



# TOWN OF MIDDLEBURY

## Economic Development Commission

**Regular Meeting Minutes, Monday, April 25, 2022 6:30 p.m.**  
**Shepardson Community Center, Room 26**  
**(subject to approval)**

**Present:** Chairman Terrence McAuliffe  
Commissioner David Cappelletti  
Commissioner Nicole Griffin  
Commissioner Frank Mirovsky  
Commissioner Anthony Minchella  
Commissioner Armando Paolino  
Commissioner Mark Petrucci

**Also Present:** Emily Jones  
Robert LaFlamme

**Absent:**

### **CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm with roll call and pledge of allegiance by all.

### **Approval of minutes of March. 28, 2022 meeting.**

Mark Petrucci MOTIONED to approve the minutes, SECOND by Anthony Minchella and unanimously voted.

### **ARCHITECTURE REVIEW – 1625 Straits Turnpike – Middlebury Edge Building 2**

Emily Jones, Professional Engineer from Civil1 in Woodbury, and Robert LaFlamme, developer of Middlebury Edge, described the proposed new 2-story, 16,000-square-foot building to be constructed south of the current 3-story Middlebury Edge complex.

Ms. Jones used a detailed rendering of the new building in its setting, noting that existing curb cuts on Straits Turnpike and the existing parking areas would be used, supplemented with additional shielded parking along Straits Turnpike. There will not be an additional entrance. The new 2-story building will match the architecture of 3-story Middlebury Edge. Mr. LaFlamme said a basement was a maybe, and if built, would be used for storage needed by medical offices.

Materials for the new building would be concrete and dark glass, matching the existing building as close as possible using materials available today. There will not be vehicle access along the back.

Mr. LaFlamme said there was a lot of synergy among the tenants in the building. He said he thought he was bringing medical tenants because the complex was sort of a campus.

At the conclusion of the review process, a MOTION was made by Anthony Minchella, SECOND by Armando Paolino to recommend the building design to the Planning and Zoning commission.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### **2022 Business Survey.**

Anthony Minchella and Nicole Griffin reported on the proposed survey which follows up the one conducted in 2017. Mr. Minchella said he recommended using "Constant Contact" so most or all the survey could utilize E-Mail and benefit from efficiency and automated tabulation. Ms. Griffin said she found that the Secretary of State had a downloadable file of E-Mail addresses for all businesses. Chairman McAuliffe recommended the list of businesses be cross referenced against the list from Chris Kelsey at the assessor's office. Ms. Griffin said she would filter and play around with the lists. There was some discussion about limiting the list to "brick and mortar" businesses and not sending to home based "bedroom LLC's". McAuliffe said the 2017 survey was limited to "brick and mortar" businesses but in discussion it was agreed that a broader survey would be beneficial.

Mr. Minchella said we would design the survey using "Constant Contact" using "radio buttons" to answer questions requiring a selection. The survey would be tagged as coming from the Town of Middlebury. The survey would also contain areas for written answers to open-ended questions on Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats regarding the Middlebury business environment.

Mr. Minchella agreed to have a draft of the survey available on or before the May 23 regular meeting. He said the cost of sending the E-Mail survey would be zero, with Chairman McAuliffe saying the commission could pay for any paper mailing that might be needed. Ms. Griffin said she would sort through the proposed E-Mail list and determine how much, if any paper mailing would be needed. She would share the resultant list with the commission and describe how it was derived from the source business lists.

## **2022 Development Guide**

Chairman McAuliffe said he had circulated copies of the 2017 Commercial Development Guide to Town Hall and Land Use staff for corrections and markups, picking them up in the next week. He said he planned to publish the guide more frequently in smaller batches rather than a bulk printing, to accommodate changes as they occur.

## **Website**

Chairman McAuliffe said that the former standalone EDC website had been consolidated into the town website with good results. During the transition, the old domain name was redirected to the town website. He said the overall cost to EDC was a few hundred dollars less, with the major cost being the AdvanceCT “plugin” of available properties. The 2017 Business Survey Report was added to the list of downloadable files.

## **Research**

Chairman McAuliffe said he wanted to have someone compile a report of what surrounding towns and nearby comparable towns spent on Economic Development. He said most of those towns spent far more than the \$2,000 budgeted for EDC in Middlebury, with several having a paid staff member or other paid arrangement. The towns in the report should include Woodbury, Southbury, Oxford, Naugatuck, Waterbury, Watertown, as well as Newtown and Cheshire. David Cappelletti agreed to produce the report for the next meeting.

## **Reports**

Frank Mirovsky said he had requested a package from Yankee Group for sharing with the commission. Chairman McAuliffe said he agreed that certain reports that pertained to EDC's mission would be good to hear about.

## **Promotional Video**

Chairman McAuliffe said he wanted to continue the effort to produce a promotional video targeted for business owners, developers and investors interested in Connecticut locations who were unfamiliar with Middlebury and performing “due diligence”. He said that despite EDC's small budget, it might be possible to arrange for a professional consultant to guide a video to be largely produced in-house.

The video would be short, perhaps 3-5 minutes, discussing Middlebury's desirable address, location, demographics, unique proximity to acute care centers, aggressive tax incentive program, and seven business areas. In question are testimonials, graphics, maps, narration, and music. The underlying message would be Middlebury as one of the best places to live.

Armando Paolino said he would reach out to art schools to see if a graduate student was available. Anthony Minchella said he knew a person who did voiceovers.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

None.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

David Cappelletti MOTIONED to adjourn, SECOND by Frank Mirovsky and unanimously voted at about 7:25 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Terrence McAuliffe

Chairman—Economic Development Commission

Attachment: Rendering of Middlebury Edge Building 2

cc. Town Clerk, Commission Members

## Middlebury Edge Building 2

