

APPROVED MINUTES

Present: A. Moran, C. Workman, P. Aho, J. Armstrong, R. Aylesworth (late), D. Freudmann, M. Gilbert, E. Holinko, V. Lorenz, S. Vasington

Staff: L. Painter, C. van Zelm

Guests: R. Miller, EHHD Director

Absent: D. Mack

The meeting was called to order by Chair C. Workman at 1:01 PM

1. Public Comment

No public comment.

2. Meeting Minutes

E. Holinko moved, A. Moran seconded, to approve April 13, 2021 minutes. Minutes approved.

3. Updates

a. *Mansfield Downtown Partnership(MDP) / Economic Development.* C. van Zelm reported that MDP hosted its annual membership meeting and honored outgoing President Diane Peltier and former President Steve Bacon. Strategic Planning process begins with consultant Street Sense for Downtown Storrs, and will include outreach in the coming months. John E. Jackman Bike Tour June 5 hosted 60 riders. Summer events on the Betsy Paterson Square include a concert in June, Ballard Puppetry activities and movies in August. The Celebrate Mansfield Festival is scheduled on Saturday, October 2 from 2 to 8 PM.

T. Moran moved that Item 5 be moved up to Updates Item 3a1, P. Aho seconded.

a1. *UConn / Town COVID-19 Update.* R. Miller updated that COVID rates have been declining significantly over 7-8 weeks; week ending May 28 there were 12 confirmed cases. Eastern Highlands Health District has discontinued large-scale vaccination clinics opting for walk-in clinics twice per week at the Mansfield Community Center and pop-up clinics, including Storrs Adventure Park. Hawley Armory site, operated by UConn Health, is also wrapping up at end of June. Walk-in clinics will transition to Audrey P. Beck Municipal Offices Conference Room A. Vaccine coverage records show 6,543 as of May 2. Year-round, non-

- student Mansfield population is ahead of the average vaccination rate in Connecticut. C. Workman reported nearly 40,000 COVID tests given by health center in fall and 71,000 COVID tests were administered on campus in spring. UConn is requiring vaccinations for students in the fall. Dashboard data, the COVID hotline and the UConn website continue to provide updates and information. V. Lorenz inquired who mandated vaccinations for students, and C. Workman reported the UConn Board of Trustees made that decision. A. Moran asked R. Miller about chance for potential resurgence in the fall, and he reported the country has not achieved herd immunity and an uptick is possible. EHHD will keep its contact tracing and closely track emerging data. Department of Public Health will be putting out guidelines for K-12 schools. UConn will keep data measures in place in the fall, and proof of vaccine and COVID testing will be in place for students. A. Moran acknowledged that the cooperation between Mansfield and UConn has been valuable throughout the pandemic.
- b. *Opportunity Zone.* C. van Zelm reported marketing of the Opportunity Zone and related UConn properties continues. Continuing to develop a parcel book featuring key properties and development process for developers. P. Aho inquired if there is any activity with new business Downtown, and C. van Zelm reported the development team reports there is interest in the vacant properties.
- c. *Four-Town Economic Vitality Plan.* C. van Zelm reported CTTrailFinder.com was released last week which markets regional trails to visitors. Regional tours and itineraries are under development, plus policies for developing a shared event calendar. Marketing subcommittee is developing logo and branding. D. Freudmann urged UConn to be more influential in fueling economic vitality through its policies that impact local businesses, such as offering more flexible meal plans for students. A. Moran suggested a future agenda item focus on how UConn might encourage its students and staff to participate in supporting local businesses. C. Workman reported that UConn is embedded in Mansfield with the Downtown Partnership, real estate committee plus this committee and takes seriously its significant impact on the region. V. Lorenz shared she believes students do not care for forced meal plans. A. Moran pointed out that UConn's presence at the Four-Town Vitality collaborative discussions is critical to true economic development, and that it is important that the new UConn administration values these relationships.
- d. *Planning and Development.* L. Painter reported that the strategy survey on the affordable housing plan continues accepting input in advance of the June 23 public hearing. The public hearing closed June 7 on the AgBotic Greenhouse application. The hearing on a special permit application for 358-unit housing development between CVS and Key Bank on Rte. 44 continues. A second 399-unit mixed use development at Holiday Mall/former Two-Steps site application is open with a hearing scheduled to open July 6. There are several zoning regulation amendments including a moratorium on cannabis establishments pending the legislature's final decisions. Maximum building heights and drive-

- through services amendments are also in development. A scenic road application has also been received for a section of Browns Road, and an application for a business at the former Echo Grange building has also been submitted. The Planning Department has created a story map with details on all of the pending projects so residents can follow the details of applications before Planning & Zoning as they evolve. A separate story map will follow business development activity. Lastly, an upgraded trail information tool is close to implementation on the Mansfield website. D. Freudmann asked about UConn's position on the CVS/Key Bank development, and C. Workman urged review of the Planning & Zoning minutes to review details of UConn's point of view on that project since UConn's representative attends those meetings. C. Workman suggested that UConn's stance on this project could be covered as a future agenda item.
- e. *Back to School Plans for Fall at UConn.* C. Workman reported employees return to work August 16, and classes start August 30, with move-in dates August 27-29. It is expected that residence halls will be at 90% with 3700 new students on campus with 90% of classes in-person. Fall sports will include in-person fans. D. Freudmann asked for data on total enrollment in the coming fall, and what the residential occupancy is on campus for the August meeting.
 - f. *CT Murals-MLK Mural Project.* R. Aylesworth summarized the proposal by RiseUP for the Arts to engage 39 communities in completing murals across Connecticut honoring Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. before January of 2022. The Town will take the lead, and is forming a working group to involve many stakeholders, led by the Human Rights Commission (HRC). Three mural sites are being considered. Community input will be critical. The project will be highlighted at Juneteenth in Mansfield. The goal is to hold a ribbon-cutting by Indigenous Peoples' Day on October 11. Fundraising will need to take place to support the project. J. Armstrong asked if UConn's office of Diversity has been involved, and R. Aylesworth reported on how RiseUp has engaged with UConn.
 - g. *State Trooper Status re: Sgt. Timme Retirement.* R. Aylesworth reported that interviews for this position will take place in later June, and he is participating. J. Armstrong asked how the announcement will be executed and shared with UConn, and R. Aylesworth hopes to influence the search committee in that announcement. Timing on the hire is unclear. A. Moran asked if there is a way to collaborate on a joint letter between UConn and Mansfield asking that the procedures/policies that have evolved under Sgt. Timme continue. C. Workman will inquire with UConn Police whether they are involved with this decision. D. Freudmann expressed that the Resident State Trooper and UConn Off-Campus and Commuter Student Services should not collaborate. J. Armstrong expressed that the collaboration between UConn Police, the Resident State Trooper and UConn Housing is critical to guide young students living off-campus.
 - h. *Return to in-person meetings.* A. Moran presented the benefits of virtual vs. in-person meetings, and E. Holinko and P. Aho expressed support for returning to

meet in-person. Hybrid meetings in Council Chambers are challenging to execute, although a call-in option is offered to the public. S. Vasington suggested the group review the legislature's recent guidelines on public meetings. It was agreed August meeting continue as a virtual meeting, and the co-chairs will review requirements before the October meeting.

4. **UConn Construction Updates.** S. Vasington reported that the Northwest Science Quad construction project has progressed quickly, and the road will reopen by August 6. Hockey arena area residents have been contacted in the area of Separatist Road/Hunting Lodge to keep them informed of blasting and tree-clearing. P. Aho acknowledged that UConn acted on reports with trucks in residential Eastwood/Hillside Roads. S. Vasington suggested the Town engage with Google Community to direct appropriate road usage.

5. **Other Business.**

None reported

6. **Future Agenda Items.**

- a. Moran asked if it's possible for the new interim UConn President to join the committee briefly to introduce himself. C. Workman will check on the possibility, although the August meeting is not likely.

P. Aho motioned to adjourn the meeting at 2:25 PM, seconded by J. Armstrong. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,
Margaret Chatey
Administrator to the Committee
Communications Specialist-Town of Mansfield

Next Meeting: August 10, 2021 at 1:00 PM