

MINUTES

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

Ex-Officio Members Present: A. Moran

Ex-Officio Members Absent: B. Shaiken

Staff Present: C. van Zelm, Executive Director- Mansfield Downtown Partnership, L. Painter- Director of Planning and Zoning Department, and M. Ollenu- Administrative Assistant, Mansfield Downtown Partnership

1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Chair Ferrigno called the meeting to order at 6:06 p.m.

- A. Moran exited the meeting at 6:15 pm
- W. Okeson joined the meeting at 6:15pm
- L. Watson joined the meeting at 6:18 pm

2. OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Okeson MOVED, Chukwuogor SECONDED, to approve the March 18, 2021 regular meeting Minutes. Motion PASSED unanimously.

4. DISCUSSION ITEMS AT MEETING

A. Approval of By-Laws

Chair Ferrigno asked for a motion to approve the By-Laws as amended. Okeson MOVED, Chukwuogor SECONDED. Motion PASSED unanimously.

B. Update from Subcommittee on Opportunity Zone Support

Van Zelm updated members on the Opportunity Zone Support Subcommittee and reflected on the progress of work on marketing the Opportunity Zone. The Partnership with funding from the Town has placed two ads in Site Selection magazine which has generated some reviews. Also discussed was the EDC subcommittees in general moving forward and the idea of fully populating the EDC to tackle relevancy concerns raised with the subcommittees. Van Zelm encouraged members to ask developers who come to the EDC if they are taking advantage of tax benefits.

C. Update on Agbotic letter to the Planning and Zoning Commission (PZC)

Chair Ferrigno, Mayor Moran and Chukwuogor commented on some opposition by neighbors on the proposed Agbotic Farm's proximity to their residences, water usage impact on existing wells, impact on roads by trucks, noise and light pollution, the amount of concrete and whether the Farm will be growing and harvesting hemp. Chair Ferrigno noted that John Prete with Agbotic has not met with several of the neighbors. Painter noted that the special application permit has been uploaded on the Town's website and includes specific details on the scope of the business and a video link that all can access. In response to a question from Chukwuogor on limited opposition provided to the EDC at its last meeting, Moran noted that sometimes this information is not known until public comments come in on any specific project.

Okeson asked if the land has been permitted to undertake agricultural projects. Painter said the proposed project meets the allowable use as dictated by the CT Department of Agriculture. Chair Ferrigno asked for a motion to send a letter of clarification to the PZC regarding addressing some of the concerns of neighbors including buffering methods from the adjacent neighborhoods. Chukwuogor MOVED, Fecho SECONDED. Motion PASSED unanimously.

5. OTHER BUSINESS

A. Member Updates- New EDC Members

Ferrigno updated members on his outreach to possible new members. He encouraged members to reach out to other people who will be valuable additions to the EDC and welcomes suggestions.

B. Memo from Mansfield Downtown Partnership Executive Director Cynthia van Zelm re: *Site Selection* magazine

Van Zelm briefed members on the ad placed in Site Selection magazine to boost development prospects in Mansfield. So far the ad has met its goal of generating interest in the Opportunity Zone and Mansfield in general. Van Zelm commended Kathleen Paterson, Senior Communications Manager for the Partnership, and Linda Painter for making this project a success.

C. Update on distribution of *Mansfield Explore Our Town Guide*

Update was also given on the distribution of the Town of Mansfield's marketing brochure "Explore our Town" guide. So far, copies have been distributed to realtors and human resource offices in Mansfield, the Mansfield school system, the Town Clerk's office and the Provost's office at UConn for new faculty. Some copies have been given to realtors in Windham, Windham Hospital Human Resource Dept, and the Eastern Connecticut State University. Realtors in Coventry, Tolland, Vernon, and some colleges and universities in Hartford and its environs will also be given some copies. Members commended Van Zelm and staff of the Partnership for working on this initiative. Chair Ferrigno commented on the positive responses from prospective home buyers he is working with in his office.

PZC public hearings on the J.E Shepard Company and Capstone Collegiate Communities proposal (April 19 at 7pm); Agbotic Smart Farm proposal (tentatively scheduled for May 3rd at 7:00 pm)

Painter commented on the upcoming public hearings scheduled and noted that members will be duly informed if the applicants are ready or not to proceed on the respective hearings. Van Zelm encouraged members to listen in to the hearings.

Water System Advisory Committee Update

Watson and Painter briefed members on the recent meeting of the Water System Advisory Committee to recommend the J.E Shepard/ Capstone development. A recommendation was approved but it was not unanimous. Chair Ferrigno thanked Watson for representing the EDC on the Committee.

C. BUSINESS UPDATES (Closings/Opening)

Van Zelm updated on the re-opening of the Mansfield Movieplex, the relocation of Frog Bridge Gymnastics to the Eastbrook Mall, the opening of Mill Court Ceramics, and a small restaurant yet to open at the University Plaza.

D. Housing Updates

Painter commented on two pre-application meetings for CMC Storrs for changes to its town house designs and redevelopment of Champagne Motors property to include commercial spaces with drive thru restaurants.

E. EDC CALENDER

There was no discussion on the calendar.

6. COMMUNICATIONS

A. The J.E Shepard/Capstone Collegiate Communities Proposal- Email follow up

Chair Ferrigno will follow up with a letter to the PZC regarding the J.E Shepard / Capstone proposal as discussed at the April EDC meeting.

B. Articles

Noted

C. Letter of recognition to Mansfield Drive-In

Noted

7. FUTURE MEETINGS

A. Upcoming Meeting Schedule

Next regular meeting is scheduled for May 20, 2021 at 6:00 p.m.

B. Future Meeting Topics

- Haven Campus Communities Proposal – tentatively in May
- Election of Chair, Vice Chair and Secretary

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Ferrigno motion to have the EDC's April 15, 2021 regular monthly meeting adjourned. Chukwuogor MOVED, Watson SECONDED, motion PASSED unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 7:47 pm

Respectfully submitted by:

Mary Ahima Ollenu
Administrative Assistant