



CHESTER ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

**Meeting Minutes- Final (approved 10/17/ 22)
September 22, 2022**

Location: Chester Town Office Meeting Room

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Meeting called to order at 4:12 by Chairman Jon Joslow. Carlie Dailey and First Selectwoman Charlene Jacecek in attendance.

2. Approval of draft minutes: 8/31/22

Approved: Motion by Carlie, Seconded Jon. All in favor without edits.

3. Recent commercial listings and transactions:

11 Main Street (former Kismet) leased to Nora Murphy - Country House. That store has opened.

244 Middlesex Ave (former location Ted Tine Motorsports)- scheduled for auction on 9/15 – status unknown.

4. Existing town initiatives:

47 Middlesex Ave (St. Josephs Parish Center)

9/22/22- A company has been selected to develop affordable housing using a colonial design based on Old Wethersfield. 3 buildings of various sizes. Primarily one bedroom, efficiency style. Maybe 40 units. The Bishop has not given his final approval yet.

56 Middlesex (Organon)

9/22/22- New tenant opening a grocery store 12/1/22. Owners believed to be the same owners of the Grist Mill Market in Moodus.

Goodspeed at Chester

9/22/22- Charlene met with Caryn Paradis, representatives from Inland Wetlands, P&Z, Building Inspector and her lawyer (Caryn's) yesterday and has a meeting tomorrow with Goodspeed on how to acquire the property for purposes of creating event space, mainstage for movies, recitals and other purposes with a guaranteed free use to the Goodspeed to mount three productions a year.

Town of Chester
203 Middlesex Avenue
Chester Connecticut 06412



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facsimile: 860-526-0004
web page: chesterct.org

Other space for art gallery, bridge and boardwalk to the other side of the brook, an event space / potential tent. Walking path to a place for wedding ceremonies.

Cell Reception across Chester- Cell Towers

9/22/22- Ed and Charlene met earlier today. They are waiting to hear back from Ray Lemley.

Boardwalk from North Quarter Park to the Cemetery Road

9/22/22- Charlene meeting next week with Mike Abramson, John Ivimey and John Williams. Possibility for funding remains.

East Haddam Ped/Bike Path Spur and Complete Streets- Sidewalks, Crosswalks, etc.

9/22/22- Pat's emailed report. She met with Cindy Lignar on 9/3/22. Cindy waiting for DOT State of CT for a date of the audit of Chester Road safety.. Application approved 8/8/22 and we were told it would take a few weeks to schedule. Pat may have a GIS map showing abutting properties and rights of way.

East Haddam Swing Bridge Rehabilitation

9/22/22- Charlene reported that the selectmen of Chester, Haddam, East Haddam have invited businesses to meet for an update on the Bridge and how it might impact commercial and retail business in the affected towns. That meeting is 8:00 next Tuesday, 9/27, at the RiverHouse. Charlene informed Many of the Merchants of Chester, in order to alert the member businesses.

MASTER PLAN FOR PUBLIC FACILITIES/CONVENIENCES

9/22/22- Sustainability Committee has identified three locations to install EV Stations:

- Maple street parking lot
- Cemetery parking lot
- Water Street drive in/parking lot

There is interest in installing the following capabilities/facilities in one or more convenient spots in the Village:

- Handicapped Accessible Public Bathroom for downtown Chester
- Tire/Air Station for Bikes
- Recycling stations in Chester
- Water station for people and pets
- EV Stations

Carlie Dailey has agreed to reach out to all parties working on various elements of these initiatives for the purpose of developing an overall plan that will make best use of town efforts and resources to have a coordinated plan.

Meet with large Chester employers



9/22/22- Charlene has a meeting 9/27 with RotoFrank. They are renting Greenwall space and are limited in expansion possibilities at the Industrial Park.

5. Community Volunteerism RFP

9/22/22- The Initiative name is being shortened from Community Volunteerism and Leadership Initiative to Community Volunteerism Initiative to keep it simple and to not confuse it with the Governance Study Committee. Although it is hoped that leaders emerge from participating in the Initiative, its primary and initial purpose is to increase volunteerism on Chester's Boards and Commissions. It is envisioned that the first class that goes through this program will provide "proof of concept" to actively expand its scope beyond boards and commissions to address community engagement needed to help organizations that serve the benefit of the community at large. For now, it is agreed that the initial focus be to fill vacant seats on Chester's existing boards and commissions. An RFP based around this concept will be drafted for EDC approval.

The initial plan was to outsource the development and implementation of a series of five workshops that would combine the topics covered in the Chester guide to Boards and Commissions with board chairs or their designees scheduling time to appear in these sessions to share information about how they function, their current challenges, initiatives and openings. The concept is to increase participation as measured in a reduction of existing opened positions. The plan two part:

Part A: Use consultants to understand why people volunteer or choose not to participate and then tailor communications and program design around potential new approaches to getting people involved. The RFP will be focused on using outside resources to objectively understand Chester's propensity for involvement and engagement.

Part B: The Project Team will design the 5 orientation sessions around the best way to communicate and promote engagement based upon the findings, conclusions and recommendation by the external consultants (See Part A).

The Project Team will facilitate the design, planning and implementation of the sessions without using paid staff.

This is Year 1 of a three year plan. Subsequent years will build off of lessons learned during the initial class. Providing the first class goes well, the intention is to be broader in scope to encourage community involvement in all organizations and causes, in addition to elected and appointed positions. The belief is that an engaged community will leverage the strength of many people toward maintaining and improving our community and our neighbors.

Timetable:

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10/22- RFP proposal submitted to EDC for review and approval.
11-12/22 - Seek comment, review, and approval from BOF and BOS regardless of whether or not funding outside of the EDC budget is necessary.
12/22- Release RFP
1/23- Award contract
1Q-2Q 2023- Recruit, Enroll and Engage a group of residents through the training and orientation program.

ARPA Request for Funding for advertising and communication

9/22/22- Discussed EDC supporting the Merchants by continuing partial or all funding of the tourism-promoting rack cards. This to be discussed during the budget process.

Chester Leadership Meeting

9/22/22- Charlene reviewed the Board and Commission Handbook material with an emphasis on FOI compliance. Next meeting on 1/10/22 to include a FOI representative.

6. Town governance and continuity- update

9/22/22: Charlene, Jon and Mike met this week to discuss how to could comply with FOI and maintaining a productive small study group. Jon said that they expect to have a plan for next week. He mentioned that we are advisory only but because we were appointed by the BOS, we fall under the broad scope and guidelines of FOI.

7. Capability to communicate to Chester businesses

9/22/22- The Assessor created a list of apparent property owners. Carlie will define the source of the information and assess the best way to proceed with converting that information into a relevant email/ contact list.

8. New Business- None

9. Audience of citizens- None

10. Adjournment- The meeting adjourned at 5:13 PM.

Submitted by
Jon Joslow, Chair