



TOWN OF MIDDLEBURY

ECONOMIC AND INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

**Special Meeting, Thursday June 25, 2020, 6:30 p.m.
VIDEO TELECONFERENCE**

Present: Chairman Terrence McAuliffe
Commissioner Frank Mirovsky
Commissioner Mark Petrucci
Commissioner Armando Paolino

Also Present: Michael McVerry
Thomas Danieluk
Linda Zukauskas

Absent: Commissioner David Cappelletti
Commissioner Ted Mannello
Commissioner Anthony Minchella

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at about 6:45 pm.

Frank Mirovsky joined by Facetime at about 6:40.

ARCHITECTURE REVIEW – Design Change Plans for “Shell Station / Alltown Market” at 504 Middlebury Road.

Attorney Michael McVerry and Project Manager Thomas Danieluk discussed the design and site changes for signage and external colors at the existing Shell Station / Alltown Market which they said were being done to rebrand Alltown Market as Alltown Fresh. Commissioners reviewed site plans and a color visualization of the signage and building exteriors.

A proposal to add a fourth pump with two filling positions to an empty island under the existing canopy was also discussed.

There were no concerns about any of the proposed changes. However, the commissioners did comment about the harsh high color temperature of the LED lighting at the station and asked Mr. Danieluk to consider replacing the lighting with something of lower color temperature, more compatible with the prevailing country look of the town center.

At the conclusion of the review process, a MOTION was made by Armando Paolino, SECOND by Frank Mirovsky and unanimously voted by all members to forward approval to the Planning and Zoning Commission.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mark Petrucci MOTIONED to approve the March 24 minutes, SECOND by Armando Paolino and unanimously voted.

NEW BUSINESS

Chairman McAuliffe told members he had spoken to several commercial real estate brokers and been told that rents and leases purchase prices were high relative to comparable towns. He said he asked AdvanceCT (formerly CERC) to do some research, which they did as part of EIDC membership. AdvanceCT provided a spreadsheet of eight towns, including Middlebury, Southbury, Woodbury and Oxford, plus four other demographically comparable towns.

The data was inconclusive, given the sample sizes, but did show that Middlebury was higher in many cases. McAuliffe said it was important for EIDC to have solid numbers, and know the numbers well, even though Middlebury might be higher than some comparable towns. He said Middlebury was a premium town, with other desirable factors other than price, but those prices needed to be understood by the commissioners when we developed promotional offers and advertising.

Mark Petrucci agreed to take the spreadsheet and acquire more data and a greater sample size and report at the next meeting.

OLD BUSINESS

Website search performance, consultant report

Chairman McAuliffe reminded commissioners of complaints about visitors not finding the EIDC web site because the town web site contained duplicate information. The matter was brought up at the January 28 meeting and sent to the Selectmen's office.

At the advice of AdvanceCT McAuliffe hired an independent consultant to perform an audit of the "online visibility" of the EIDC web site. The findings (see attached letter from Rebecca Mead Communications) confirmed what was said

January 28, and the report and recommendations were forwarded to the Selectmen's office.

Commercial Development Guide Update Status

McAuliffe said he had taken over the update effort and met with Land Use and other Middlebury officials to get the document republished by June 30th. He said Barbara Whitaker had agreed to print 100 color copies using the town's copier contract.

Southbury Web Site – “Bring Your Business”

McAuliffe said Southbury has a section on their web site called “Bring Your Business to Southbury” which contains similar information as our printed Commercial Development Guide. He said he would take the guide information and add a similar section to the EIDC web site.

EIDC Promotional E-Mails

McAuliffe said he wanted EIDC to send out promotional E-Mails, as suggested by Mark Petrucci at several previous meetings. He said EIDC should do this, but on a very targeted basis. He said he would speak to Ed St. John to be certain there was someone to take return phone calls and follow-up. He said EIDC should not send out bulk E-Mails but only personalized targeted E-Mails to specific companies.

ADJOURNMENT

Armando Paolino MOTIONED to adjourn, SECOND by Mark Petrucci and unanimously voted at about 7:04 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Terrence McAuliffe

Chairman—Economic Development Commission

cc. Town Clerk, Barbara Whitaker, Commission Members

attachments: Rebecca Mead Communications letter
Architecture Review letter to P&Z

**Architectural Review
Design Plans for 504 Middlebury Road
Westvest, Inc / Global Montello Group, LP
June 25, 2020**

Memo to: Terry Smith, Chairman, Planning and Zoning Commission.

On Thursday, June 25, 2020, the Economic and Industrial Development Commission met to review the architectural design for modifications to the building at 504 Middlebury Road.

Attorney Michael McVerry and Project Manager Thomas Danieluk discussed the design and site changes for signage and external colors at the existing Shell Station / Alltown Market. Members reviewed site plans and a color visualization of the signage and building exteriors.

A proposal to add a fourth pump with two filling positions to an empty island under the existing canopy was also discussed.

There were no concerns about any of the proposed changes. However, the commissioners did comment about the harsh high color temperature of the LED lighting at the station and asked Mr. Danieluk to consider replacing the lighting with something of lower color temperature, more compatible with the prevailing country look of the town center.

At the conclusion of the review process, a motion was made and the resulting vote by EIDC unanimously approved the proposed design changes as presented to the commission.

Submitted by:

Terry McAuliffe, Chairman

cc: Terry Smith, Chairman Planning and Zoning Commission
Attorney Michael McVerry
Commission Members



June 10, 2020

Mr. Terrence McAuliffe, Chairman
Middlebury Economic Development Commission
Town of Middlebury, Connecticut
1212 Whittamore Road
Middlebury, CT 06762

Dear Mr. McAuliffe,

Thank you for contacting me in regards to the Middlebury Economic Development Commission's website search performance. After our discussion, I ran a website audit on <http://middleburyeconomicdevelopment-ct.org/> to further assess the website's current performance, user experience, SEO/online visibility, and security. The report is attached, and includes recommendations for easy to implement improvements, including the discovery of duplicate website content on the Town of Middlebury's Economic Development page.

Before investing any additional time or resources into improving the site's SEO (Search Engine Optimization) to increase its visibility, it is important that the duplicative content be removed from the Town of Middlebury's website, specifically on <https://www.middlebury-ct.org/economic-development>. Due to the Town's website generating higher traffic overall, the Search Engine's are considering the EDC website content duplicative, and the Search Engine rank is suffering for the same key search terms.

I recommend that the EDC website be a direct link, that opens to a new tab, from the Town website's main navigation menu, and the EDC page be removed from the Town website. If this is not possible, I recommend that the duplicate content on the Town's EDC page be replaced with a short blurb of original content, and a link out to the EDC website. Either one of those actions will, in time, allow for the EDC website to be found for the appropriate search terms, and rank higher on Search Engine results pages (SERPs), driving more traffic to the EDC website.

Please feel free to reach out to me should you have any questions on my recommendations, or on the attached website analysis. Again, thank you for the opportunity to assist you with this matter.

Kind Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rebecca Mead". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial 'R'.

Rebecca Mead
Principal
Rebecca Mead Communications