



City of Bristol
Economic and Community Development Board
INFORMATION TO ACCESS THIS MEETING

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Meeting ID: 886 7721 0794
Passcode: 379107

The ECD Board Meeting will be held on Thursday, August 6, 2026, at 5:00pm in City Council Chambers, First Floor, City Hall, 111 North Main Street, Bristol, CT.

- I. Call to Order
- II. Public Participation
- III. Approval of Minutes
 - A. Minutes of the July 2, 2026 Regular Meeting
- IV. Consent Agenda
 - A. Communications
 - B. Economic Development/Grants/Marketing Report
- V. New Business
 - A. Industrial Update
 - B. Downtown Update
 - C. Fiscal Year End Carryovers and Transfers
 - D. ECD Policy Discussion
- VI. New Business by Commissioners
- VII. Old Business by Commissioners
- VIII. Committee Reports

A. City Council Member Report

IX. Adjournment

Per Order of Mayor Ellen Zoppo-Sassu, Chair

ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Thursday, July 2, 2026 at 5:00pm

City Council Chambers, City Hall, 111 N. Main Street & on Zoom

Present: Mayor Zoppo-Sassu, Chair; Howard Schmelder, Vice Chair (Zoom); Council Member Susan Tyler, and Commissioners Dave Mills, Tom Hick, and John Paul Sirko

Absent: Commissioners LaQuita Kearney-Gonzalez, Marvin (Mickey) Goldwasser, and Louise Provenzano

ECD Staff: Justin Malley - Executive Director

Guests: Charlie Talmadge, President – Development Planning Solutions, LLC
Charlie Nyberg, Owner – Associated Architects, P.C.

I. Call to Order

Mayor Zoppo-Sassu called the meeting to order at 5:00pm and led all present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

II. Public Participation

There was no Public Participation.

III. Approval of Minutes

A. Minutes of the June 4, 2026 Regular Meeting

The mayor called for a motion to approve the Minutes of the May 7, 2026 Regular Meeting. The mayor noted the correct spelling of Ken Gallup's name as the purchasing party of Lot #8 in the Southeast Bristol Business Park (SEBBP). No other edits were noted. All were in favor of the amended Minutes, and the Minutes were accepted into the record.

IV. Consent Agenda

A. Communications

B. Economic Development/Grants/Marketing Report

The mayor called for a motion to accept the Consent Agenda. There were no notes of discussion. Commissioner Mills made the motion to accept the

Consent Agenda, and the Motion was seconded by Commissioner Hick. All were in favor and the Consent Agenda was accepted into the record.

V. New Business

A. Industrial Update

Charlie Talmadge provided an update on Integrity Manufacturing, a metal finishing company currently located in Farmington, CT looking to relocate to Lot #6 in the Southeast Bristol Business Park (SEBBP). Integrity has approximately 30 employees and their project is 30,000 square foot building. The site plan will be submitted to the city by the end of July, and in front of the ECD Board in September. Their goal is to start construction in the Spring of 2027.

Justin Malley provided an update regarding 383-385 Middle Street, formerly known as the ESPN North property. Prime Engine Accessories will be occupying a 150,000 square foot facility there. This is a new company formed by Bauer, currently established in Bristol, and FTAI Aviation, a large, globally established business. Prime Engine Accessories will maintain, repair and overhaul jet engine accessories. This company plans for 120 employees within the first three years, with 200 jobs in five. The company expects to open in October. ECD Staff is encouraged to see jobs opening in fields where vacancies were recently created.

B. Downtown Update

Justin Malley provided an update on 10 N. Main Street and 4 Riverside Avenue. Both buildings have one owner and they're planning to convert the top floors into eight apartments in each building. They have parking to meet the need. The first-floor will remain as commercial units.

JHM, the developer of choice for 273 Riverside Avenue aka The Sessions Building, will come before the Board soon to provide an in-person progress update. Currently, they're working with a historical consultant, an important piece for the project, and their architects and engineers are looking at ways to maximize the floor plan. They're also building a relationship with the Department of Housing which is key to the success of the project. The purchase and sale agreement are also in progress. The ECD Board will see the documentation before it goes before City Council.

New businesses opening:

- Sei Bella: an Italian restaurant currently completing renovations and expected to open mid- to late-July
- Tavello: a pizza and gelato restaurant in Building 2 of Centre Square is opening mid-July

C. Façade Project Update

ECD Intern Kaidyn Sigmund presented the following Façade Grant updates on projects he's been addressing during his internship:

- O'Donnell Brothers, 17 Divinity Street: The Grant will assist them with painting and new stucco work.
- Cinder & Salt, 409 Broad Street: This Grant will support the removal of an awning and repair of a leaking roof, as well as painting. The owner has also put up a new sign, redone the parking lot, and had a mural put up.

Kaidyn has also been assisting with the following Small Business Grants:

- Mr. P's Frozen Treats, in Building 2 of Centre Square: Looking to open in the next week. The Grant is going towards some electrical, flooring and plumbing work.
- El Bori Bakery, 170 Riverside Avenue: They had a soft opening Monday, with a Grand Opening July 3rd. Their Grant helped with plumbing and electrical work.
- Sei Bella, in the former Pint & Plate location at 182 Main Street: The Grant is assisting with permanent building improvements and the purchase of a pasta making machine. This machine will allow them to make multiple batches of pasta at a time, improving their efficiency.
- Your Eyes of Bristol, 927 Farmington Avenue: Floor damage from a car driving into the building in May will be addressed with their Grant funding.

Justin Malley provided an additional note regarding Azul Agave which plans to open at 170 Riverside Avenue, the former location of Monterrey Restaurant. This will be the family's second location (the first one is in Wethersfield). Further

updates on them will follow in the coming months. Discussion followed, including the addition of Qdoba Mexican Eats at 735 Farmington Avenue.

D. BOF Transfer Request

The mayor called for a motion to approve the BOF Transfer Request as presented to the Board. Commissioner Hick made the Motion as follows:

Motion to transfer \$50,000 from the Economic Development Expense Account and \$1,000 from the Development Grants Center Square Account to the Small Business Grants Program account and refer to the Board of Finance.

Discussion followed with no changes or updates to the proposed motion. The motion as read was seconded by Commissioner Mills. All were in favor and the Motion was accepted into the record.

E. State Urban Jobs Program

Justin Malley reported on the State of Connecticut Urban Jobs Program for manufacturers and distributors which offers them a five year, 80% tax abatement on their buildings. Applications are typically done at this time each year. Examples of Bristol businesses which have utilized the program include Express Kitchens and Horizon Stone. Discussion followed.

VI. New Business by Commissioners

There was no New Business by Commissioners.

VII. Old Business by Commissioners

There was no Old Business by Commissioners.

VIII. Committee Reports

A. City Council Member Report

There was no City Council Member Report. The mayor requested an update on the Little League signage which had been an item requested and discussed previously in the City Council Member Report.

ECD Intern Kaidyn Sigmund reported on behalf of fellow intern Colin Cavallari and himself, advising the Board that Garrett Printing of Bristol was commissioned with creating a sign to be suspended across Mix Street. The message will welcome the Little League tournament players and their families while bringing

attention to the event. The sign is double sided and can be used each year. Additional support for the Little League event includes social media posts and signage for store windows. Discussion followed.

IX. Adjournment

The mayor called for a motion to adjourn. The motion was made by Commissioner Mills and was seconded by Commissioner Hick. All were in favor and the meeting adjourned at 5:30pm

Respectfully submitted,

*Sharon Arsego
Recording Secretary*

Unapproved

NEW TASTE IN BRISTOL: Pho Cam On owners excited to bring something different to city

BRIAN M. JOHNSON @brianjohnsonBP

Jul 13, 2026



BRISTOL — City leaders welcomed a new Thai and Vietnamese restaurant, Pho Cam On, who celebrated their grand opening.

The restaurant, located in the plaza at 1235 Farmington Ave., opened a month ago in the former Golden Pagoda spot. It is a family-owned business owned by Viengthong Charoensuk, who has more than 15 years of experience in the restaurant industry and previously operated a restaurant in Bloomfield. Pho Cam On is managed by her daughter Jackie Sisavath.

The family is now hoping to get the word out to the community.

“We knew the previous owners were leaving and thought that this would be a great location — we were really excited for the opportunity,” Sisavath said. “It is always busy around here, there’s a lot of foot traffic and there isn’t another Pho spot that also offers Vietnamese sandwiches.”

So far, Sisavath said a lot of customers have complimented the food at Pho Cam On. She said everything is made with fresh ingredients that aren't frozen and the prices are very reasonable. She advised those who are looking to try the food for the first time to try the Pho, Vietnamese sandwiches or drunken noodles.

"We are bringing a different type of taste to Bristol and we want to share it with the community," she said. "We hope you come here a lot and become a regular; we treat our regular customers very well."

One regular customer present during the grand opening was Tim Terwilliger, who owns SuppLife Vitamins & Nutrition in the same plaza.

"I came here for the first time three weeks ago and I was so impressed that I put a video on my social media," he said. "I've been coming here three or four times a week every week. The pork and beef fried rice is so fresh and so good. The owners are so kind and it is so nice in here."

Terwilliger said he was also a fan of the Thai tea.

Mayor Ellen Zoppo-Sassu said it is great to see the plaza is doing well, with a lot of new businesses filling spots. She said Aldi opening another location there soon should bring "increased visibility" for the businesses.

"There are a lot of residents living near Route 6," she said.

Zoppo-Sassu added Pho Cam On did a "great job" with the decor inside the restaurant.

"It's beautiful in here," she said.

Economic & Community Development Director Justin Malley said many people remember coming to Golden Pagoda before it closed a few years back. He said it is great to have another restaurant in that spot.

In addition to the Pho and Vietnamese sandwiches, the menu includes appetizers like spring rolls and shumai, salads, soups, pho noodles, stir fried noodles, fried rice, desserts and teas including boba tea.

Pho Cam On is open Tuesday through Sunday from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. They are closed on Mondays. They offer dine-in, take-out and delivery. For more information, call 860-973-8910 or visit phocamon.com.

Mayor updates Zoning Commission on Vape Shop ordinance

by [Laura Bailey](#) July 16, 2026



Bristol City Hall. | [Laura Bailey](#)

by [Lucas Amoroso-Whittles](#) | *TBE correspondent* | July 16, 2026 |

Mayor Ellen Zoppo-Sassu provided an update to the Zoning Commission regarding a new vape shop ordinance at their monthly meeting on Monday night.

Speaking before the commission, Zoppo-Sassu said she was following up with the commission on a request for parameters following an [ordinance passed last month](#). Councilman Mark Dickau joined her via Zoom.

The mayor noted that the Ordinance Committee was working internally to review the new ordinance following the passages of two new acts by the state: [Public Act No. 26-8](#), and [Public Act No. 26-100](#), both of which, according to Zoppo-Sassu, impact cities looking to regulate vape shops.

"We are going to ask that we have a little bit more time in order to go through some of this," Zoppo-Sassu said. "We also had some great information brought forward by our Zoning Enforcement Officer, which also lays out some additional authority that is granted to me in order to deal with public health issues as they're defined in a lot of these state laws."

Zoppo-Sassu said that she did not have any formal requests at the time due to the amount of work needing to be done by the City Council but did have information to leave for the commission.

“There’s some stats that I’ve written down from my recent meeting with the drug control agents,” Zoppo-Sassu said, “and at the Department of Consumer Protection, and unfortunately, out of all of the vape-type smoke shops across the state, 10% are acting properly, but 90% of them are non-compliant, which raises the concerns to us about really balancing business viability, as well as community well-being.”

Zoppo-Sassu said that the city can partner with DCP for inspections, and the police department was already checking for illegal sales to minors, but zoning has a role in making sure complaints about signage issues or unauthorized work are addressed, reflecting state requirements for applications and distancing from schools and churches.

“This is all information that I really think is right still now the purview of the ordinance committee and the city council to decide how we’re going to roll this out, which pieces are the most important, and then we will go from there with forming some parameters to send back to the zoning commission.” Zoppo-Sassu said.

City Planner Robert Flanagan said that he had suggested the commission could impose a moratorium on any new vape shops from opening while the regulations are reviewed.

“What it essentially means is that tobacco, vape, and smoke [shops], you can’t open any new shops once the moratorium goes into effect, so I thought that was a good first step in again, just trying to stop the bleeding.” Flanagan said. Acting Chair Richard Goodwin said the commission decided not to act on the recommendation.

The Zoning Commission will hold their next meeting on Aug. 10.

Family-owned Mr. P's Frozen Treats brings 36 flavors to downtown Bristol

By [Laura Bailey](#), July 20, 2026



Mr. P's Frozen Treats, located at 120 North Main St., Bristol. | Maleena Muzio

by Maleena Muzio | TBE correspondent | July 20, 2026 |

Mr. P's Frozen Treats, a new family-owned ice cream shop located in the center of North Main Street, will be the newest addition the city's downtown revival project at Centre Square Village.

Decorated in vibrant reds and faux chocolate drizzle, the ice cream shop can be found at 120 North Main St. and officially opens Saturday, July 25, after a ribbon cutting ceremony with the Chamber of Commerce a day prior.

The owners of Mr. P's Frozen treats are husband and wife, Jesse and Danielle Pescetelli, who first met in Bristol and have called the city home for the last 15 years.

The couple explained that they associate ice cream with happiness, and that they wanted to establish an environment where people in the Bristol community can make memories.

"Ice cream is for everyone," Jesse Pescetelli said.



Mr. P's Frozen treats, a new ice cream shop opening in downtown Bristol. | Maleena Muzio

Mr. P's Frozen Treats will serve 36 Hershey's Ice Cream flavors, some which will rotate seasonally, as well as soft serve, milkshakes, "P Storms," which the Pescetelli's described as similar to "Blizzards" from Dairy Queen and "Stackers," or ice cream parfaits. Homemade waffles cones can be ordered with ice cream, and coffee and pup cups will also appear on the menu.

Danielle Pescetelli highlighted the "Bristol All Heart Stacker," which plays on the city's red, white and blue logo, with layers of fresh strawberries, pound cake and blueberry sauce paired with ice cream. They also mentioned that a popular favorite, "Graham Central Station," a graham cracker-flavored ice cream with bits of chocolate covered honeycomb, will be available.

The couple's sons, Liam 11, and twins Lucas and Levi, 10, love flavors "Lil' Blue Panda" and "Superman," Danielle Pescetelli said.

The Pescetelli's said that the name "Mr. P" was inspired by a nickname given to Jesse's grandfather, and the idea that "there will always be a Mr. P," because of their sons, Jesse Pescetelli said.

The couple shared that they hope to open two additional locations in the future — one to hand down to each son.

“This is also about building a legacy,” Danielle Pescetelli said.

She described their current location downtown as “prime.”

“It’s really pretty exciting to be part of [the downtown revitalization], and to see our own hometown hopefully start to boom,” Danielle Pescetelli said.



The owners of Mr. P's Frozen Treats Jesse and Danielle Pescetelli. | Maleena Muzio

Mayor Ellen Zoppo-Sassu visited the store and shared her thoughts.

“I think that this mix of businesses that the Carriers have attracted to downtown is creating downtown as the destination that we always envisioned that it would be when we purchased the Centre Mall in 2005 — I was on the City Council — and when we developed this plan about

carving up those 17 acres and attracting people to the independent parcels,” Zoppo-Sassu said.

She said that what she likes about Mr. P’s Frozen Treats is that “they are Bristol.”

“They’re a Bristol family, Danielle and Jesse, the owners; they live here,” Zoppo-Sassu said. “Their kids go to school here. They are hiring local high school and college kids for summer employment, and they’re very invested. This is something that they’re looking at as a legacy business that their sons may run someday. And they are putting their heart and soul into the design, and they’re over there now testing out their soft serve. They’re making waffle cones and really preparing to get everything just right for the day that they are going to open.”

Mr. P’s Frozen Treats will also donate to local charities through their very own “Cherry on Top” program, in which customers are asked to round up or donate any dollar amount, and in turn, can opt to receive a cherry on their ice cream.

“What [customers] are doing is, they’re being the ‘Cherry on Top,’ and they’re helping us be involved in our community, which is the goal,” Danielle Pescetelli said.

The first recipient of donations from the program will be the Boys & Girls Club of Bristol.

Jon Rulkowski, the director of Resource Development for the Boys & Girls Club of Bristol, wrote in a statement that 1,000 youth are served daily across 12 sites throughout Bristol to help build promising futures.

“Our mission is to enable all young people, especially those who need us most, to realize their full potential as productive, caring, and responsible citizens,” Rulkowski wrote.

He expressed the organization’s gratitude for customers who donate.

“When you choose to round up your purchase or make a donation through Mr. P’s Frozen Treats’ Cherry on Top program, you’re helping provide opportunities for local kids and teens who need them most,” Rulkowski wrote. “Together, we’re investing in the next generation and helping ensure that Great Futures Start Here.”

The Pescetelli’s said they envision Mr. P’s Frozen Treats becoming a staple of the town, and that as a family, they value presence.

Jesse Pescetelli explained that in the past, he was often away from wife and kids because of his career driving trucks.

“For the last five years, I’ve been 700 miles away for 90% of my week,” Jesse said. “This is a very needed lifestyle change for our whole family. I get to be present, and at the same time, I get to work with my best friend essentially.”

To view the full menu of Mr. P’s Frozen Treats or for other information, visit <https://www.mrpsfrozentreats.com/>

SWEET ADDITION DOWNTOWN: Experience ‘ice cream, family, community and connections’ at Mr. P’s

BRIAN M. JOHNSON @brianjohnsonBP

Jul 27, 2026



Bristol's Jesse and Danielle Pescetelli, owners of Mr. P's Frozen Treats, in their new sweet shop at 120 N. Main Street in Center Square Village.
Brian Johnson

BRISTOL — “Meet me at Mr. P’s” — a new neighborhood sweet shop invites people to come experience “ice cream, family, community and connections.”

Mr. P's Frozen Treats, located at 120 N. Main St. in Centre Square Village, held its grand opening this past Saturday. They were welcomed by city and Chamber leaders, whom owners Jesse and Danielle Pescetelli said they have already become well acquainted with on a first-name basis.

The new business employs 18 people and offers 36 flavors of Hershey's ice cream along with milkshakes, parfaits and more. They also carry coffee from Cafe Real.

So far, Jesse Pescetelli said he has been "quite impressed" by the response from the Bristol community. He said customers like that they offer a variety of flavors. The most popular items so far have been strawberry cheesecake ice cream and strawberry milkshakes.

"We saw this building going up and contacted the company, By Carrier, telling them that we wanted to be a part of the new downtown Bristol," he said. "This is a beautiful spot with a great patio; we couldn't ask for better. My other business was as a semi-truck driver and I was always away from home, so I was looking for something where I could spend more time with my wife and our three children."

Pescetelli said the name "Mr. P" references his grandfather's nickname. He said he and his sons will also be called "Mr. P," keeping the tradition alive. If all goes well, he aspires to open multiple locations and give them to his sons someday.

Pescetelli said he chose an ice cream business because "everyone associates ice cream with good, family memories."

“We wanted to be part of people’s happy memories,” he said. “We’re looking to connect with town sports teams and support fundraisers and sponsorships. We’re also looking to work with other businesses like we do with Cafe Real – any way that we can be part of the community.”

As part of their grand opening celebration, Mr. P’s Frozen Treats is currently offering Bristol All Heart “P-Shakes” with red, white and blue Bristol logos.

Mr. P’s is also offering a “Cherry on Top” program, which allows customers to round up to support the Boys & Girls Club of Bristol. Jesse and Danielle Pescetelli said their children regularly participate in the club’s activities.

“Our three boys all go to the Boys & Girls Club for after school programs,” Danielle Pescetelli said. “They are like an extended family over there.”

Pescetelli said she is proud of the growth she has seen in Centre Square Village downtown.

“Jesse and I have been living in Bristol for 15 years,” she said. “We live on Federal Hill and our kids go to school here. We used to come to downtown only when we needed to conduct business at City Hall. We are so excited to be a part of the revitalization that has taken place here. It is better than we ever imagined.”

Mayor Ellen Zoppo-Sassu was joined by City Councilors Susan Tyler and Mark Dickau at the ribbon cutting celebration. Zoppo-Sassu said she is “very excited” about what Mr. P’s Frozen Treats brings to downtown Bristol.

“The continued development of this strip looks exactly like we planned it since 2019,” she said. “I love that Mr. P’s Frozen Treats is run by a local family and that they have hired so many local youths.”

Katie D’Agostino, president and CEO of the Central Connecticut Chambers of Commerce, said she too is very excited to have Mr. P’s Frozen Treats in Bristol.

“I’m excited to see this street filling up,” she said. “It gives us a lot of excuses to go out of the office and walk downtown for some great food.”

Mr. P’s Frozen Treats is open Sunday through Thursday from noon to 8 p.m. and Friday and Saturday from noon to 10 p.m. For more information, call 860-877-2935 or visit mrpsfrozentreats.com.

Rich Farm Ice Cream at Bristol Farmers Market



The parking lot of Express Kitchens, the new location of the Bristol Farmers Market | Lee Cormier, Wings of a Dove

Rich Farm ice cream truck will join the Bristol Farmers Market, along with longtime vendor Twin Pines Farm and others, today Saturday, Aug. 1, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the parking lot of Express Kitchen Showroom on South Street.

Returning and new vendors include Black Sheep Garlic, Better Baking By Beth, The Core Beverage Group (Connecticut Distilling Co.), Gresczyk Farms, Hathor Hill Farm, Perkins Pure Maple Sugar House, Ridge Runner Soaps, Tonn's Marketplace, Twin Pines Farm, Lollipops K.I.S.S., Connecticut Soap and Candles, Litchfield Distillery, LaFamiglia Tedesco, Vue Brewing, Flock & Flour, Wilson Wild Fern & Flora, Halian's Creations, Sicilian Squeeze and Passion Bakery.

Customers visiting the market are asked to access the vendor parking area from Willis Street via South Street.

The Bristol Farmers Market will continue to accept Double SNAP/EBT benefits, as well as WIC and Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program benefits through eligible vendors, helping increase access to fresh, locally sourced food for area residents.

Additional information, including sponsor listings and weekly vendor schedules, is available at <https://bristolfarmersmarket.com/>

Come Sunday morning! Bristol is rolling along as Tavello debuts

by [David Fortier](#)
August 2, 2026

Good Sunday morning!

From all indications, [Tavello](#)—the new neo-Napolitan pizza and gelato restaurant downtown and the latest addition to the storefronts in Centre Square Village by Carrier—drew large crowds for a soft opening Friday.

Soft openings by definition are meant to be a quiet event to help settle staff into a routine and manage the menu and foster operations. From all appearances, this event was anything but quiet. The place was packed.

And so, here is another hopeful sign that Bristol continues to roll along. Not only does Tavello's look like it is off to an auspicious beginning, but it appears to be a place that we have been waiting for and happy to frequent.

Just a little more than a week or two earlier, [Mr. P's Frozen Treats](#) opened at the opposite end of the building. Both join Pure Foods and Monterrey in Bristol's new restaurant row. (And of course, one street over there is [Iron Horse Sports Pub](#) and soon-to-open Italian freestyle [Sei Bella](#) on Main.)

It just feels good to be writing about these new places and others in the downtown area and to feel the excitement. I stopped by Tavello's earlier in the week to say hello, and I found the owner and two others testing the beautiful new ovens that arrived from Italy a few days before. It's worth a trip to check out the ovens alone.

It was a cordial meeting—and the excitement for the immanent soft opening was palpable.

More on Tavello in the coming weeks.

The OM Keystones Association was honored on Wednesday when Jim Clark, president and CEO of Boys and Girls Clubs of America, visited the club to recognize the association and its efforts over many years. The OM Keynote Show will hold its 86th event next time around.

Also in our TBE Sunday features today is the TBE August poetry challenge and a new face, but also a familiar face, in local poetry circles—imagine, Bristol has poetry circles! Joseph Adomavicia or as he as come to be known, Joe the Poet, debuts with “Arbor Mundi,” a reverse poem—simply meaning the poem can be (and should be) read top to bottom and bottom to top.

There is room for more TBE Sunday features, and the hope is that Bristol people will step up. Our new feature, Bristol Stories, has yet to see any submissions. Here's the original description.

A new TBE Sunday feature—Bristol Stories

There is really is never enough of Bristol to go around. So, building on our essay challenge, we've decided to try another approach—Bristol stories. What is your Bristol story? How did you are your family get here? Where did you grow up? Who were your neighbors? Who was an inspiration? What hurdles did you face?

Take one of these at a time, they do not have to be treated all at once or cover your entire life. Just tell a Bristol story. You can submit as a short written piece, a short video, audio. We will feature it in any format. (No AI generated stuff—we want you.)

Anyone can submit their own Bristol story—that's it. Write about your experience of Bristol, and share it with the community in our TBE Sunday selection. Email: editor@bristoledition.org and type "Bristol story" in the subject line.

And a new plug: Yes, you have a story. Send it with a photo that includes people in the story or about the event. If you have issues with your writing, record it, send the audio and TBE will transcribe it and publish it with your byline.

We are looking for engagement from our readers. Poets are warming to TBE and sending their poems. We expect that when Bristol Stories publishes a few personal essays, more people will be willing to share.

And this week, we received a first-time photo submission from Jenn McCann. If you haven't seen her photos—yes, photos, including a vintage black and white of the Bristol 12U girls softball teaming celebrating its victory, sending them to the Little League softball World Series—check this week's "Photo of Week" story. We hope to see more of Jenn's photos in TBE.

And of course, her photos capture the elation over the girls championship walk-off victory over Rhode Island, sending them to Greenville, N.C. for the Little League softball World Series.

The girls play Aug. 3, at 7 p.m. You can follow the games on ESPN 2. Word on the street is that Iron Horse Sports Pub is holding a watch party. Go team!

Finally, we hope you are getting used to our new website. This is our own version of a soft opening, and the tinkering has already begun. I won't go into great detail, but if you have suggestions, please send them along to editor@bristoledition.org.

Businesses flock to growing CT downtown. New ice cream shop and pizza restaurant draw crowds



Mr. P's Frozen Treats dished out 150 strawberry shakes alone during the grand opening in Bristol. (Courtesy)

By [Sean Krofssik](#) | skrofssik@courant.com | Hartford Courant

PUBLISHED: August 4, 2026 at 5:15 AM EDT | UPDATED: August 4, 2026 at 7:37 AM EDT

[Mr. P's Frozen Treats](#) and [Tavello Pizza](#) are the latest of several new businesses adding to the ever-growing roster in downtown Bristol.

The growth that includes more restaurants coming to downtown this summer has been decades in the making.

The ice cream shop is located at 120 N. Main St. in [Centre Square Village](#) and recently held a grand opening during which they served hundreds of people each day over a weekend. The business had out-the-door lines and the ice cream shop sold more than 150 strawberry milkshakes alone last weekend.

Owners Jesse and Danielle Pescetelli held a soft opening the previous week and the ice cream shop serves 36 flavors of Hershey's ice cream. Flavors will be rotated based on popularity. Mr. P's also serves soft serve ice cream, dairy free ice cream and is exploring other no sugar added flavors. The business also bakes fresh cookies on site, according to the owners.

Jobs and a popular product

"We were overwhelmed by the support we actually opened the previous Saturday just quietly to train our staff," Jesse Pescetelli, 41, said. "This was a good stress test. Saturday, we had a line out the door. Everybody was thankful and appreciative for having a new ice cream place downtown."



Monterrey Mexican Restaurant relocated to Monterrey Mexican Restaurant in downtown Bristol last November. (Courtesy)

"It was emotional because we have been building this for a long time," he added. "I've been sacrificing my time with my family on the road for many years and this is a chance for us to be local, small business owners. Eventually, we will get to spend more time with our children here."

The Pescetellis have three school-aged sons and prior to opening the Mr. P's, Jesse Pescetelli was a truck driver for [Clean Harbors](#) for four years and drove back and forth from Connecticut to Cincinnati twice a week.

"I was on the road a lot and away from home a lot. I was always looking to spin off into another business, especially something where I can be part of my community," he said. "I wanted to be part of the community in a business, but I couldn't determine what that business was going to be. We started researching."

Keep Watching

Eventually, the couple who have lived in Bristol for 15 years, decided on ice cream and, instead of driving to Ohio, Jesse Pescetelli's commute is about two miles from his Bristol home. They closed on their location at Centre Square Village about a year ago. He said the space "checked all of the boxes."

"I love my job now," Jesse Pescetelli said.

Jesse Pescetelli said he hired 19 part-time workers, mainly young people from Bristol starting their first job. The business seats about 20 indoors and another 20 outdoors.



Bristol Health on Main Street in downtown Bristol. (Courtesy)

Bringing a 'vibe' to Bristol

Jesse Pescetelli said Farmington-based [By Carrier](#) built the two Centre Square Village buildings and noted that he's happy to work with them. The buildings house a total of 104 apartments and also multiple businesses on the first floor.

He praised neighboring businesses [Pure Foods](#), owned by JR and Leanne Rusgrove, as well as [Dark Moon Gifts](#), [Axis Barber Shop](#) and [Monterrey Mexican Restaurant](#). Monterrey Mexican Restaurant relocated to 96 North Main St. last November.

"What's most important to us is being part of this community, being part of this revitalization of downtown and getting in in the beginning so we can grow as this grows," he said. "And it's very exciting because Bristol has needed this for a long time. I live here with my wife, my three sons

and a lot of times we would leave Bristol to go out to eat, to find decent restaurants. With this project, there's many restaurants within this two- or three-mile radius here. It's starting to sprout up new life in downtown and we're very excited to be part of it."

Mr. P's Frozen Treats is open noon to 8 p.m. Sunday through Thursday and noon to 10 p.m. on Friday and Saturday.



Mr. P's Frozen Treats dished out 150 strawberry shakes alone during the grand opening in

Bristol. (Courtesy)

The goal of making downtown Bristol a business destination has been more than 20 years in the making and with a flurry of more businesses moving into the area, [Bristol Mayor Ellen Zoppo-Sassu](#) said the area now has a “vibe.”

In addition to Mr. P’s Frozen Treats, Tavello Pizza moved into 140 N Main St. [Sei Bella](#), an Italian restaurant, will be moving into 182 Main Street and is expected to open in mid-August.

Tavello had a soft opening this past weekend, with a grand opening to come. Social media posts showed long lines in the restaurant. According to the owners, the turnout was so great, they ran out of fresh dough.

“Our soft opening weekend exceeded every expectation we had,” the owners [said in a Facebook post](#). Seeing so many of you walk through our doors, waiting patiently, supporting us and leaving with smiles on your faces made all the hard work worth it.”

The owners noted that the pizzas are made with a signature dough that must ferment for 48 hours.

“From the bottom of our hearts, thank you for making our very first weekend so special. This is only the beginning, and we can’t wait to continue this journey with the Bristol community,” the owners said.

Agave Azul Mexican Restaurant will be opening at 170 Riverside Ave. later this summer and [El Bori Bakery](#) opened next door to the Mexican restaurant in June. Zoppo-Sassu said she enjoys the new bakery and on Saturdays “because it’s hard to get in there because it’s so busy.”

It’s been a long road back for downtown Bristol. Zoppo-Sassu said the downtown struggle dates back more than 70 years, when the [Flood of ’55](#) damaged the area. She said urban renewal followed and was not well received, and the downtown businesses opted to move to Route 6.

The Bristol Centre Mall was built in 1969 and 1970. Zoppo-Sassu said the mall was built and had a “heyday of less than a decade” before the Westfarms mall opened nearby in 1974.

“When we talk about investment, it’s done in such a way because people who live here and who have been watching this know that nothing has come easy and I like to say that up until, we took control of them all, which was another very controversial vote in 2005. There were very few reasons to come downtown unless you were picking up a prescription, buying stamps or getting your birth certificate at City Hall,” Zoppo-Sassu said.

Zoppo-Sassu was a city council member at the time of the 2005 vote for Bristol to buy the 17-acre property for \$5 million that was formerly the Bristol Centre Mall bounded by North Main Street, Riverside Avenue and Main Street.



Bristol Officials and members of Carrier Company break ground for the Centre Square Village at the former Bristol Mall location on Thursday, July 13, 2023. (Aaron Flaum/Hartford Courant)

“We did remediation environmental demolition and had to deal with a few remaining tenants that were still leased out in there for relocation expenses, but we felt strongly that we wanted to control our own destiny,” Zoppo-Sassu said. “The area struggled for 20 years easy, probably more. I would pinpoint the moment that we took ownership of the 17 acres as the beginning of finally getting things back on track after probably another 30 or 40 years of floundering prior to that.”

“To have this brand-new vibe built on the former mall site, which was 17 acres, is really a turning point where even the naysayers are now driving downtown going, ‘Oh my God, this actually worked,’” Zoppo-Sassu said.

Centre Square Village is two buildings that face Bristol City Hall and the Bristol Police Department on North Main Street. They were developed by Geno and Ryan Carrier and each building has 52 apartments in it for a total of 104 apartments. They’re leasing at between \$1,800 and \$2,700. The two Carrier Centre Square Village buildings host eight new businesses. A third Carrier building is also in the works that [will showcase about 70 apartments](#).

“Carrier was the winning developer for the last parcel on the 17-acre mall property. They’re going to start that next – hopefully in a year. It’s a six-story building with apartments with retail bounded on that North Main Street corridor,” said [Justin Malley, the Bristol executive director of economic & community development](#).

“We have all of this other new investment sprinkled along Main Street and Riverside Avenue, which is our gateway,” Zoppo-Sassu added. “We just finished a huge project with the state to realign Route 69 at Route 72, which has brought all kinds of new and interesting businesses into what we call the West End, which is on the backside of downtown. It’s really starting to grow. I think people are noticing it. The word that keeps being used, and my kids roll their eyes when I say it, but it’s a vibe. There’s actually a vibe downtown now, and I’m looking out my office window right now. And there’s three outdoor seating areas.”

‘They only want to go downtown’

Zoppo-Sassu said the Centre Square Village residents who live in the Carrier apartments are out walking their dogs, going to lunch or dinner at nearby restaurants.

“We did not have this before. Then when you come through on a Friday or Saturday night, there’s lots of cars here. We actually are experiencing a fun problem when we have city meetings finding parking spots. We didn’t have that problem 10-15 years ago,” Zoppo-Sassu said. “It’s an interesting mix of food and retail, commercial, and service, and they’re doing what we thought they would do, and that is attracting new people downtown and returning customers as well.”

Malley said the Centre Square Village eight businesses “are a combination of Bristol businesses that came here and expanded their footprint and took a gamble on that and are doing extremely well.”

Can Dogrucan is the co-owner of Tavello, which will specialize in Neapolitan pizza. He imported two 6,000-pound ovens from Italy that arrived in downtown Bristol last week.

The restaurant will be open seven days a week from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. with the last pizza being made at 8:30 p.m. Tavello also offers handmade cannoli and gelato and Italian-theme drinks.

Dogrucan, a native of Turkey, moved to Simsbury last year. He said he grew up in the pizza business, and he worked for his family-owned pizzerias in Turkey for much of his life.

“We have top-quality ingredients imported from Italy. Our ovens are from Italy. My partner also is certified in Neapolitan pizza. We are trying to do everything as it is in Italy,” Dogrucan said.

Dogrucan said his space is 4,100 square feet that seats 100 indoors and about 40 on an outdoor patio.

“We have an open kitchen concept so everybody can see how we are making the pizza, tossing it and putting all the toppings,” Dogrucan said. “Our ovens can reach up to 1,000 degrees Fahrenheit. We can bake a pizza in 60 seconds. That’s the way of baking Neapolitan because it’s high heat and the oven is just making it a little bubbly with the right amount of crunch and also a little bit charry so you can get that full flavor.”

He added that their dough is fermented for 48 hours.

“If the dough is not fermented long enough, it’s going to ferment in your guts. When people are getting that heavy feeling after eating it – it’s not good pizza. We are only using the best ingredients. We are investing a lot of money into our product, for us the most important thing is the product itself,” Dogrucan said.

Dogrucan the business also plans to hold pizza making classes on site and it will be another food option for those in downtown Bristol.

“When you think about North Main Street on a linear basis, we now have a dozen different food choices ranging from Ken’s Grill, which is a food truck that’s been around for 25 years and people will literally lose their minds when he decides to retire all the way up the strip,” Zoppo-Sassu said. “The new places, the hole in the wall places, the ethnic features. There’s something for everyone now. This is really starting to come together at different menu options and at different price points.”

Sei Bella is co-owned by 39-year-old New Britain resident Julien Garcia. He said his restaurant name translates to “Hey, gorgeous” in Italian.

Garcia, a native of Puerto Rico, said he’s worked in the restaurant business since 2008, and this is first he has owned. His primary job is working in restaurant consulting and initially he was looking for someone else to buy the Bristol space he ended up in.

“Bristol has done a great job of growing and developing, but it has to translate 100% to those outside of Bristol...I think there’s potential with this space. We can make something fun, energetic and dope. That’s why I’m here,” Garcia said.

He said his restaurant, which will open in mid-August, is considered “freestyle Italian.”

“It is Italian, but we have flexibility to do international food with Italian dishes. So if we wanted to do a Caribbean lobster dish, we are able to do that. It’s modern Italian,” Garcia said.

Sei Bella will feature house made pasta, ravioli and other essentials. Garcia said his restaurant will have a very small menu compared to industry standards but will be “heavy on specials” such as seasonal ravioli.

The restaurant will seat about 100 and includes 20 seats at the bar area, which will have a full cocktail menu, 14 drafts and wine.



Bristol Mayor Ellen Zopo-Sassu (Courtesy)

“I’m all about helping the underdog and that translated to Bristol and what they are developing here. They are doing a great downtown and I can see the vision of the city. More apartments are being developed, and more people will be within walking distance of the restaurant,” Garcia said.

Garcia took over the property in May and has been remodeling since. He said he kept the core of the building with a “great brick accent.” The restaurant has six walls and several of them feature photos of iconic women in the world.

“The best way I can describe it is that it’s very Instagrammable, right? But not your neon signs, it’s very soulful,” Garcia said.

“This is exciting because we’ve had people clamoring for an Italian restaurant open in Bristol for as long as I’ve been here, which has been a while. It’s cool to see this new young owner. It’s not traditional Italian – it has a modern twist on it. So that’s really fun,” Malley said.

Malley added that [Wheeler Health](#) moving its headquarters to downtown Bristol brought 200 workers to the area each day, significant to the growth of businesses downtown. He said that the move of Eagle Environmental to downtown at 150 Main Street last year also was significant.



Mr. P's Frozen Treats had a ribbon cutting last week in Bristol.

“I’ve been here a while, when I would talk with restaurants in the past or any type of business, really. Let’s say they were interested in locating somewhere in town, I would make it a point to talk about downtown, but I would bring it up and do a little sales work at least to get folks to consider locating downtown. Now, it’s the opposite. Folks call me, and they only want to go downtown. That’s where they want to be. It’s been an interesting ride to get to this point,” Malley said.

Dear CDBG Committee-

I would like to thank you for your support of BristolWORKS! The allotted amount will be used to support BristolWORKS! participants in their learning and development.

Your commitment to our program is much appreciated and shows our participants the engagement from the City in their workforce success.

Thank you-

Kim Ward-Holley

Economic Development/Marketing/Grants/CDBG Report

August 2026

Downtown/West End Updates

- Centre Square:
 - The following storefronts are open or preparing to open: Tavello, Cyriously Hair, Axis Barbershop, and Mr. P's Frosty Treats.
- Staff will provide an update on Sei Bella, the additional downtown restaurant preparing to open at the former Main St. Pint and Plate location.
- Apex Golf, a membership-based golf training facility, is planning to open in the former Biker's Edge space in the coming weeks.
- Azul Agave, located in the former Monterrey Restaurant space on Riverside Ave., will open in August.
- A brief update on the Centre Square "pocket park" parcel and the new Carrier 70-unit development will be provided at the ECD Board meeting.
- ECD staff will provide a brief "Sessions Building" update at the board meeting.

Development Outside Downtown

- Industrial Update:
 - Horizon Stone is nearing completion of its distribution facility in the Southeast Bristol Business Park.
 - AllState Commercial Drive Training School has cleared its lot in the Southeast Bristol Business Park, with construction ongoing.
 - Staff continue to work with Lee Spring, a prominent manufacturer in need of a larger facility to consolidate a few additional manufacturing businesses owned by its parent company.
- Forestville/Other
 - ECD staff continue to work with Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments (NVCOG) on remediation and future parking area at 43 East Main St. Staff recently submitted a draft design for the parking area in hopes of applying for brownfield cleanup funds.
 - Staff are working to connect with the new owners of the former Stephen Toyota.
 - Cinder & Salt continues on its façade improvement project for Broad St.
 - House of BBQ and Bacon will open its storefront at 31 Church Ave. in the coming weeks.
 - Aldi's continues a buildout of the former Big Lots! space on Route 6.
 - Staff are working with LK Glass Tempering at 550 Broad Street.
 - A potential Padel business is considering locating at 550 Broad Street. Padel is a popular version of pickleball that is popular in Europe and making its way to the U.S.
 - ECD, Public Works, Fire and Police personnel, and the Mayor continue to work with property owner who may be open to selling land to host the Police/Fire training complex. More to come soon.

Business Incentives

Small Business Micro Grants in Process

- Working on small grants for the following new businesses:

- Northside Welding on Broad St.
- Hot Side Equipment in Wooster Court
- Bristol Your Eyes for new flooring on Route 6
- El Bori Bakery on Riverside Ave. for buildout cost
- Velour Beauty on its new build-out in the West End
- Mr. P's Frozen Treats on downtown buildout
- Sei Bella on downtown buildout
- Azul Agave on downtown buildout

Downtown/West End/Forestville Façade Grants in Process

- Working with Cinder and Salt, a new business at 409 Broad Street in Forestville
- Working with O'Donnell Bros. at 17 Divinity Street
- Helping Smith Cycles with new garage doors and exterior paint on Riverside Avenue
- Helping the owners of 216 Central Street in Forestville to complete exterior upgrades
- Coordinating façade assistance for the "NAPA" building at 65 Memorial Blvd.

Grants Administration

Grant Activity:

The Bristol Parks, Recreation, Youth and Community Services Department is exploring the possibility of applying for a grant from the **Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership (ORLP)** Program, offered under the auspices of the National Park Service. This is a one-to-one matching program from which the City previously received \$1.9 million to make improvements in Rockwell Park. The ORLP Program grants are targeted for low-income, underserved areas of densely populated cities.

Pending approval by the BPRYCS Board and City Council, an application will be prepared for submission in the coming month.

CDBG Program

- The Annual Action Plan for Year 52 is pending approval.
- Program Year 52 started on July 1, 2026. Funds will be allocated to entitlement communities in October at the start of the Federal Fiscal Year.
- Final reimbursement requests from YR 51 recipients are being processed and the program year will be closed as soon as all payments are made.



**CITY OF BRISTOL
BOARD OF FINANCE AGENDA REQUEST FORM**

To: Board of Finance Commissioners

From: Economic & Community Development
(Requesting Department)

Date: August 7, 2026
(Submission Date)

For the August 25, 2026 Board of Finance Meeting Agenda
(Date of Meeting)

This request is for:

(Please check the type of request and list in whole dollar amounts)

- ☐ Additional Appropriation \$ _____
- ☐ Transfer from Contingency \$ _____
- ☐ Transfer(s) \$ _____
- ☐ Grant \$ _____
- ☒ Carry-over(s) \$ 7,855.24
- ☐ Other

Approval:

This request was approved by the Economic and Community Development Board at its meeting held on August 6, 2026.

(Department Head's signature)

All requests to appear on the Board of Finance meeting agenda for consideration must be submitted to Jodi McGrane in the Comptroller's Office by 10:00 a.m. Monday of the preceding week of the meeting. Board of Finance Meetings are held on the fourth Tuesday of each month at 5:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers.

Board of Finance Agenda Request Form

Reason for request:

To carryover funds in the following accounts from 2025 to 2026:

Carry-overs list the following:

Account	Account Name	Amount
1044101-531000-G2026	Professional Fees & Services	\$6,702.00
1044101-581120-G2026	Conferences & Memberships	\$1,153.24

[illegible]



**CITY OF BRISTOL
BOARD OF FINANCE AGENDA REQUEST FORM**

To: Board of Finance Commissioners

From: Economic and Community Development
(Requesting Department)

Date: August 7, 2026
(Submission Date)

For the August 25, 2026 Board of Finance Meeting Agenda
(Date of Meeting)

This request is for:

(Please check the type of request and list in whole dollar amounts)

- ☐ Additional Appropriation \$ _____
- ☐ Transfer from Contingency \$ _____
- ☒ Transfer(s) \$ 3,813.00
- ☐ Grant \$ _____
- ☐ Carry-over(s) \$ _____
- ☐ Other

Approval:

This request was approved by the Economic and Community Development Board at its meeting held on August 6, 2026.

(Department Head's signature)

All requests to appear on the Board of Finance meeting agenda for consideration must be submitted to Jodi McGrane in the Comptroller's Office by 10:00 a.m. Monday of the preceding week of the meeting. Board of Finance Meetings are held on the fourth Tuesday of each month at 5:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers.

Board of Finance Agenda Request Form

Reason for request:

Year end transfers to cover overages in various accounts.

Transfer(s) complete the following:

From:	1044101-553100-G2026	To:	1044101-517000-G2026	Amount:	
	Postage		Other Wages		\$1.00
From:	1044103-531000-G2026	To:	1044103-514000-G2026	Amount:	
	Professional Fees & Services		Regular Wages		\$1,120.00
From:	1044103-531000-G2026	To:	1044103-520700-G2026	Amount:	
	Professional Fees & Services		F.I.C.A.		\$150.00
From:	1044103-531000-G2026	To:	1044103-520750-G2026	Amount:	
	Professional Fees & Services		Medicare Insurance		\$35.00
From:	1044103-531000-G2026	To:	1044102-514000-G2026	Amount:	
	Professional Fees & Services		Regular Wages		\$1,740.00
From:	1044102-531000-G2026	To:	1044102-514000-G2026	Amount:	
	Professional Fees & Services		Regular Wages		\$500.00
From:	1044102-561800-G2026	To:	1044102-514000-G2026	Amount:	
	Program Supplies		Regular Wages		\$182.00
From:	1044102-561800-G2026	To:	1044102-520700-G2026	Amount:	
	Program Supplies		F.I.C.A.		\$68.00
From:	1044102-554000-G2026	To:	1044102-520700-G2026	Amount:	
	Travel Reimbursement		F.I.C.A.		\$1.00
From:	1044102-554000-G2026	To:	1044102-520100-G2026	Amount:	
	Travel Reimbursement		Life Insurance		\$2.00
From:	1044102-554000-G2026	To:	1044102-520750-G2026	Amount:	
	Travel Reimbursement		Medicare Insurance		\$14.00
From:		To:		Amount:	
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FISCAL YEAR END TRANSFERS	
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