

MINUTES - Draft

Members Present: S. Ferrigno, M. Hirschorn, L. Watson

Ex-Officio Members Present: Toni Moran

Members Absent: C. Chukwuogor, D. Fecho, A. McPherson, W. Okeson

Ex-Officio Members Absent: Ben Shaiken

Staff Present: C. van Zelm, Executive Director Mansfield Downtown Partnership; L. Painter, Director of Planning and Development; E. Galbraith, Administrative Assistant

1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Chair Ferrigno called the meeting to order at 6:31 PM.

2. OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

Andrew Latiga, part-owner of Eagleville Motors, said he was interested in the efforts to develop a four town economic development plan for the towns of Bolton, Coventry, Mansfield, and Tolland. Van Zelm indicated that the plan should be completed by late March.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Quorum not met.

4. PRESENTATIONS

A. Taste of Mansfield

UConn Associate Extension Educator, Jiff Martin, gave a presentation on the collaborative project titled "Taste of Mansfield." UConn student and Extension intern, Alexis Meehan, assisted Martin in the presentation.

Martin listed partners to the project including the town of Mansfield's Agriculture Committee, the Mansfield Public Library, The Mansfield Public Schools and the Mansfield Senior Center.

Martin guided members through the Taste of Mansfield website. She noted that the logo had been updated to go along with the new branding and logo for the Town of Mansfield. Website pages included professional photos of people visiting local farms, information about farms in the area, and local events hosted by or benefiting local farmers.

Upcoming events include a community dinner on January 29, 2020 at the Mansfield Middle School, 205 Spring Hill Road, sponsored by the Mansfield Public Schools and Taste of Mansfield with support from an agricultural grant. Community dinners are held 3 times a year, at

no cost to the public, and are open to anyone living in Mansfield with an RSVP to Stephanie Richard, Mansfield Public Schools Food Service Director. April 1, 2020 will be the last community dinner of the academic year.

Other upcoming events highlighted on the website include a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) farmer meet and greet to be held on February 22, 2020 in the Buchanan Center at the Mansfield Public Library at 54 Warrenville Rd. This event is geared towards teaching the public about Mansfield's CSA farms and recruiting members for the 2020 growing season. Martin noted that Mansfield is unique in the large number of CSA farms located in such an area, and also the importance of supporting the local CSA farms through membership. The third event Martin directed EDC members to on the website is a regional "Know Your Farmer" fair in Willimantic on February 29, 2020.

Martin praised the work of Stephanie Richard, noting that Richard has worked hard to purchase fresh produce in bulk from local farms for the dual purpose of economically supporting the farmers and to be able to provide the children attending Mansfield Public Schools with fresh and nutritious meal options. Richard utilized grant funding to purchase a chiller and other large pieces of kitchen equipment to preserve the product and use it throughout the school year by freezing and blanching to add soup and other dishes or roasting. Martin noted that only two other schools in the state are doing this level of local food-sourcing.

EDC chair Ferrigno expressed pleasant surprise in these two unique features of Mansfield and suggested continued outreach to the public about these assets.

Martin then moved on to discuss the future goals for the Taste of Mansfield. One area that is being looked at is how to incorporate the UConn campus including outreach to dining services, hosting special events on campus, and educating UConn students, faculty, and staff on the project and how to purchase local agricultural goods. Another area Taste of Mansfield will be focusing on is within the local restaurant industry, identifying and promoting restaurants who are purchasing from local farms.

At the conclusion of the presentation, Martin and EDC members discussed ideas on how to support each other's goals. Collaborative events, representation at existing events, and open farm days were explored.

5. DISCUSSION ITEMS AT MEETING

A. Review of Draft Memo to Town Council

The communication to Town Council regarding UConn's letter on sewer connections was deferred as Mayor Moran reported that she has been charged with writing a response on behalf of the Town Council. She will look at the EDC's draft memo for additional input.

B. Review of Draft Memo to Planning and Zoning Commission

The draft memo to the Planning and Zoning Commission regarding the Eagleville Green was deferred, as there was no quorum.

6. OTHER BUSINESS

A. Member Updates

Ferrigno reported that William Okeson was appointed as a new EDC member earlier that day. Okeson is retiring from a long career in the financial industry and brings with him a great deal of local and economic knowledge and experience.

B. Staff Updates

Painter reported that budget negotiations for next fiscal year have just begun.

C. Business Updates (Openings/Closings)

None.

D. Housing Updates

Painter reported that the J.E. Shepard Company has resubmitted a wetlands application for the proposed project at 1621 Storrs Road and Middle Turnpike, with a public hearing set for March 4, 2020.

7. COMMUNICATIONS

None.

8. FUTURE MEETINGS

A. Next Meeting Date

Noted.

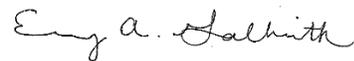
B. Agenda Items

Noted.

9. ADJOURNMENT

Ferrigno adjourned the meeting at 7:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted by:



Emmy A. Galbraith
Administrative Assistant