates (Openings/Closings)**

Van Zelm reported on the permanent closure of Tang and Storrs Yoga. She informed members of the opening of Old Navy, her continued efforts to meet the manager, and developments on the property at Wilbur Crossway and Dog Lane for leasing. She encouraged members to inform the Partnership of any business openings or closings they might know of. Chair Ferrigno shared with members the opening of State Farm's office in another location in Mansfield.

## **D. Housing Updates**

Van Zelm shared an update from Linda Painter, the Town's Director of Planning and Development as follows:

- **Eagleville Green (Mixed Income Development on South Eagleville Road).** It does not appear that this project will be funded in the current round of funding from the State of Connecticut. The Mansfield Housing Development Corporation is actively seeking other funding sources to leverage potential state funds. It is anticipated that the amount of state funding for this project in the next few years will continue to decrease, requiring the Inland Wetlands Agency to find other sources of funds to close the gap.
- **J.E. Shepard/Capstone Collegiate Communities.** IWA approval has been appealed to Superior Court. No application for the associated special permit has been submitted at this time.
- **CMC Storrs (Golf Course Property).** Wetlands map amendment to establish the boundaries of the wetlands on the property was approved on September 30, 2020. Applications for the associated inland wetlands license and special permit have not been submitted at this time.
- **Haven Campus Communities (Storrs Road-Former Willards, Holiday Mall, former Two-Steps).** Public hearing on application for Inland Wetlands license was opened and been continued to November 16, 2020. An application for the associated special permit has not been submitted at this time.
- **Toast Four Corners/Mike's Pizza Property.** A pre-application for development of the vacant portion of this property was held on September 21, 2020. The meeting can be reviewed at [https://townhallstreams.com/stream.php?location\\_id=69&id=26043](https://townhallstreams.com/stream.php?location_id=69&id=26043)

## **7. COMMUNICATIONS**

### **A. Chronicle Articles: September & October 2020**

Noted.

## **8. FUTURE MEETINGS**

### **A. Upcoming Meeting Schedule**

Next regular meeting is scheduled for December 16, 2020 at 6 p.m.

### **B. Future Meeting Topics**

Ferrigno and staff will review future meeting topics before the December meeting.

## **9. ADJOURNMENT**

McPherson MOVED, Watson seconded, to adjourn the meeting.

Motion PASSED unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 7:02 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:

Mary Ahima Ollennu  
Administrative assistant