

ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Regular Meeting

Thursday, December 7, 2023 5:00pm

City Hall Council Chambers, 111 N. Main Street and on Zoom

ATTENDEES: Mayor Caggiano, Council Member Panioto, Commissioners Schmelder, Hick, Mills, Verikas (Zoom), Goldwasser (Zoom), Rasmussen-Tuller, and Massarelli

ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: Justin Malley - Executive Director, Dawn Nielsen – Marketing & Public Relations Specialist, Dr. Dawn Leger - Grants Administrator, and Sharon Arsego - Sr. Admin. Assistant

GUESTS: Louis Silva (Zoom), Community Investment Corp. (CIC)
Kent Lorenz, PKL Ventures, LLC.
Charlie Talmadge, President of Development Planning Solutions
Miledy Lopez and staff, Golden Years Homemakers & Companions

I. Call to Order

Mayor Caggiano called the meeting to order at 5:00pm and led all present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

II. Public Participation

There was no Public Participation

III. Minutes: November 2, 2023

Mayor Caggiano called for a motion to approve the meeting minutes from November 2, 2023. The motion was made by Commissioner Mills and seconded by Commissioner Schmelder. There were no requests for changes or revisions. All were in favor and the minutes were accepted into the record.

IV. Consent Agenda

A. Communications

B. Economic Development/Grants/Marketing Report

Mayor Caggiano called for a motion to accept the Consent Agenda. The motion was made by Commissioner Schmelder and seconded by Commissioner Rasmussen-Tuller. There were no comments or discussion. All were in favor and the Consent Agenda was accepted into the record.

V. New Business

A. Enterprise Zone Application

Justin Malley introduced the Enterprise Zone Applications. Charlie Talmadge of Development Planning Solutions spoke to the plans for market rate housing in place of the current building at 15 Haviland Street with some discussion with the Board members.

It was agreed to waive reading of the full motion; however, it is provided below for the record, and was made available to the Board ahead of the meeting.

Commissioner Schmelder made the motion to accept the full motion as delineated in the proposed motion.

Motion for 15 Haviland Street:

Whereas, the property known as 15 Haviland Street, Map 28 Lots 137 and 137-B, is located within the boundaries of the Enterprise Zone established by the City of Bristol and State of Connecticut;

Whereas, Cokel Properties, LLC has purchased 15 Haviland Street with the intention of converting the property to 11 townhouse style rental units following demolition of an existing mixed-use structure;

Whereas, per Article XIV, Section 18-200, of the City of Bristol Code of Ordinances, assessments on multifamily real property within the Enterprise Zone which is improved to the extent of \$20,000 per unit with all units being upgrades or the complete retrofitting of the apartments, whichever is less, are eligible to be fixed for a period of seven (7) years from the time of such improvement and shall defer any increase in assessment attributable to such improvements according to the following schedule: Year 1 (100% deferral), Year 2 (100% deferral), Year 3 (50% deferral), Year 4 (40% deferral), Year 5 (30% deferral), Year 6 (20% deferral), Year 7 (10% deferral).

In addition, per Article XIV, Section 18-203(g) any owner of real property who agrees to rehabilitate such property or construct new multi-family rented housing or cooperative housing on such property located in the rehabilitation area herein designated may, in accordance with provisions of Section 12-65e of General Statutes, make application to the city for an agreement to fix the assessment on the property, during the period not to exceed three (3) years of rehabilitation or construction and for a deferral of any increase in assessment attributable to such rehabilitation or construction...

I hereby make a motion: Under the guidelines of Article XIV of the City of Bristol Code of Ordinances, and pending conversion of the subject properties to a climate-controlled self-storage project to approve the following Enterprise Zone tax abatement schedule for the property known as 15 Haviland Street Map 28 Lots 137 and 137-B:

Construction Year #1 (benefit to take effect Oct. 1, 2024): 100% real property abatement
Construction Year #2: (if required) 100% real property abatement
Construction Year #3: (if required) 100% real property abatement

Year #1 (period to begin following issuance of a certificate of occupancy for 11-unit townhouse style apartment project): 100% real property abatement attributable to property improvements
Year #2: 100% real property abatement
Year #3: 50% real property abatement
Year #4: 40% real property abatement
Year #5: 30% real property abatement
Year #6: 20% real property abatement
Year #7: 10% real property abatement

The motion was seconded by Commissioner Hick. There was further discussion regarding the layout of the buildings. All were in favor and the motion was accepted into the record.

Justin Malley then introduced Miledy Lopez, Owner of Golden Years. Miledy and Golden Years staff members presented their business plan with discussion about their services offered and their clientele served.

It was agreed to waive reading of the full motion; however, it is provided below for the record, and was made available to the Board ahead of the meeting.

Commissioner Schmelder made the motion to accept the full motion as delineated in the proposed motion.

Motion for 118 Main Street:

Whereas, the properties known as 118 Main Street Map 30 Lot 121 is located within the boundaries of the Enterprise Zone established by the City of Bristol and State of Connecticut;

Whereas, 118-126 Main Street LLC – doing business as Golden Years – has purchased 118 Main Street with the intention of converting the vacant commercial property to a mixed-use building that includes commercial space for the corporate office and programming space for adult daycare for Golden Years and future space for rent on the second floor;

Whereas, per Article XIV, Section 18-201, of the City of Bristol Code of Ordinances, assessments on commercial real property within the Enterprise Zone which is improved to the extent of \$175,000 or the complete renovation of the building(s) facade, whichever is less, are eligible to be fixed for a period of seven (7) years from the time of such improvement and shall defer any increase in assessment attributable to such improvements according to the following schedule: Year 1 (100% deferral), Year 2 (100% deferral), Year 3 (50% deferral), Year 4 (40% deferral), Year 5 (30% deferral), Year 6 (20% deferral), Year 7 (10% deferral).

In addition, per Article XIV, Section 18-203(g) any owner of real property who agrees to rehabilitate such property or construct new multi-family rented housing or cooperative housing on such property located in the rehabilitation area herein designated may, in accordance with provisions of Section 12-65e of General Statutes, make application to the city for an agreement to fix the assessment on the property, during the period not to exceed three (3) years of rehabilitation or construction and for a deferral of any increase in assessment attributable to such rehabilitation or construction...

I hereby make a motion: Under the guidelines of Article XIV of the City of Bristol Code of Ordinances, and pending conversion of the subject property to a mixed-use building including dedicated commercial space for corporate office and adult daycare program on the first floor and space available for rent on the second floor to approve the following Enterprise Zone tax abatement schedule for the properties known as 118 Main Street Map 30 Lot 121:

Construction Year #1 (benefit to take effect October 1, 2024): 100% real property abatement
Construction Year #2: (if required) 100% real property abatement

Construction Year #3: (if required) 100% real property abatement

Year #1 (period to begin following issuance of a certificate for a climate-controlled self-storage facility encompassing the subject properties of this motion): 100% real property abatement attributable to property improvements

Year #2: 100% real property abatement

Year #3: 50% real property abatement

Year #4: 40% real property abatement

Year #5: 30% real property abatement

Year #6: 20% real property abatement

Year #7: 10% real property abatement

The motion was seconded by Commissioner Rasmussen-Tuller. There was no additional discussion. All were in favor and the motion was accepted into the record.

Justin Malley requested an amendment to a motion passed at the November 2, 2023 meeting. The amendment is to correct an oversight on the start of the approved tax abatement for the addresses listed below. Commissioner Schmelder read the following motion:

Motion to Amend for 238 Main Street, 13 Prospect Street, 19 Prospect Street, 23 Prospect Street, 29 Prospect Street and 35 Prospect Street:

To amend the motion passed at the November 2, 2023 ECD meeting awarding an Enterprise Zone tax abatement to 238 Main Street, 13 Prospect Street, 19 Prospect Street, 23 Prospect Street, 29 Prospect Street and 35 Prospect Street for the construction of climate-controlled self-storage to change the start of the construction abatement period to October 1, 2023.

The motion was seconded by Commissioner Rasmussen-Tuller. All were in favor and the motion passed into the record.

B. Downtown Update

Justin Malley gave an overview of the planned development of Parcel 10 with the original developer, Kent Lorenz of PKL Ventures, LLC. who was present to speak to the Board. His plans are for live-work units on the ground floor for this property, with four levels of varying bedroom count apartments above which help maximize the footprint of the location. The live-work units will essentially be a studio apartment in the back with a store front business such as a lawyer or artist. Kent has also purchased additional apartments on High Street and they will use their property management division to oversee those units and assist the tenants with their maintenance needs.

C. Revolving Loan Program

Justin Malley advised the Board of steps taken to draft the loan program's underwriting guidelines for applicants to be held to when applying to the new Revolving Loan Program. Louis Silva joined the conversation representing the Community Investment Corporation (CIC) as the lending program vendor contracted with the City. Louis reviewed the five key loan guidelines that CIC uses to ensure a streamlined approach to the loan process and discussion followed.

Mayor Caggiano called for the motion to be made. Commissioner Schmelder read the following proposed motion for this item:

To approve the general underwriting criteria for the Bristol Revolving Loan Fund as presented by Community Investment Corp. All future suggested changes to the underwriting criteria must first be approved by the ECD Board.

Commissioner Hick seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion was accepted into the record.

D. Shaffer Beacon Grant Amendment

Justin Malley advised the Board that a change of language was needed within the grant awarded to Shaffer Beacon Mechanical, LLC. Shaffer Beacon has requested that a percentage, rather than a specific number of Bristol registered vehicles, be included in the grant wording. It was clarified that a yearly review of the vehicle percentage would be conducted by the ECD staff and that could be written into the agreement.

Mayor Caggiano called for the motion to be made. Commissioner Schmelder read the following motion for this item:

To approve a modification to the grant amendment approved on September 7, 2023 for Shaffer Beacon Mechanical LLC to read that the company shall commit to registering at least 80% of its company owned or leased motor vehicles within the City of Bristol for the duration of the Grant Agreement.

Commissioner Mills seconded the motion. There were no further questions or comments. All were in favor and the motion was accepted into the record.

E. StartUP Bristol

Justin Malley brought a proposal before the Board regarding moving the program management of StartUP Bristol from the ECD Department to the CT Chamber of Commerce. The pairing would be best for the necessary networking, pitch nights, socializing and other related events that are ideal for new Bristol businesses. Katie D'Agostino, President & CEO of the Chamber, is excited for this opportunity, if approved. There was discussion and the Board's consensus was to transition the management of StartUP Bristol to the Chamber with a member of the ECD Board to be set up as a member on the board that the Chamber organizes.

Mayor Caggiano requested a motion for the approval of the transition of StartUP Bristol to the Chamber. Commissioner Hick read the following motion as proposed with the agreed amended item regarding an ECD Board Member as a liaison:

To approve the transition of StartUP Bristol and associated activities to support local entrepreneurs and startup businesses to the Central Connecticut Chambers of Commerce, with at least one ECD Board Member on the new board selected by the Chamber.

There was no additional discussion. All were in favor and the motion was accepted into the record.

VI. New Business by Commissioners

There was no New Business by Commissioners

VII. Old Business by Commissioners

Commissioner Hick asked about the Sessions Building and Dodge Village, both on Riverside Avenue. Justin Malley advised the Board that clean up at the Sessions Building is moving ahead of schedule. Mayor Caggiano advised that the details of the housing portion for the Sessions Building is being worked out. He also advised that the demolition for Dodge Village is likely set for December.

Justin Malley advised of a business coming to the old Firefly Hollow Brewing Company location. The Chic Miller location was also discussed. Commissioner Verikas reported that Yellow King continues to prepare for opening. The Bristol Bazaar has been successful for the makers with record sales over the holiday weekend and since.

VIII. Committee Reports

A. City Council Member Report

Council Member Panioto reported on the alcohol service discussion at the Rockwell Theater at the previous week's Ordinance Committee meeting. They referred it to the City Council for a public hearing. Mayor Caggiano encouraged everyone to attend the public hearing when it is scheduled.

IX. Executive Session

A. Downtown Grant

Mayor Caggiano entertained a motion to table the Executive Session as the previously prepared packets were collected from the Board. The grant application will be paused at this time. Commissioner Rasmussen-Tuller made the motion to table the Executive Session. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Schmelder. All were in favor and the motion was passed into the record.

There was no other business to come before the Board.

X. Adjournment

Mayor Caggiano requested a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Rasmussen-Tuller made the motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Hick. All were in favor and the meeting adjourned at 6:28pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Sharon Arsego
Recording Secretary