

TOWN OF MONTVILLE
Economic Development Commission
Regular Meeting Agenda – June 15, 2020 – 7:00 p.m.
Virtual

The Town of Montville will be utilizing a virtual FreeConferenceCall service for this meeting.

Please call number below to attend the meeting at:

[1-\(605\) 313-5935](tel:1-605-313-5935)

[PIN # 401237](#)

On March 14, 2020 Governor Ned Lamont issued an Executive Order 7B suspending in person open meeting requirements, and to hold such meetings or proceedings remotely by conference call, videoconference or other technology.

Link: <https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/Office-of-the-Governor/Executive-Orders/Lamont-Executive-Orders/Executive-Order-No-7B.pdf>

For all publicly broadcasted meetings, public comment on agenda items or topics in accordance with the Town charter may be submitted in writing in advance or by live audio via FreeConferenceCall.

Written comments must be emailed to the Town Clerks Office at townclerk@montvillect.org at least **1 working day in advance** (if the meeting is on a Monday the questions must be submitted by close of business the previous Friday).

Written comments may not be read in their entirety, but rather similar messages may be aggregated or paraphrased for submission to the Economic Development Commission.

Live audio comments may be made via FreeConferenceCall by calling from your telephone.

Comments will only be accepted at times designated for public comment by the Chair of the meeting. The Economic Development Rules of Procedure, decorum, timeliness and suitability shall be followed and enforced in the same manner as if the meeting were held in person.

- 1) Call to Order
Chairman Hewitt called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.
- 2) Pledge of Allegiance
All stood and pledged the flag.
- 3) Roll Call
Commissioners present were Mickey Gillette (7:16 p.m.) Heather Harris, Sheelagh Lapinski, Christopher Napierski, Jim Toner, and Chairman Walter Hewitt. Also present was Town Planner Marcia Vlaun. Town Council Liaison Colleen Rix was absent. A quorum was present.
- 4) Alterations to the Agenda -- *None*
- 5) Remarks from the Public regarding items on the Agenda (3-minute limit)
Chairman Hewitt asked three (3) times for remarks. There were none.
- 6) Remarks from Marcia Vlaun
Town Planner Vlaun described the pandemic as “the most perplexing, unstable atmosphere” in her 40-year career. She spoke of the different categories effecting unemployment—furloughs, PPE, businesses that may or may not reopen as well stable aspects of the Town economy such as Electric Boat, Stop & Shop, Home Depot that remained open. She also commented on new housing activity, the data storage as well as the unknown of home occupation jobs impacting Montville. Town Planner Vlaun also mentioned the delayed Plan of Conservation & Development and the requests for outdoor dining of Town restaurants that were completed by her department within one (1) day and discussed at the last Commission meeting.

Chairman Hewitt mentioned incentives and referenced Groton EDC Initiatives. Town Planner Vlaun responded there are not incentives in general but spoke of the potential for incentives for manufacturing PPE in Connecticut. She also noted the difference between Groton and Montville that has one major site, the former Faria property, concerning eligibility for the Manufacturing Assistance Act. Town Planner Vlaun said developers are looking for a fast turnaround time and fast-track permitting, one way in which Montville can compete. She stated that the goal should be to determine what would add value to the Grand List. A need for modern apartments for Electric Boat expansion, to attract younger people to stay and add stability to the Town Grand List, declining school enrollment and household sizes were topics referenced by Town Planner Vlaun. Chairman Hewitt thanked Town Planner Vlaun for her input and insight. (*Town Planner Vlaun left the meeting at 7:24 p.m.*)

- 7) To Consider and Act on a Motion to approve:
 - i) The Minutes of the Regular Meeting of May 18, 2020
Motion by Commissioner Lapinski; seconded by Commissioner Toner to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of May 18, 2020. Discussion: none. Voice vote, 6-0, all in favor. Motion carried.

Chairman Hewitt stated the minutes from the February meeting had not been approved. Motion by Commissioner Napierski; seconded by Commission Toner to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of February 19, 2020. Discussion: none. Voice vote, 6-0, all in favor. Motion carried.

8) Unfinished Business

a. Montville real-estate properties for development

- i. James M. Gillanders, Londregan Commercial Real Estate Group – 3 properties.

Chairman Hewitt reported he had heard from J. Gillanders who was unable to attend the meeting and had no report on Town properties.

- ii. Land Use Workshop 4/29, 5/13 SCCOG (To be rescheduled due to Corona Virus)

Chairman Hewitt reported the workshop was postponed and had not been rescheduled.

b. Mohegan Tribe and our request for contact information regarding retention of businesses vacating the casino – Bill Caron

Chairman Hewitt said there was no news to report on this item.

c. New Business Report

Chairman Hewitt said there was not a business report for this month stating the last one was in February. Commissioner Lapinski questioned how many businesses were closing commented on Town businesses particularly those that may not be reopening.

d. Business Survey – Heather

Commissioner Harris said she converted the business survey into a Survey Monkey email and used the EDC email address to send it to some businesses but said since she had no responses from it felt she needed to conduct the survey in person. Chairman Hewitt suggested sending a general email to the businesses to wish them well and ask if there was anything the Commission could do for them.

e. Chamber Business After Hours – Heather

Commissioner Harris reported there are no after hour events scheduled but said she accessed the website last week and there were webinars and conference dates for November.

f. Groton - Roadmap of Groton EDC Initiatives

Chairman Hewitt said he posted information about the Groton initiatives on the EDC blog back in February and it had a lot of good ideas. He also commented on information available on a statewide basis and stated there needs to be a way to market the Town of Montville to individuals to get business and residential investors. Commissioner Toner spoke of the difficulty given the current economic climate to come up with a marketing plan. Chairman Hewitt said he was speaking from a planning perspective for strategies following the pandemic. Commissioner Toner commented the topic was reviewed by the Commission months ago to determine Town needs and what would go well within its confines. Commissioner Napierski said strategies would be different given social distance and spoke of delivery services, drive-in movies, day care as examples. Commissioner Toner said masks, capacity limits, and social distance would be the norm and suggested the Commission brainstorm for ideas of businesses that would flourish in the current economic climate and then discuss them at the next meeting. He added that state legislature has already considered what businesses will be viable once Covid-19 is gone. Chairman Hewitt suggested the approach be thought along the lines of short, medium, and long-term. Commissioner Napierski said that online businesses might be a good option and asked whether the Town had the infrastructure

to flourish. Commissioner Toner asked Commissioner Harris on her view regarding marketing. She said she could come up with some ideas but said she was not confident that the barriers are known nor what dynamics need to be resolved. Commissioners Napierski spoke of safety concerns and Commissioner Toner of health barriers for those over 65.

9) New Business

a. Groton Incentives

This item was discussed under 8.f.

b. Montville Plan of Conservation and Development – Waiting on Census update per Marcia Town Planner Vlaun reported that the plan is on hold.

c. Pandemic and EDC Process

The Commission discussed presenting its EDC Recognition Business Award. Commissioner Toner said when Town Council meetings restart they can be listed. Commissioner Napierski suggested having Town Councilor Rix check that the place where the awards are made is open.

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

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

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

12) Remarks from the Commissioners and Town Council Liaison

The Commission discussed the Town's return to regular meetings and the need for social-distance at the Town Hall.

13) Townspeople and Business Feedback

a. Proposed Recipients for Business Recognition Award – *No action*

14) Adjournment

Motion by Commissioner Gillette; seconded by Commissioner Toner to adjourn the meeting at 8:10 p.m. Discussion: none. Voice vote, 6-0, all in favor. Motion carried.