

DRAFT MINUTES

Members Present: Chair S. Ferrigno, C. Chukwuogor, D. Fecho, L. Watson, M. Hirschorn, W. Okeson

Ex-Officio Members Present: B. Shaiken

Ex-Officio Members Absent: T. Moran

Members Absent: D. Dorfer, A. McPherson

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

Guest: R. Aylesworth (incoming Town Manager)

1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Chair Ferrigno called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m. R. Aylesworth, newly appointed Town Manager, introduced himself to members and shared his background and enthusiasm for the new position. Members and staff introduced themselves and wished R. Aylesworth well in his endeavors.

2. OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Fecho MOVED, Watson seconded, to approve the October 29, 2020 regular meeting Minutes as presented.

Motion PASSED unanimously.

4. DISCUSSION ITEMS AT MEETING

A. Housing Initiatives

Chair Ferrigno followed up with members on the idea of sending a letter to the Planning and Zoning Commission (PZC) that will state the EDC's position on housing initiatives in general, in terms of developments' positive impact on the Grand list. Van Zelm noted that any specific letters on projects must relate to the decision being considered by the governing body. After discussion, the EDC agreed to review a draft letter from Chair Ferrigno as a position statement of principle on housing developments. Chair Ferrigno will bring a draft to the next meeting.

5. OTHER BUSINESS

A. Member Updates

None

B. Staff Updates

Van Zelm updated on the \$5000 CT Cares Grant Opportunity for businesses set up by the State to help out businesses struggling because of the pandemic. The Partnership staff and Board members followed up with calls and emails to businesses to inform them before the deadline on November 19, 2020. Van Zelm estimated that about 10 businesses in Mansfield had expressed interest in it.

Van Zelm also shared with members the change on the Small Business Saturday program from a one day event to a season long shopping campaign aimed at encouraging patrons to shop local throughout the season and beyond. Branding materials from American Express and other items will be distributed to businesses who have expressed interest in participating.

The Merry Mansfield Campaign- www.mansfieldct.gov/merry on the Partnership's website which has not been populated yet, will be updated by Kathleen Paterson from the Partnership with varied in- person events such as the Artists Open Studio, Jorgensen Center activities and the Partnership's Winter Welcome that will have clear adherence to Covid 19 safety protocols.

Van Zelm also touched on the Partnership's Winter Welcome event which will be a drive- thru event with lighting displays, prerecorded songs from the E.O Smith High School, and displays from organizations in Mansfield as well as sponsored decorated Christmas trees. Similar to the Town's "Trick N Treat", participants will be gifted with goodies and coupons from businesses and organizations and a list of restaurants in the Downtown.

Van Zelm also touched on the Partnership's continued efforts in keeping businesses abreast with Covid related updates from the State via email blasting. Following a suggestion by Prabhas KC, a member of the Board, the Partnership offered to design QR menus for restaurants at no cost to businesses who might be interested.

Also commented on was the Eastern Highlands Health District's concerns that patrons of some restaurants in the Downtown area are not practicing social distancing particularly on weekends. The Partnership put out free decals in front of these restaurants to encourage the 6 feet social distancing guideline. R. Aylesworth, shared his excitement for the programs lined up for winter and expressed his thanks to the Partnership.

C. Business Updates (Openings/Closings)

Van Zelm commented on the update from the last meeting and asked members if they have noticed any business closings or openings. No other business openings or closings were noted.

D. Housing Updates

Chair Ferrigno touched on the four projects that were discussed at the last meeting which are as follows:

- Eagleville Green (Mixed Income Development on South Eagleville Road)
- J.E. Shepard/Capstone Collegiate Communities CMC Storrs (Golf Course Property).
- Haven Campus Communities (Storrs Road-Former Willards, Holiday Mall, former Two-Steps)
- Toast Four Corners/Mike's Pizza

Chair Ferrigno shared some other housing developments outside of Mansfield and opined that the Town stands to benefit economically from varied developers and not solely focused on college housing.

Chair Ferrigno and Van Zelm will follow up on providing the EDC with information on the appeal processes with the (PZC) and the Inland Wetlands Agency (IWA).

E. EDC CALENDER

Chair Ferrigno informed members to be on the lookout for notifications about the EDC's subcommittee meetings for the beginning of next year.

6. COMMUNICATIONS

A. Chronicle Articles: October & November 2020

Noted.

B. PSQ (publicsquare) Journal Article- October 28, 2020

Noted

7. FUTURE MEETINGS

A. Upcoming Meeting Schedule

Next regular meeting is scheduled for December 17, 2020 at 6:00 p.m.

B. Future Meeting Topics

Chair Ferrigno will provide a draft letter to the PZC for review as noted earlier, and work with staff on information on the process and timing of appeal of an IWA or PZC decision.

8. ADJOURNMENT

Chukwuogor MOVED, Fecho seconded, to adjourn the meeting.

Motion PASSED unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 6:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:

Mary Ahima Ollenu
Administrative Assistant