

# **Economic Development/Marketing/Grants/CDBG Report**

May 2023

## **Downtown/West End Updates**

- ECD staff and the Mayor’s Office expect an agreement for the sale of “Parcel 10” Centre Square to a new, experienced developer in the coming months. The expected new developer plans to keep the projects as a market-rate, mixed-use development with a potential increase in the number of living units. The developer will meet with the ECD Board prior to development.
- ECD staff continues to connect with a private entity on the former Firefly Hollow space. Hopefully more information to come soon.
- ECD and Public Works continue to work with design firm GM2 on the streetscape design for Route 72. The project is fully funded by the Community Investment Fund (CIF) grant as well as portion of funding from CT DOT.
- The property closing for Centre Square parcels 5,6,7,8 is being scheduled as soon as possible to allow Carrier to break ground.
- The City expects to move back into City Hall in October. At the staff level, preparation to return has already begun!
- Under “Downtown Update” at the May meeting we will continue to discuss the Hope St. Parking Structure, as design work and project cost discussions are ongoing.
- Work on the “Sessions” building remediation and redevelopment continues. New Colony Development Corp. is soliciting proposals for environmental cleanup the week of May 1.
- New downtown area businesses include: Bristol Tool Works at the “Barrett Building” off Valley St., First Impression Salon at 10 Main St., Arizona Construction (AZ Construction) is expected to open soon at the “Barrett Building,” Two Sisters’ Deli is open in the West End, Elaborate Wedding and Event Planner and Avalon Smoke Shop are open on North Main St.
- D’Amato Construction has begun City Hall Parking Garage construction, which should go quickly once the pre-formed casts arrive for the structure’s parking levels.
- Other Significant Downtown Infrastructure:
  - Public Works staff, ECD staff, Benesch Engineering, and Carrier Construction are coordinating streetscape design work for North Main Street in front of the “Centre Square Village” project.
  - Public Works is coordinating with Eversource on the relocation of electrical “switchgears” and associated concrete structure from the corner of Hope St./North Main St. to an interior location between the Hope St. Parking Structure and Bristol Health’s property.
  - Carrier will begin work on the retaining wall required along the railroad bank shortly after breaking ground on Centre Square.

## **Development Outside Downtown**

- ECD staff and UHY continue to coordinate the Building Bristol grant program using American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds.
- ECD staff, Mayor's Office, and Public Works continue to work closely with ConnDOT on various initiatives. This includes ConnDOT financial assistance for the Route 72 streetscape (to complement CIF Grant), continued discussions on bus service on Route 229 to Southington, future bike path and other infrastructure improvements in the West End, and more.
- Baumer has begun operations at its temporary relocation with longer-term plans to construct a new building on Business Park Drive.
- 894 Middle Street groundwater monitoring continues. ECD staff and the Licensed Environmental Practitioner (LEP) for the site are in discussions on next steps to address groundwater monitoring results to enable the property's sale for private development.
- 70 Horizon Drive in the 229 Technology Park is available for lease or sale. ECD staff has had discussions with one interested party which is a manufacturer elsewhere in Connecticut.
- Route 6:
  - A new wedding/event planning agency is opening in the plaza with Rodd's Restaurant. More information to come as we learn more.
  - After years of supporting development at the large development site just east of the Bristol Farms Plaza we are happy to report that development of a large medical office construction project is just beginning, with design materials submitted to our land use and public works staff.
  - Bristol Plaza continues to attract new tenants, including Cost Cutters, a future Robek's Juice franchise, and Carter's children's clothing store.
  - The new gas station and associated 7-11 retail store are under construction on Farmington Ave. heading toward Plymouth/Terryville.
  - A potential second hybrid cannabis location may open in the former "Blockbuster" location if/when the appropriate materials are submitted for City Council approval.

### **Small Business/Manufacturing Technical Assistance Grants Completed or In Process**

- Cuts by Chelle: Assist with new air conditioning and fence enclosure.
- 10 Main Café: Assist with upgrades to plumbing and electrical.
- Rosie's Detail House: Assisting with removal of graffiti on exterior.
- Rust to Riches: Assisting with removal of graffiti and new gate.
- Palma's Diner: Assisting with permanent improvements as a result of the accident.
- Advanced Machine Lubricants: Assist with new space renovation including electrical, and permanent fixtures.
- Advanced Fuel & Oil: Assisting with new heating and electrical.
- Casa Blend: Assist with new space renovation with items to be identified for a juice bar concept.
- Alloy Welding: Assist with grading and leveling of driveway area.

- Harry the Barber: Assist with new space renovation including electrical, plumbing, HVAC, flooring, painting, and more.

## **Marketing**

### **Marketing and Public Relations Initiatives:**

- 1) Bristol All Heart Website Update: The site is being programmed by the vendor, more information on progress will be available at the June ECD meeting; a video to promote Bristol is being worked on simultaneously to be the banner on the home page of the new website, more information to come in June.
- 2) This week is Small Business Appreciation Week – April 30 through May 6. Remember to shop local; social media posts have been scheduled to promote and recognize Bristol’s small businesses and to remind the community to patronize them.
- 3) Economic Development Marketing In the News: By Carrier asked the City to participate in a segment on Great Day Connecticut/Channel 3 which talked about the Centre Square Village development. This segment aired at the beginning of April, see Communication for the link to the segment – Mayor Caggiano and Justin Malley spoke about what the new development will mean to downtown.
- 4) Upcoming May new business ribbon cutting ceremonies and anniversaries:
  - Ultimate Wireforms – 35<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Presentation May 10<sup>th</sup>
  - Chippanee Golf Club – 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Presentation May 12<sup>th</sup>
  - Elaborate Wedding Planner – Ribbon Cutting Ceremony May 18<sup>th</sup>
  - Arizona Roofing – Ribbon Cutting Ceremony in new Bristol location May 25<sup>th</sup>
  - Advanced Machine Lubricants – Ribbon Cutting Ceremony May 30<sup>th</sup>

## **Grants Administration**

### **Grant Award:**

- The Cemetery Commission was awarded \$5,000 from the State’s Neglected Cemetery Fund to continue improvements in the historic cemeteries on Downs and Lewis Streets.

### **Grant Submissions:**

- The City submitted an application on behalf of the Bristol Police Department for support from the Broad View Fund of the Main Street Community Foundation to be used for the purchase of new community interaction software.
- The City has submitted two proposal to the Thomaston Savings Bank Foundation on behalf of the Bristol Police Department to support the Summer Youth Athletic Program at Cambridge Park and to provide financial support for the Bristol Police Cadets to purchase uniforms and equipment.
- The City submitted a Letter of Intent to the U.S. Department of Energy for a formula grant to continue installation of LED lighting in municipal buildings, and to install electric vehicle charging stations on municipal properties for public use.

## **CDBG Program Highlights**

- **CDBG Year 49**

The City's CDBG allocation from HUD was announced, and for Year 49, the City will receive \$588,120. The Policy Committee will present its recommendations to the ECD Board at today's meeting.