

Economic Development/Marketing/Grants/CDBG Report

April 2021

Downtown Development News

- Staff is working with Bristol Health EMS on a possible relocation to the downtown area. The build-out for this project is proving substantial, and we expect EMS to apply for financial assistance.
- We are working with D'Amato Construction Co. on its build-out of 10 Main St., including an incentive package.
- ECD staff and Mayor continue to work closely on the spaces occupied by Baskets and Foodies. More to come.
- The City and its land bank partner New Colony Development will submit a grant application for \$2 million to remediate the J.H. Sessions building by April 7.
- ECD staff and the Mayor's Office have received preliminary design drawings from a prospective new private development on Centre Square. The City's technical staff must work on the design proposal now and we anticipate calling a Downtown Committee meeting in April.
- We continue to work with the development team and future owner of the "Funk" and "Eagle" buildings on Main Street/Prospect Street on its proposal for Veterans Housing. We do expect an application to the TIF program shortly.
- ECD is partnering with Public Works to add a small stamped asphalt treatment to the sidewalk in front of the "Residences on Main" project.
- ECD staff and Mayor submitted an Urban Act Request "Update" application to the State of Connecticut. The application requested funding for the design and construction of a City Plaza and Parking Structure to support Centre Square development.
- Centre Square Infrastructure: The mural planned for the retaining wall adjacent to the shared parking area on Centre Square will be paid for with a combination of ECD funds and funds from the Arts and Culture Commission. We will have a discussion at the April ECD meeting concerning additional Centre Square infrastructure.

Development Outside Downtown News

- The ECD is expected to receive an update on the HOME2/Conference Center project at the April meeting.
- Andrew Armstrong continues to work on "Manufacturing Technical Assistance Grants." To date, we have seven (7) active projects with a value of approximately \$40,000.
- We are working very closely with the owners of Nuchies on the future of their building, including the possibility of a new owner and similar business in the location.
- We continue to collaborate with the City Assessor, Corporation Counsel, and Verogy Solar regarding a PILOT (payment in lieu of taxes) agreement for Verogy's large solar farm at the former Minor's Farm property.
- Route 6:
 - It is confirmed that Sonic will be reopening its original location.

- There is a new coffee franchise called Aroma Joe's that I mentioned months back. Aroma Joe's has submitted its site plan for the former Webster Bank location at the Big Lots plaza.
- We are aware of another new national chain business destined for Bristol Plaza. More to come.
- A new medical provider will be filling the former space of Dr. Katkowski (we helped Dr. Katkowski on his dental practice relocation to Pine Street).

Recent New Businesses/Startup Projects

- New Downtown Businesses: Diana Gonzalez of CT Ears has opened her office space but will only open the on-site clinic once the soundproof booth is installed.
- "Rise and Dine" eatery is open and doing well on Route 6.
- Family Roots" is preparing to submit its business plan and Downtown Grant application to the StartUP Bristol group in the coming months.
- Raw Food Central is open and doing well. The company will return with its updated Economic Development Grant.
- Bakery on Maple continues its build-out in the plaza with Parkside Café.
- Dusty Dude Woodworks, a popular home-based business, has made the jump to leasing space downtown.
- Rumba Lounge is expected to open very soon in the Forestville space formerly occupied by Delish Lounge.
- We continue to work with "Harry's at Home" frozen pizza manufacturer on establishing a location in Bristol. A potential location has been secured, with further work needed from BBHD.
- We are doing our best to find a location in Bristol for "Big Steve's Grill" which is being forced out of its location in Plainville.

Marketing

Marketing and Public Relations Initiatives:

- 1) Thank you to Bristol essential workers poster campaign – worked with the Mayor's Office on banners and posters to acknowledge essential workers in Bristol which included all City employees, Fire and Police first responders, BOE, Community Health Center, and CERT. See article in Bristol Press, banner and poster samples in Communications.
- 2) Economic Development flyers and signage to highlight and showcase projects throughout the City to promote economic development in Bristol – see draft flyers and sample signage in Communications.
- 3) Continuing to work with the Mayor's Office and the United Way on marketing materials for the Farmers to Families Food Box Program for April dates to get important information out to the community about vaccine clinics, COVID testing, and other community resources such as food distribution, a Community Clean Up Day, a Drug Take Back Day on April 24, Kindergarten registration for fall 2021, and summer camps.

Grants Administration

NAA: Applications are available for the Neighborhood Assistance Act Tax Credit Program. The city is a pass-through for this program with the CT Dept. of Revenue Services. Applications are due on April 30. There will be a short public hearing after the ECD Board meeting on **May 6, 2021** to hear from any applicants or members of the public concerning this program.

Thomaston Savings Bank Foundation: The Police Department will file an application for funding to continue the Roberto Clemente Baseball Program at Cambridge Park. In the past, TSBF awarded a grant of \$2,000 to support that program.

CDBG Program Highlights

CDBG Year 45:

The Draft Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER) is available for public review on the ECD website. The Public Comment Period for the CAPER is March 29 to April 16. Because of COVID-19, the deadline for submitting the Year 45 CAPER was extended until June 21, 2021.

Shepard Meadows Therapeutic Riding Center has changed its name to Shepard Meadows Equestrian Center. Members of the Board who would like to visit are invited to stop by the farm on Wednesday afternoons, when there's a lot of opportunity to see what goes on there.

CDBG Year 46:

Request transfer of \$15,000 in Residential Rehab Program funds from Multi-family to Single Family to accommodate the higher demand in that program.

CDBG Year 47:

The CDBG Policy Committee met on Monday, March 8 to discuss the allocation of funds and has the following recommendations:

Proposed CDBG Allocation FY 2021-2022	
Housing Rehabilitation Program	\$ 265,000
Support Staff	\$ 114,555
Planning & Administration	\$ 102,885
Fair Housing	\$ 3,000
Subtotal:	\$ 485,440
Public Services	
Bristol Boys & Girls Club - Outreach	\$ 20,000
Shepard Meadows Therapeutic Riding	\$ 10,000
Prudence Crandall - Shelter services	\$ 10,000
Bristol Adult Education - Intro to Manufacturing	\$ 25,000
Family Resource Centers	\$ 4,000
United Way Summer Youth Employment	\$ 4,000
HRA- Case Manager	\$ 20,000
YWCA New Britain - SACS	\$ 5,093
Subtotal:	\$ 98,093
Public Facilities	
City of Bristol - Infrastructure (sidewalks)	\$ 37,924
Bristol Recovery Club - kitchen upgrade	\$ 12,500
Komanetsky Estates - BHA elevator upgrade	\$ 10,000
Bristol Adult Resource Center - Roof	\$ 25,000
Neighborhood Housing Services of NB	\$ 10,000
Subtotal:	\$ 95,424
Grand Total:	\$ 678,957

A Public Comment Period is open from March 29 through April 26. At the ECD meeting on May 6, the Board will be asked to approve these allocations, which are part of the CDBG Annual Action Plan for Year 47.