



**City of Groton**  
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## **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION & TIF ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

### **MINUTES**

**February 3, 2021**

**5:30PM - 7:00PM**

#### **Agenda:**

- I. Call to Order @ 5:35pm**
  - a) Present: Jason Rusk (Chairman), Nishant Sahoo, Margaret Hirsch, and Paul Norris
  - b) Liaison: Tina Daniels & Stephen Sheffield
  - c) Staff: Cierra Patrick & Leslie Creane
- II. Introductions**
- III. Minutes Approval**
  - a) January 13, 2021  
Motion to accept the minutes of January 13, 2021  
Motion: Margaret Hirsch  
Second: Nishant Sahoo  
Decision: 4-0-0
- IV. New Business**
  - a) Town of Groton Navi Retail Survey Results
    - 887 total businesses in Groton. 554 Businesses Called. 448 Business Responded. Interesting nuggets include:
      - 3% of business lack PPP equipment
      - 18.8% of businesses are performing better than expected
      - Supply Chain distributions were felt
      - 27% of Business adopted an online digital platform

- 30% of Businesses do not keep their hours of operation updated on digital platforms. Many business had difficulties verify information on Google and getting information updated.
- 90% of business that applied for COVID related funding programs received funding.
- At the onset of COVID roughly 3000 workers were displaced Groton that number has decreased to 969 displaced workers.
- Recommendations from report include:
  1. Assist local businesses with improving their online presence & Google verification
  2. Highlight opportunities for businesses to transition their resources into other industry sectors
  3. Provide assistance to sole proprietors applying for SBA funds. City of Groton should connect businesses with services at SeCTer, WBDC, and SBDC for application assistance.
  4. Create an online directory of businesses to reflect current hours
 Recommendations 1 & 4 coincide with the Commission's Business Spotlight initiative that will kick off this spring.
- Retail trade area results: Population of 72,684; average household income \$75,922; most disposable income exist between ages 45-54
- Commission discussed conducting a City specific survey and cold calling. Concerns of increased phone scams occurring for both commercial and residential was mentioned. Commission request staff to further inquire Navi results to obtain City specific information.
- b) Regional Workforce Development Initiatives
  - Eastern CT Workforce Investment Broad won an award for their manufacturing pipeline initiative. Staff recommends better connecting residents with upcoming skill development opportunities. In addition to manufacturing, there is also a healthcare pipeline, 180 skills, Skill Up CT, and an upcoming IT Pipeline initiate out of Hartford.
  - Staff went on to mention the state representatives being eager to work with the private sector to develop additional workforce development programs.

## V. Old Business

- a) EDC Working Groups
  - Commissioners will circle back with staff on working group scheduling.
- b) Staff Report
  - Project Status Update
    1. No significant changes to report on projects from January 13<sup>th</sup> special meeting
    2. Riverwalk ~ Coast Guard Academy Capstone Project
      - Staff is collaborating with the US Coast Guard Academy's Engineering Department for an academic exercise. Staff is working with four cadets on completing a Riverwalk proposal along Thames Street for their

capstone project. Focus area includes K. Streeter boat launch, Sub vet Memorial, Thames View Park, Water treatment facility, and Thames River Heritage Park. Chairman stressed this is an academic engineering exercise that will not result in construction plans. Instead the project will spark a much needed conversation about the development of Thames Street, public waterfront access, and flood and erosion protections.

- Commission thanked staff for an informative Jan 28<sup>th</sup> Committee of the Whole presentation, providing the council and community an update on active projects. Key takeaway from council was on community engagement and getting as many voices involved in the planning process.
  - Commission mentioned the CT trails and recreation grant program and requested understanding of application procedures for the City of Groton to apply. Staff believes the Town of Groton would need to be a partner in the submission but will reach out to develop a better understanding of process and procedures. At this time the Pedestrian & Bicycle Network Assessment Working Group will conduct street audits to further assess City needs.
- Tax Increment Financing District
  - Projects in the City

Staff introduced and the Mixed Use Development District. The City Planner will join a future meeting to provide an overview.

**VI. Public Comments**

**VII. Adjournment**

Jason Rusk moved to adjourn

Stephen Sheffield seconded the motion

The meeting was adjourned at 6:20 PM

Submitted by Cierra Patrick