



Economic Development Commission

Branford, Connecticut

Minutes of Special Meeting of January 18, 2023

Joe Trapasso Community House - Church St – Branford

Present: Cathy Lezon (Chair), Elena Cahill, John Leonard, Jared Schulefand, Rich Sgueglia, Alisa Waterman, First Selectman Jamie Cosgrove, Dee Jacob (Chamber), and Perry Maresca (Staff)

Call to Order: Chair Cathy Lezon called the meeting to order at 8:07am and announced that due to a new position at work she will have to step off the Economic Development Commission after today's meeting. All wished her well, thanked her for her dedication, and congratulated her on the new opportunity.

Approval of Minutes: Since this was considered a Special Meeting, approval of the December Minutes were postponed until the next Regular Meeting on February 1st.

Reports:

Staff Report: Although *sema4* is leaving Branford, and reducing its footprint in CT, the State is recouping some of the funds loaned to them. Additional sections of the Shoreline Trail are being planned and meeting has been scheduled to discuss the desired locations. BluePoint Apothecary has opened to the public under the name RISE. Article regarding possible use of the closed Regal Theaters at exit 55 sparked renewed public interest. Branford has been awarded a One Million Dollar Grant for the Town Pier at the end of Harbor Street. Town Center news... Annual "First Night" in Branford held on Friday, January 6th was a great night and enjoyed by all. Merchants are planning an indoor sidewalk sale to coordinate with this event next year. Local authors book signing festival being planned for May 6th. It will be an all-day event. Encompassing Main St & Montowese St, merchants, restaurants, service businesses and the Blackstone Library. All are welcome.

Planning & Zoning... 175 Cherry Hill Rd, changed date of public hearing to February 2nd regarding an 11 Lot Subdivision connecting to Autumn Ridge Rd. Approved amendments to POCD Section 6.16 and 4.18 to allow large scale ground mounted solar arrays.

Chamber: Dee Jacob- First business after hours (BAsh) event of 2023 being held 1/31 at Your CBD Store on West Main St. Net 90 is being planned for Elements Massage on Chestnut St. New this year, short morning meetings to network. Woodwinds on School Ground Rd will once again be the venue for the Annual Awards Meeting being held on February 21st. Yiftee Gift Cards program is still underway. Interested businesses should contact the Shoreline Chamber. AARPA funds being used to assist small businesses.

Selectman's Report: Budget process is about to begin with new software being implemented at Town Hall and training beginning this month. For the first time since pandemic, nationwide, more retail stores are opening than closing. Conversation ensued discussing types of businesses around Branford and what draws people to Branford. Inquiries of shuttle bus/trolley possibility resurfaced.

Old Business: Attraction; Retention/Expansion; and Workforce Development subcommittees will meet to determine plans of forging ahead.

New Business:

Correspondence: Demolition application for 1155 Main Street for the building that was damaged by fire at Branford Building Supplies. No objections.

Public Comment: None.

Announcements: Next Meeting = February 1st, 2023. Cathy Lezon suggested that residents and businesses logon to www.energizect.com for ways to save energy. Staff and commission thanked the outgoing Chair once again for her dedication to the Commission and the Town over the many years of service.

Meeting adjourned at 9:33a. Motion by Rich Squeglia, seconded by John Leonard. Motion carried.

Perry Maresca
Staff

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Elena Cahill · Al Canosa · Frank Hird · John Leonard

Jared Schulefand · Richard Squeglia · Alisa Waterman

First Selectman Jamie Cosgrove [ex officio] · Dee Jacob, Shoreline Chamber [ex officio]

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