

AGENDA
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
TUESDAY, December 21, 2021
7:30 A.M.

Via Zoom

- I. Call to Order/Roll Call/Determination of Quorum
- II. Pledge of Allegiance
- III. Approval of Minutes – November 16, 2021
- IV. Website
 - 1. Review of Website Changes
 - 2. “Doing Business in Cheshire”
- V. Economic Development Update- *Andrew Martelli*
 - 1. New Business Announcement
 - 2. Review of Legislative Agenda
 - 3. Update on North End Development
 - 4. Top 13 Employers Final Report
 - 5. Update on State Property Conveyance
 - 6. Business Outreach
- VI. Official Business
 - 1. 2022 Calendar – *Review and approval*
 - 2. Election of Officers
- VII. Grant Update
 - 1. CT Community Challenge
- VIII. Liaison Report
- IX. Adjournment

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**MINUTES
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
NOVEMBER 16, 2021
ROOM 207**

PRESENT: Bill Stanley, Derek Gromko, Don Dobbs, Mark Thomas (Council Liaison), Jamie Ferguson (arriving at 7:40), Michael Ceccorulli, and Yetta Augur (Chamber of Commerce President)

ABSENT: David Pelletier, Peter Nichols and David Borowy (Council Liaison)

STAFF: Andrew Martelli, Economic Development Coordinator

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Stanley called the meeting to order at 7:31 a.m.

ROLL CALL AND DETERMINATION OF QUORUM

The roll was called and a quorum was determined.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Mr. Gromko to approve the minutes of the October 19, 2021 meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Dobbs. All were in favor.

COMMUNICATIONS

There were no communications.

Mr. Stanley began by introducing new commission member Michael Ceccorulli to the members as a longtime resident of Cheshire. He is an attorney familiar with land use. Mr. Ceccorulli stated that he was familiar with the work Mr. Martelli has done in the past and is looking forward to working with him on Economic Development.

WEBSITE

1. Bios of EDC Commissioners

Mr. Martelli stated the he has been working on revamping the EDC website, updating it and making it easier to access. With the help of the commission members he also plans on adding a paragraph or two about each member explaining who they are and some background information on each of them.

2. Commercial listing Service – Advance CT

Mr. Martelli said he is also working with Advance CT that hosts a commercial property listing service specifically for Cheshire. This service is helpful for those seeking to lease or to buy specifically in Cheshire. Mr. Martelli said his goal is to have this work completed by Christmas with a link to the Cheshire Chamber of Commerce. He would like to keep it simple. He is also looking into a Facebook page for EDC.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

1. Zone Text Amendment

Mr. Martelli explained to the committee that the Public Hearing on the zone text changed closed on October 25, 2021 and was adopted by the town. To clarify, he said that certain parcels of land bordering I-691 were not zoned properly. The town was approached in the past about changing the zoning in this area which covers several hundred acres. Therefore, the change was made. A question was also asked about publicizing it for the future so others would be aware of the change.

2. Credit Enhancement Agreement

This agreement basically identifies what the responsibilities of the developer and that of the town are. The developer will basically be installing the water and sewer infrastructure to the other side of I-691. Reimbursement to the developer will not be given until a certain percentage of development has been reached. Regional Water Authority has begun installing water lines and will supply water in the area. Sewer lines have been approved by the State of CT and will also be installed coming from the Dickerman Road area. A pump station will also be constructed. The cost will be borne by the developer.

3. Top Ten Employers

Mr. Martelli had a power point presentation showing the top ten employers in Cheshire. At the top of the list were Bozzuto's, State of Connecticut (Corrections), Town of Cheshire, Macy's Logistics and Collins Aerospace. The total of new full time employees in all the top ten employers is 783 for the year. Mr. Martelli added that Bozzuto's was also contemplating a major expansion and is looking at two properties in Cheshire.

4. Best Practices in Economic Development & Land Use – Application

Mr. Martelli said he has been taking a course offered by CEDAS, which is offered by the State of CT Economic Development Association. It involves a system for good planning and economic development. It will be good for Cheshire to have this certification on our website. He feels that it would also be very competitive to have this for the Town of Cheshire. Mr. Ceccorulli offered his support and said he is on the Board of Directors for CEDAS and would help wherever possible.

5. Report on State Property Conveyance

Once again, Mr. Martelli showed the committee, through power point, the 58 acre area near the I-691 exit ramp that is owned by CTDOT. This property will not be given to the town, but the town has 5 years to market the property for economic development purposes only. The town must have the property surveyed and then appraised and put on the open market. When the property is sold, the state

gets all the money but the town would benefit by getting all the employment and tax revenue from the property. It will remain in state hands until it is sold to a private entity. The issue will be discussed at the next Town Council meeting.

OFFICIAL BUSINESS

1. 2022 Calendar

Members were asked to look over the schedule of meetings for next year. A list of meeting dates is included in today's packet. A motion to adopt the calendar should be made at the December meeting and filed with the Town Clerk by January.

2. Election of Officers

Mr. Martelli noted that the same thing applies for the election of officers. Election of officers will take place in April. Some members are up for re-election at this time, others will remain until 2024.

GRANT UPDATE

1. Ball and Socket Arts

Mr. Martelli said that a grant for \$925,000 has been submitted and if received, it will be used to remove the asbestos, replace the roof and various other projects at Ball and Socket. Mr. Martelli said he feels the response he received was favorable. The first phase of the project could be started by the spring of 2022.

2. Recreational Trails

A grant for recreational trails has also been submitted on November 1st for \$27,000 from the state for the installation of chicanes on the bike path at the West Main Street crossing. It will mean that bicyclists and skaters will have to negotiate the chicane before crossing the street. The town will hear the result of this grant by the end of January.

3. CT Community Challenge

CT Community Challenge grant has also been made available. It is for community wide projects and must be submitted by the end of January. If received, the possible uses could be Bartlem Park or a parking lot at Ball and Socket.

LIAISON REPORTS

Mr. Thomas reported that there will be a ribbon cutting ceremony this Thursday at Trinity Health, on December 2 a ribbon cutting at Oak Street Tavern and on January 20 other small shops opening. The Chamber holiday party at the Farms Country Club will be held on December 8, 2021.

Ms. Augur reported that on December 1, 2021 Women's Business will be on Good Morning America and on December 8, 2021 the awards ceremony will be held and Channel 8 will be there. The chamber also encourages people to shop local and receive gift cards.

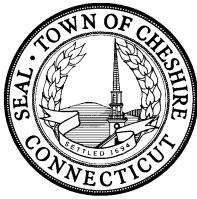
ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Ceccorulli and seconded by Ms. Ferguson. All were in favor.

The meeting ended at 8:20 a.m.

Attest:

Patricia W. Kuzmak, clerk
Economic Development Commission



MEMORANDUM
TOWN OF CHESHIRE
84 SOUTH MAIN STREET, CHESHIRE, CONNECTICUT 06410
Telephone (203) 271-6660 FAX (203) 271-6639

Adopted December 14, 2021

TO: Town Council Members
FROM: Sean M. Kimball, Town Manager
SUBJECT: Legislative Recommendations 2022

The 2022 State Legislative session will run from February 9th to May 4th. In anticipation of our legislative delegation's deliberations, we have developed the following list of draft recommendations, which identifies our proposed legislative priorities. These recommendations have been developed in discussions with Town Staff, meetings and conversations with staff at the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities (CCM) and other municipalities, and in some cases build upon prior year recommendations that were not ultimately resolved at the state level. Similar to last year, this year's proposals are being divided into those that are more generally applicable to other communities versus those that are specific to Cheshire.

General Legislative Requests

1. Juvenile Justice Reform

Many towns in Connecticut have experienced a dramatic increase in car break-ins and thefts over the past several years. The prevailing opinion of police chiefs across the state including Cheshire's Chief Dryfe, is that recent changes to laws related to juvenile crime penalties have led to juveniles feeling emboldened and nearly immune from punishment if caught. We recognize this is a complicated issue with many passionate advocates on both sides, but we encourage our legislative delegation to find a workable solution soon before there is a further escalation in the seriousness of these crimes or a potentially deadly confrontation occurs.

2. Prevailing Wage

During the 2017 session of the Legislature, the State adopted a revision to the prevailing wage threshold for new construction, increasing it from \$400,000 to \$1,000,000, which is saving the Town a significant amount of money on projects that fall within this range. Cheshire consistently lobbied for this revision over many years and this was the first time since 1991 that the limit was increased.

However, while the threshold for prevailing wage requirements for new construction is now \$1,000,000, the threshold for renovation projects has remained at \$100,000. With tight budgets, towns like Cheshire are increasingly using renovation projects to maintain our infrastructure as opposed to new construction. And with the cost of materials and labor increasing, the \$100,000 is simply too low of a threshold to incur the added costs of prevailing wage requirements. Therefore, we are again advocating for an increase to the threshold for renovation projects to at least \$500,000, and also recommending that both thresholds, for new construction and renovation should be indexed annually to reflect the effect of inflation.

3. Binding Arbitration

Require that all binding arbitration cases proceeding pursuant to Section 7-473c. of the Connecticut General Statutes must be concluded within a six-month time period from the commencement of the proceedings, and that the time frame may be extended only upon mutual agreement of the parties for one three-month time period.

Currently there is no time limit imposed for completion of a binding arbitration case which can and has resulted in awards occurring many months after a labor contract expires. This protracted process can delay a resolution to the point of significant municipal fiscal and budgetary disruption due to continued uncertainty of wage and benefit costs, loss or delayed opportunities to achieve savings proposals and increased legal and arbitration costs. Cheshire has experienced the consequences of this open ended time limit in recent years with a previous Police contract, which was in arbitration for eleven months and settled 23 months after expiration in June 2012.

Cheshire-Specific Requests

4. Transfer of School Bus Depot property from State to Town of Cheshire

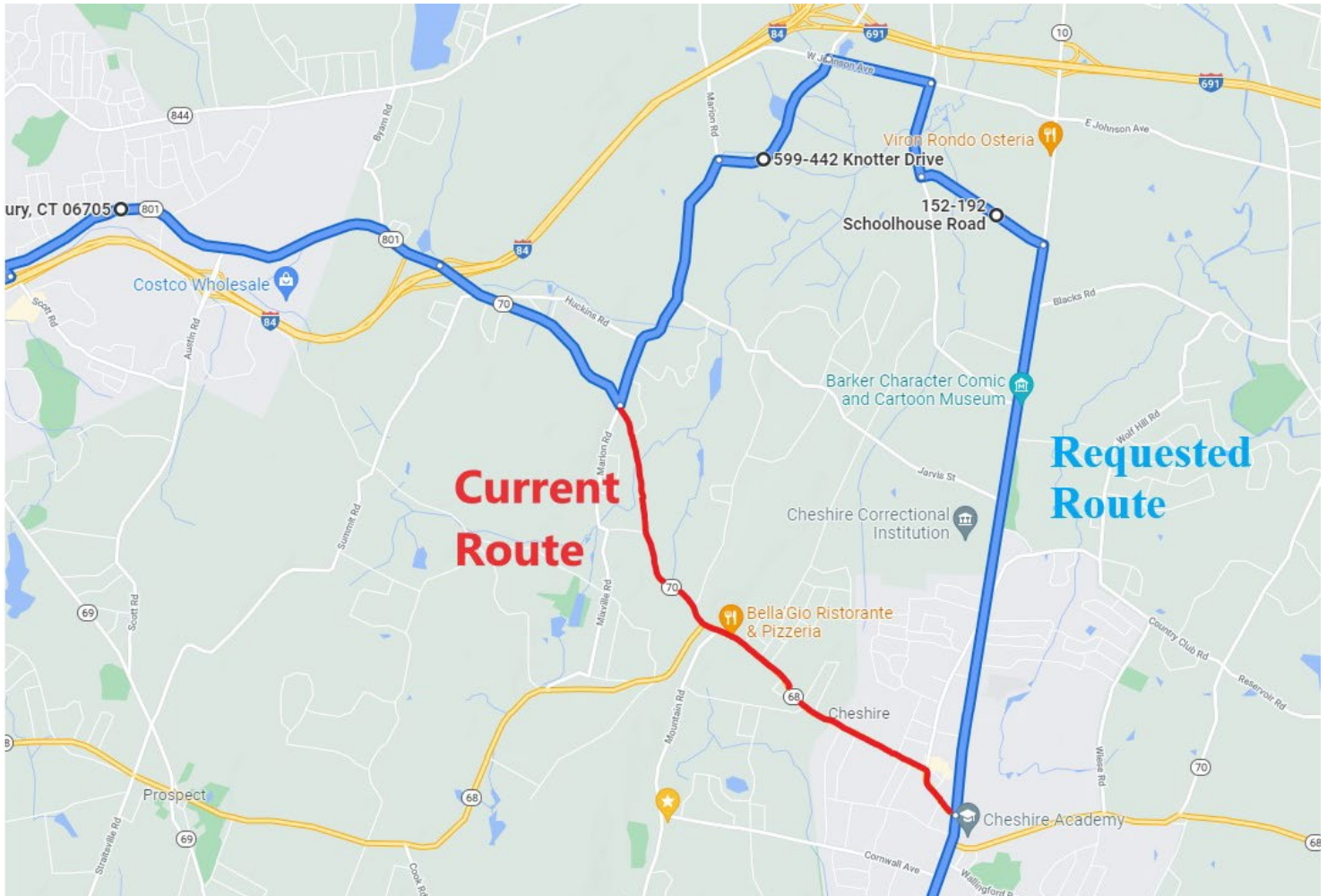
The Town leases 3.26 acres of State property on Sandbank Road which houses the bus depot for the Cheshire Public Schools, for \$1 per year. The Town maintains said property. State transfer of said property to the Town would enable the Town to construct permanent structures and allow flexibility to further utilize the area. The loss of revenue to the State is minimal. This request was made last year, a bill was raised and the Town gave testimony in support, but ultimately the conveyance was not taken up for a vote.

5. Expanded Bus Service Route to Assist Cheshire's Industrial/Commercial Employers

This request should not require legislative action by the General Assembly, but we would ask for the assistance of our legislative delegation on this issue affecting a number of Cheshire's largest employers. It is well known that Cheshire has very limited access to public transportation. But the issue is particularly significant in our town's industrial/commercial areas where workforce access is most critical. Major businesses in the area of Knotter Drive, Peck Lane and Schoolhouse Road including Macy's Logisitics, Kurtz Farms and Bozzuto's are looking for improved access to employees who may require public transit from the Waterbury or New Haven metropolitan areas. These employers have approached the Town asking for assistance from CT transit in this area as the labor market is becoming increasingly challenging.

Presently the CT Transit route between New Haven and Waterbury travels up Route 10, turning left onto Main Street/West Main near Cheshire Town Hall and proceeding to Waterbury via Route 70. Ideally, some bus routes could be expanded to include a new route along Schoolhouse Road, Peck Lane, W. Johnson Ave., Knotter Drive and Marion Road, before returning to Route 70. This route would have the added benefit of providing improved transit options for Department of Corrections employees at the Cheshire Correctional and Manson Youth Institutions.

(See Attached Map)



6. Repeal of House Bill No. 6688- Public Act No. 21-177- *An Act Concerning a Highway Use Fee*

This request is for consideration to repeal the above referenced highway use fee approved by the State Legislature in June of 2021 to commence on or after January 1, 2023. Public Act No. 21-177 imposes a tax on vehicles with a gross weight of twenty-six thousand pounds or greater and carrying a classification between Class 8 and Class 13. For each calendar month a tax is imposed on every carrier on each motor vehicle for each mile traveled within the State. Each carrier shall calculate the number of miles and multiply it by the given rate based on the gross weight in pounds of the vehicle. Tax rates range from 26,000lbs. at 0.0250 per mile to 80,001lbs. and over at 0.175 per mile.

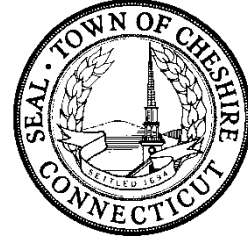
The purpose of this Act was to raise revenue for Connecticut's transportation infrastructure. In light of recently approved Federal funding earmarked directly for infrastructure purposes this tax may no longer be needed. Cheshire's major industries will be directly impacted by this tax as their distribution vehicles fall within the gross weight target of the tax.

Top Employers
2020 2021 Employee Counts

	Employer	Employees 2021 ⁽¹⁾	Employees 2020	Change	Rank	Percentage of Total Town Employment ⁽²⁾
1	Bozzuto's Inc	1,773	1,227	546		11.80%
2	State of CT Dept. Correctional Facilities	1038	1021	17		6.91%
3	Town of Cheshire	962	957	5		6.40%
4	Macy's Logistics	680	523	157		4.53%
5	Whole Foods	317	245	72		2.11%
6	Collins Aerospace	301	325	-24		2.00%
7	Hanwha Aerospace	253	253	0		1.68%
8	Omnicare	220	220	0		1.46%
9	Elim Park Baptist Home	199	194	5		1.32%
10	Eversource	167	167	0		1.11%
11	Housing Authority Insurance	160	148	12		1.07%
12	SLR Consulting	120	120	0		0.80%
13	Napoli Foods	95	87	8		0.63%
			New Employees	798		
	⁽¹⁾ Full - Time					
	⁽²⁾ Percentage of CT Department of Labor Quarterly Census by Employment and Wages, by Town 2021 Q1 15,021 jobs					

TOWN OF CHESHIRE

Economic Development
84 South Main Street
Cheshire, Connecticut 06410
203-271-6670 • Fax 203-271-6688



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION MEETING DATES 2022

The Commission meets the third Tuesday of the month at 7:30 a.m. in Room 207/209 at the Town Hall, 84 South Main Street, unless otherwise noted.

January 18, 2022

February 15, 2022

March 15, 2022

April 19, 2022

May 17, 2022

June 21, 2022

July 19, 2022

August 16, 2022

September 20, 2022

October 18, 2022

November 15, 2022

December 20, 2022

January 17, 2023

(Chairman)

(Date)

***The Meeting Dates and room location are subject to change. Please call the Planning Department at 203-271-6670 for confirmation.**

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
MEMBERSHIP LIST**

REV. 11.19.2021

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