

**TOWN OF MONTVILLE**  
**Economic Development Commission**  
**Regular Meeting Minutes – October 17, 2022 – 6:00 p.m.**

**Town of Montville has lifted the mask mandate effective Monday, February 28, 2022, throughout Town facilities in coordination with our schools. Although the mask mandate has been lifted, Uncas Health strongly recommends that all individuals, both vaccinated and unvaccinated, continue to wear masks indoors. Comments will only be accepted at times designated for public comment by the Chair of the meeting. The Montville Town Council Rules of Procedure, decorum, timeliness, and suitability shall be followed and enforced.**

1) Call to Order

Co-Chair Napierski called the meeting to order at 6:04 p.m.

2) Pledge of Allegiance

All stood and pledged the flag.

3) Roll Call

Present were Commissioners Sierra Davis, Walter Hewitt (by phone), Sheelagh Lapinski, and Christopher Napierski. Absent were Commissioners Mickey Gillette, Meracus Hernandez, and Thomas McCarthy. A quorum was present.

Also present was Asst. Planner Colleen Bezanson and Town Council Liaison Robert Yuchniuk.

4) Alterations to the Agenda

**Motion** by Commissioner Lapinski; seconded by Commissioner Davis to move up Item 8.a on the Agenda after Item 5. Discussion: none. Voice vote: 4-0, all in favor. Motion carried.

5) Remarks from the Public regarding items on the Agenda (3-minute limit)

Co-Chair Napierski asked three (3) times for remarks. There were none.

8.a) Presentation on C-PACE (Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy ) financing –

Christina Tsitso, Associate of Financing Programs, Connecticut Green Bank

Asst. Planner Bezanson introduced C-Pace representatives Christina Tsitso, Associate of Financing Programs and Emily Basham, Senior Manager gave a presentation, and spoke of C-PACE and its responsibilities and work with communities to help businesses with clean energy measures. This initiative through the State of Connecticut Green Bank assesses commercial properties and helps property owners finance clean energy upgrades. Reducing utilities to owners that are permanently affixed such as solar panels and more simply by the use of LED lights are installed. Financing is available for up to 100% of projects for 5 – 25 years. C-PACE works with municipalities to assess an existing property that is C-PACE secured and stays with the property, even if sold. Utility bills over useful life and smart long-term investments for the owner property is the aim of the program. Questions were responded to regarding multi-unit properties such as apartments in an owner home, apartment complexes

and co-ops, not condominiums, that are program eligible. Contact by C-PACE is typically with a property owner or business owner. Discussed was the process, from contractor to proposal to C-PACE; the property owner will insure the building and once underwriting is complete C-PACE will schedule with a contractor and property owner per a specifically chosen timeline. C-PACE acts as a partner to a property owner regarding the costs for their building and works with municipalities doing outreach with property owners and businesses to help control costs and solutions. A network of contractors is used by C-PACE to resource from matching the terms of a project with financing and energy savings that have to be higher than the cost for a project, as a safeguard. Actions options to earn points independent of a town or communicating benefits to property owners by creating a list of property owners who would fit the program is a guide to find project candidates. There is one existing in-town project that was mentioned. Having evolved in Connecticut since 2013, 350 properties have benefited from the program, with most having solar energy efficiency, with a minimum project size for financing of \$30,000 to \$13.8 million, the largest to date. Property types benefited are industrial 24%, other 16%, nonprofit 14%, and retail 21%. Any rebate programs are currently being used by the homeowner with financing at 4.5% - 5.0%, a lower cost than others. The new construction program is financed at 100% and repurposing properties can be done and would be eligible for Sustainable CT. Presentation slides were offered by the C-PACE representative to be sent for more information.

6) To Consider and Act on a Motion to approve:

a) The Minutes of the Regular Meeting of September 19, 2022.

**Motion** by Commissioner Lapinski; seconded by Commissioner Davis to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of July 18, 2022. Discussion: Commissioner Hewitt requested changes to his comments under Item, 8.a, Discussion of Business Spotlight. *Commissioner Hewitt asked that the Commission not ignore the businesses on the list that were agreed to be recognized post pandemic. He also commented businesses on the existing list should be under current consideration and proposed a business from the existing list that has been in Montville for over 35 years for consideration for the upcoming quarterly plaque.* **Motion** by Commissioner Lapinski; seconded by Commissioner Davis to approve the amendments to the Regular Meeting Minutes of September 19, 2022. Discussion: none. Voice vote: 4-0, all in favor. Motion carried. **Original Motion Voice vote:** 4-0, all in favor. Motion carried, as amended.

7) Unfinished Business

a) Sustainable CT.

1. Discussion of status of webpage with current businesses

Asst. Planner Bezanson updated the Commission on the proposed changes to its webpage. They include a directions map and categories of businesses, restaurants, lodging, and retail with options for health, fitness, dance, and beauty, pets. Commissioners Davis and Napierski concurred with the changes. Other options for obtaining information were discussed if the survey does not work. Commissioner Hewitt commented on use of the new business list as an option. It was noted some categories do fit under homebased businesses. Asst. Planner Bezanson reported on visual changes to the webpage, from arial view to street view, and others such as color coding categories but this revised view does not provide access to a business website simply by hovering over it. Additionally, some businesses do not have websites. The Asst. Planner also asked if EDC flyers were wanted or a website and press release; Commissioner Napierski proposed the latter.

a. Discuss business survey/business directory

This item was discussed under Item 7.a.1. Asst. Planner Bezanson added the hope of acquiring more information from the business survey. She also reported on the press release to be posted on the announcement page of the Town website. Feedback was requested from the Commission on the EDC webpage on the arial versus the street view and financing for projects that should point back to the EDC per Commissioner Napierski. The business survey will be resent to the Commission by Asst. Planner Bezanson for a final review with a return date for comments by Wednesday, October 26 that will be calendared. Commissioner Hewitt proposed shortening the URL on the press release and sent a shorter version from home to Asst. Planner Bezanson.

**Motion** by Commissioner Lapinski; seconded by Commissioner Davis to approve the Business Survey with the possibility of minor corrections by an effective date of October 28, 2022. Discussion: none. Discussion: none. Voice vote: 4-0, all in favor. Motion carried.

2. EDC Training Webinars – Discussion of past and upcoming webinars and attendance.

Asst. Planner Bezanson made a request for two (2) commissioners to view EDC training webinars. The goal is to have this task completed by month's end.

b) Improve Business Awareness

1. Discussion of Presentation of Excellence Award

At its last meeting, Commissioner Lapinski agreed to draft the wording for the plaque for this quarter's award. She read the draft to the Commission for its review and agreed to send it to Commissioner Davis. Commissioner Davis reported on her contact with the plaque vendor. A preliminary cost for the plaque is \$45 but can be reduced according to wording and she suggested additional comments be put on Town letterhead. Other suggestions were also posed. Per a question by Commissioner Napierski regarding plaque verbiage, Commissioner Hewitt agreed to send samples of wording for previous plaques. Commissioner Davis will call the plaque vendor tomorrow to confirm the character/word limit. She asked if the business would have someone present at the Town Council meeting to receive the award. A call to the business for a commitment to appear at the Town Council meeting was a past practice as stated by Commissioner Hewitt.

8) New Business:

a) Sustainable CT

1. Presentation on C-PACE (Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy ) financing – Christina Tsitso, Associate of Financing Programs, Connecticut Green Bank

This item was moved up on the Agenda.

b) Improve Business Awareness

1. Maintaining a social media presence

a. Discussion of business forum page

Asst. Planner Bezanson reported on information sent to her by Commissioners Davis and Hewitt concerning the current EDC Facebook page; a place to present information on businesses, meetings, webinars, training sessions, and job postings.

b. Discussion of town media policy

Asst. Planner Bezanson reported per the Town Social Media Policy that staff will receive information that is posted as is done with Youth Services. Per her discussion with other commissions, Facebook pages were produced a while ago and only staff can post. Parks & Recreation can post comments. A notice will be put on the site to contact the EDC or call the staff office. The original intent of the EDC Facebook page was a more interactive and timely way to get information to the public, according to Commissioner Napierski, and monitoring for social appropriateness. With staff updates, posts would be updated timelier. Asst. Planner Bezanson referenced the source of information would stem from Commission members and staff knowledge.

c. Discussion of other commission pages and how they are maintained

Asst. Planner Bezanson also reported she did not have the time to meet regarding the creation of a government page for the EDC. A link from the Montville Forum regarding critical information for posting was suggested by Commissioner Davis. The Commission webpage was accessed by Asst. Planner Bezanson for review of it.

2. Welcome New Businesses

a. Review of New Business Report

Asst. Planner Bezanson responded to a question from Commissioner Napierski about mobile detailing.

b. New Business Introductory Letter

Commissioner Napierski reported a draft of the introductory letter was discussed at the last meeting. Commissioner Hewitt will send a sample of one used previously.

c. Brochure for new businesses

Asst. Planner Bezanson commented the existing brochure needed a better design that she worked on but did not bring with her. Specific changes concerning funding contact information should be updated on the brochure that can be a good tool for those without a computer. The Commission was charged with reviewing the brochure as homework and come back with a list of what they want to see on it. Commissioner Hewitt commented on brochure templates on Microsoft Word. Commissioner Napierski agreed to take on this task.

c) Staff Updates:

1. Planning and Zoning Commission application update.

Asst. Planner Bezanson reported on existing applications on the upcoming October 25, 2022, Agenda and of them regarding site plan approval for a Town boat launch, construction of a new fishing pier, and associated site improvements. A new application was also approved for rock salt storage.

2. EV Charging Stations

Per a request for information on EV charging stations, Asst. Planner Bezanson reported on the 40,000 in incentives that can be attained due to this project. There is no intent at present to follow through with it nor does Public Works have any intention for the same. Commissioner Davis inquired if the incentives are strictly for municipalities or for businesses, as well. Asst.

Planner Bezanson will obtain information on this question; she also explained the Town does not have large parking lots to accommodate the charging stations and noted some charging stations are at the Stop & Shop.

9) Report from Town Council Liaison – *No report*

10) Remarks from the Public (3-minute limit)

Co-Chair Napierski asked three (3) times for remarks. There were none.

11) Remarks from the Commissioners and Town Council Liaison.

Election of Officers will occur at the next Commission meeting and the presence of the commissioners was requested. Asst. Planner Bezanson asked the Commissioners to confirm whether they plan to attend a meeting. Town Councilor Yuchniuk remarked Commissioners Gillette and Hernandez had something to do and he told them to respond to the email from the Asst. Planner regarding the meeting. Asst. Planner Bezanson will check on missed meetings and also asked commissioners to appear at meetings to forego the phone link. Town Councilor Yuchniuk remarked whether the Commissioners know of someone interested in joining a commission; if so, have them complete an application. Asst. Planner Bezanson will also check whether the Town has a page or access channel on Breezeline.

12) Adjournment

**Motion** by Commissioner Lapinski; seconded by Commissioner Davis to adjourn the meeting at 8:27 p.m. Discussion: none. Voice vote: 4-0, all in favor. Meeting adjourned.