

**Town of Montville**  
**Economic Development Commission**  
**Regular Meeting Minutes – March 16, 2026 – 6:00 p.m.**  
**Room 203- Town Hall**  
**310 Norwich-New London Turnpike, Uncasville, CT 06382**

**Comments will only be accepted at times designated for public comment by the Chairperson of the meeting. The Montville Town Council Rules of Procedure, decorum, timeliness, and suitability shall be followed and enforced.**

**1. Call to Order**

Commissioner Hewitt, acting chair, 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, Rich Kohlbrecher and Carmelo Rodriguez. Chairperson Mickey Gillette, Vice-Chair Meracus Hernandez and Commissioner Sheelagh Lapinski were absent. A quorum was present.

Land Use and Development Director Dennis Goderre, Assistant Planner Meredith Badalucca and Mayor Lenny Bunnell were also present. Town Council Liaison Rachael Novak was absent.

**4. Alterations to the Agenda -- None**

**5. Approval of Meeting Minutes**

a) February 18, 2026

**Motion** by Commissioner Kohlbrecher; seconded by Commissioner Davis to approve the EDC Regular Meeting Minutes of February 18, 2026. Discussion: none. **Voice vote: 4-0-0, all in favor. Motion approved.**

**6. Remarks from the Public (3-Minute Limit)**

Commissioner Hewitt asked three (3) times for remarks. There were none.

**7. Standing Business**

a) Report from Town Council Liaison – No report

b) EDC Commission Communications -- None

c) New Business Report

Commissioner Hewitt noted the February 2026 New Business Report. The new businesses for the month include a law office; a home online sales/instructor/direct fulfillment firearms business; and a home drone/digital marketing and real estate photography business. There are no businesses as of yet for the month of March.

d) Project Update

Director Goderre remarked on a public hearing to be held on March 26, 2026 in the Town Hall Chambers at 6:00 p.m. that will present initial recommendations for the Route 32 – Route 163 project related to the CIF Grant. The vision for the three (3) areas that encompass the project include the Town Center, the Palmertown area and the youth services Depot Road area. In addition, a plan to guide long-range housing and commercial development will be presented. The data from an online survey that was active for 1½ months will be reviewed. In addition, feedback is welcomed from the Commission in the form of question or answers. Adjustments will be made for the final project presentation to the Town Council in late May or June of this year. The Director noted that there is a lot of enthusiasm in the community that will facilitate discussion. Additionally, there will be an evaluation for new zoning regulations, conservation and development on March 27<sup>th</sup>. In response to a Commission question, the Director reported that the questionnaire was done in late January and the survey was digitally online and the results from it can be shared. He also reported that he and Mayor Bunnell had met with Planning & Zoning and a *The Day* reporter concerning an article pertaining to the project. A new reporter made contact today as the previous reporter no longer works at the newspaper.

Director Goderre also reported on a meeting held concerning TIF (Tax Increment Financing) District. He, Assistant Planner Badalucca, and the Town Council Chairperson May met with the Director of Finance and the Town Assessor toward a desire to move forward. Two (2) draft district locations will be explored and communications from the Commission is requested. In his discussion with the Commission, the Director referenced two (2) Town maps for a Town Center and Gateway North (just north of the casino, PTA Lane, and a school) TIF Districts. He described vacant parcels on these maps and recognized that further analysis is needed to determine the assessed value of all TIF Districts. Policy is needed as to how these districts will be established and managed. This concept was presented to the Town Council in February. The aim is to achieve net positive value on the properties that will be diverted for future development related to the area. Any tax increases will not be felt as property owners will not pay more or less; just their normal taxes.

Discussion was had concerning tax liability and an adjusted tax rate concerning the need for funds by the Town affecting the mill rate, tax base and the budget (Hewitt). Director Goderre explained that the decision that can be made by the Town Council to divert funds for dire needs, a school for example. Another option would be credit enhancement agreement if a bond is wanted. Difficulty explaining the process could result in pushback from Town residents in addition to comprehending landowner growth and reinvestment plus the reluctance in the past of the Town Council. These are concerns whereby feedback is important for infrastructure, marketing, training and businesses et al. Mayor Bunnell noted that these actions and this program are what the EDC is all about—to make recommendations to the Town Council and/or resolution given the information provided. The Director suggested a proposal about an advisory committee of the Commission that would include specifics on the percentage of the district into the fund and what it will be used for. The level of involvement of the Commission and what and when would it make recommendations or details on the same was acknowledged given that a lot of decisions are made by the Town Council. Thus, the Commission would be

giving the framework to approve adoption by the end of the year (Kohlbrecher) and a master forwarded to Planning & Zoning 90 days beforehand and certified by audit.

The next meeting of the Town Council is on April 12<sup>th</sup>, and a packet will be sent to the Mayor should the Commission want to be advisory and have something for referral, per Director Goderre. However, the motion would be a recommendation from the Planning and Zoning Commission. The Director also reported on the receipt of the \$125,000 award for a housing plan that will move forward; Planning & Zoning will ask for a representative for a subcommittee that will be included in the 2026-2027 budget. The housing plan is for a build from November 2025, and a meeting will be held tomorrow on the same. Assistant Planner Badalucca reported on a Public Hearing at the March 24<sup>th</sup> meeting of Planning & Zoning that involves a zone change from R-20 to government owner at 50 Cook Drive on behalf of the Town WPCA. Revision of part of the zoning regulations will be heard at a Public Hearing of Zoning Board of Appeals on April 8<sup>th</sup>. The Director reported on a March 24<sup>th</sup> meeting at 6:00 p.m. pertaining to discussion of PTA Lane where a developer will be present and another is being considered that is requesting public funds. Discussion was had on its status as a large commercial development, traffic concerns with school buses and vehicles and widening and coordination for school access that can be insisted upon by Planning and Zoning for conservation and development. It was noted that the area is hard to get into (Davis) and that it has increased traffic in a heavily residential neighborhood where fire trucks and school buses will not fit (Rodriguez).

#### **8. Mission Statement/Purpose**

Commissioner Hewitt reported on a mission statement crafted previously by the Commission; he will bring it to the next meeting or have it sent out. He also reported on having a spreadsheet to target the range of a business. Assistant Planner Badalucca reported on receipt of an ESL spreadsheet from him that is being used in the office.

#### **9. Business Outreach**

Director Goderre reported that nothing has been done internally but the Department will have a new assistant. Commissioner Hewitt inquired about the new business owner letter that the assistant is to send out that was explained by Assistant Planner Badalucca. Discussion was had about Commission outreach and quarterly public meetings. Also discussed was a mailing list that can send information from email to Facebook (Hewitt); or a message can say visit our webpage. Further discussion was had about getting information out to the public via social media and a location that lists where businesses can obtain and send information. The Director noted that there is an internal policy that must be adhered to.

#### **10. Remarks from the Public (3-minute limit)**

Commissioner Hewitt asked three (3) times for remarks. Mayor Bunnell urged the Commission to be present on May 24<sup>th</sup> at the Planning & Zoning Meeting and May 25<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m. He also noted that May 12<sup>th</sup> is the Town Council meeting. Municipal development chartered by the State is a topic. Director Goderre remarked that the development is free and

has a fund for construction projects. It was asked what is the cost of ownership to the developing district (Hewitt).

### **11. Adjournment**

**Motion** by Commissioner Kohlbrecher, seconded by Commissioner Davis to adjourn the meeting at 7:14 p.m. Discussion: none. **Voice vote: 4-0-0; all in favor. Meeting adjourned.**

Respectfully submitted by,

Gloria J. Gathers  
Recording Secretary  
Town of Montville