

ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Regular Meeting
Thursday, November 2, 2023 5:00pm
City Hall West Meeting Room #1 and on Zoom

ATTENDEES: Mayor Caggiano (Zoom), Council Member Panioto, Commissioners Schmelder, Hick, Mills, Verikas (Zoom), Goldwasser, Rasmussen-Tuller, and Massarelli (Zoom)

ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: Justin Malley - Executive Director, Dr. Dawn Leger - Grants Administrator, Andrew Armstrong - Asst. City Planner/Development Coordinator, and Sharon Arsego - Sr. Admin. Assistant

GUESTS: Charlie Talmadge and Gino Carrier from the Carrier Group
Arianna Therriault, City of Bristol Arts & Culture Supervisor
Attorney Tim Furey on behalf of The Carrier Group

Note: Commissioner Schmelder served as the Board Chair at Mayor Caggiano's request, preferring the Chair be in person at the meeting while he needed to attend on Zoom.

I. Call to Order

Commissioner Schmelder called the meeting to order at 5:00pm and led the room in The Pledge of Allegiance.

II. Public Participation

There was no Public Participation

III. Minutes: October 5, 2023

Commissioner Schmelder called for a motion to approve the Minutes of the October 5, 2023 meeting. Council Member Rasmussen-Tuller seconded the motion. There were no changes or additions. All were in favor and the Minutes were received into the record.

Commissioner Schmelder entertained a motion to move Agenda item V. New Business B. Downtown Update to the top of the agenda. The motion was made by Commissioner Mills and seconded by Commissioner Goldwasser. The motion was approved without further discussion.

V. New Business

B. Downtown Update

Arianna Therriault, City of Bristol Arts & Culture Supervisor, provided an update on Downtown Live! at the Rockwell Theater at the BAIMS School, Memorial Boulevard in Bristol. The update included a financial report, events scheduling and variety, and season tickets being an option as more demographic information is gathered. Discussion revolved around more publication of the theater's existence and location, and the general concern about not being able to offer concessions and alcohol for these events. Mayor Caggiano spoke to the recent success of the Rocky Horror Picture Show at the theater paired with the Spooktacular event. He also encouraged marketing the theater in neighboring towns.

Commissioner Schmelder called for a motion to move Agenda item V. Consent Agenda A. Communications to the top of the agenda. The motion was made by Commissioner Goldwasser and seconded by Commissioner Mills. There was no discussion and the motion was approved by all. Item V. New Business A. Enterprise Zone Application discussion followed.

A. Enterprise Zone Application

Justin Malley reviewed previous Funck building project discussions. This is the proposed location by The Carrier Group for climate-controlled storage. That use has been approved by the city. The Carrier Group is here to address the Board to revisit a tax abatement request for this property.

Attorney Tim Furey provided a history of and repurposing for the Funck building. Charlie Talmadge provided an overview looking at the building as a developer and with their plans for climate-controlled storage. Discussion with the Board included noise concerns. Mr. Talmadge advised that the Zoning language includes “impact on the neighborhood” on the special permit classification which provides the City with enough room to evaluate issues if/when they arise.

Commissioner Schmelder confirmed there were no questions from the Board and proposed that the Board not read the Motion due to its length, but instead, accept it as delineated on the proposed Motion sheet they were provided with.

The motion reads as follows:

Whereas, the properties known as 238 Main Street, 13 Prospect Street, 19 Prospect Street, 23 Prospect Street, 29 Prospect Street and 35 Prospect Street are located within the boundaries of the Enterprise Zone established by the City of Bristol and State of Connecticut;

Whereas, Carrier Construction, Inc. has purchased 238 Main Street, 13 Prospect Street, 19 Prospect Street, 23 Prospect Street, 29 Prospect Street, and 35 Prospect Street with the intention of converting the vacant commercial properties to climate-controlled self-storage;

Whereas, per Article XIV, Section 18-201, of the City of Bristol Code of Ordinances, assessments on commercial real property within the Enterprise Zone which is improved to the extent of \$175,000 or the complete renovation of the building(s) facade, whichever is less, are eligible to be fixed for a period of seven (7) years from the time of such improvement and shall defer any increase in assessment attributable to such improvements according to the following schedule: Year 1 (100% deferral), Year 2 (100% deferral), Year 3 (50% deferral), Year 4 (40% deferral), Year 5 (30% deferral), Year 6 (20% deferral), Year 7 (10% deferral).

In addition, per Article XIV, Section 18-203(g) any owner of real property who agrees to rehabilitate such property or construct new multi-family rented housing or cooperative housing on such property located in the rehabilitation area herein designated may, in accordance with provisions of Section 12-65e of General Statutes, make application to the city for an agreement to fix the assessment on the property, during the period not to exceed three (3) years of rehabilitation or construction and for a deferral of any increase in assessment attributable to such rehabilitation or construction...

I hereby make a motion: Under the guidelines of Article XIV of the City of Bristol Code of Ordinances, and pending conversion of the subject properties to a climate-controlled self-storage project to approve the following Enterprise Zone tax abatement schedule for the properties known as 238 Main Street, 13 Prospect Street, 19 Prospect Street, 23 Prospect Street, 29 Prospect Street, 35 Prospect Street:

Construction Year #1 (period to begin November 3, 2023): 100% real property abatement
Construction Year #2: (if required) 100% real property abatement
Construction Year #3: (if required) 100% real property abatement

Year #1 (period to begin following issuance of a certificate for a climate-controlled self-storage facility encompassing the subject properties of this motion): 100% real property abatement attributable to property improvements

Year #2: 100% real property abatement
Year #3: 50% real property abatement
Year #4: 40% real property abatement
Year #5: 30% real property abatement
Year #6: 20% real property abatement
Year #7: 10% real property abatement

The motion was seconded by Commissioner Goldwasser. All were in favor and the motion was accepted into the record.

Commissioner Schmelder entertained the motion to move Agenda Item IX. Executive Session A. Downtown Grant to the top of the agenda. Commissioner Rasmussen-Tuller brought the motion forward and it was seconded by Commissioner Hick. There was no discussion and the motion was approved into the record.

The Board entered Executive Session at 5:42pm.

IX. Executive Session

A. Downtown Grant

Commissioner Schmelder requested a motion to end the Executive Session and reconvene the Regular Meeting. Commissioner Goldwasser made the motion which was seconded by Commissioner Rasmussen-Tuller. There was no discussion. All were in favor and the motion passed into the record.

The Board resumed the Regular Meeting at 5:54pm. Commissioner Schmelder noted for the record that there were no votes taken in Executive Session.

Commissioner Hick read the following motion:

To approve a Downtown Grant of up to \$62,000 – comprised of up to \$60,000 representing a 50% match of a total project cost minimum of \$120,000 and up to \$2,000 for the addition of two full-time positions to its payroll – to JWD Property Development, LLC. dba Jimmy's on the River Restaurant for building improvements including paving a parking area and façade upgrades at 249 Terryville Road and to refer to the Board of Finance for information. Commissioner

Schmelder amended the motion to include proof of flood insurance is in force during the time of the project. Commissioner Mills seconded the motion to amend the original motion to include proof of flood insurance be in force during the time of the project. There was no further discussion. All were in favor of the amendment which was now voted into the record.

In regards to the amended grant award motion, Commissioner Schmelder called for a vote. All were in favor and the motion was approved into the record and the grant was awarded.

The Board then resumed with the Agenda Item IV. Consent Agenda.

IV. Consent Agenda

A. Communications

B. Economic Development/Grants/Marketing Report

Commissioner Schmelder asked for a motion to file the Consent Agenda. The motion was made by Commissioner Goldwasser and seconded by Council Member Panioto. All were in favor and the motion was accepted into the record.

Dawn Nielsen advised that the newly designed Bristol All Heart website has launched and is supported by a marketing campaign on NBC CT in November through December. Another campaign is planned to encourage Bristol businesses to submit their listings on the website.

C. Revolving Loan Program

Justin Malley advised the contract with Community Investment Corporation (CIC) will be ready for City Council approval at the November 14th meeting. When that happens, Justin will arrange for a workshop with CIC and the Board. Discussion continued and included the recommendation of a one year waiting period between different grant applications from one business.

D. CDBG Housing Rehabilitation

Justin Malley advised the Board of the high demand for the Housing Rehab program dollars to the point where there are more projects than there are funds for. A copy of the letter provided to applicants was provided to the Board. The letter sets homeowner's expectations that emergencies such as no heat and roof leaks taking priority.

E. Proposed 2024 Regular Board Meeting Schedule

The Board discussed the proposed meeting schedule for 2024. Conflict dates are July 4, 2024 and January 2, 2025. The suggested alternate dates were July 11, 2024 and January 9, 2025. Commissioner Schmelder requested a motion to move the meeting dates to the suggested alternate dates.

Council Member Panioto made the following motion:

To move the 2024 meeting dates of July 4, 2024 to July 11, 2024 and January 2, 2025 to January 9, 2025. All the other proposed dates are acceptable. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Schmelder. All were in favor and the motion and calendar were accepted into the record.

VI. New Business by Commissioners

There was no new business by Commissioners.

VII. Old Business by Commissioners

Commissioner Schmelder asked about the Dodge Village property on Riverside Avenue. Mayor Caggiano noted that the demolition permit was submitted. Justin confirmed there is a fifteen-day period and then demo can begin. This is the fuel cell data project, part of which the city stipulated the structure be demolished.

VIII. Committee Reports

A. City Council Member Report

There was no City Council Member report.

X. Adjournment

Commissioner Schmelder called for a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Massarelli put the motion forward and it was seconded by Commission Hick. All were in favor and the meeting adjourned at 6:11 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sharon Arsego
Recording Secretary