

Town of Winchester - City of Winsted
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
October 6, 2026 6:00 PM
Lee Ann LaClair Room (Blue Room)

COMMISSION

Thomas Carter, Chairman
Deweese Yeager, Vice Chairman
Gary Giordano, Treasurer
Dennis Dressel, Commissioner
Alan Colavecchio, Commissioner
Jess Tessman, Commissioner
Stephen Plumlee, Commissioner

ALTERNATES

Eric Richard
Jamie Coligan, Secretary

TOWN OFFICIALS

Paul Harrington, Town Manager
William Pozzo, BOS Liaison
Kevin Bishop, BOS Liaison
Geoff Green, Director of Land Use
and Development

1. Call to Order and Roll Call - Called to order at 6:05 pm by Thomas Carter. At the meeting were Thomas Carter, Deweese Yeager, Gary Giordano, Alan Colavecchio, Jess Tessman, Stephen Plumlee, Jamie Coligan and guest Deb Jablonski. Geoff Green was also in attendance. Absent/excused was Dennis Dressel. Voting rights given to Eric Richard. Also in attendance were members of the Barkhamsted Economic Development Commission - Timothy Deschenes-Desmond, Todd Winkler, Don Stein, Linda Ganem, and Shannon Chatfield.
2. Agenda Review - Motion to approve by Alan Colavecchio, second by Jess Tessman. Vote 7-0-0.
3. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meetings:
 - Motion to approve the minutes of September 15, 2026 by Gary Giordano, second by Alan Colavecchio. Voted 7-0-0.
4. Public Comment
 - None
5. Treasurer's Report
 - No update from Finance Department
 - Balance \$1,065.09 after Job Fair Costs (signage, water, welcome packets, etc)
6. New Business
 - Welcome Barkhamsted EDC
 - Meet in the common/community room at the town garage office building
 - Shannon organized the Farmers Market at the Town Garage office parking lot.
 - They still have the community gardens - earth day last Sunday
 - Business Directory is on the Town's website
 - Riverton - focus of the town
 - Fairgrounds used for many things - fair, car show, school field trips

- Lombard Ford - having a tough time as Ford is not giving them cars
 - Johnson East - affordable housing, 20 units mostly two bedroom
 - Will be hosting a Winter Farmers Market and Praise Church has offered to let them use their space
 - Skeleton Crawl - extend to Winsted as well - reach out to FOMS
- Air BnB - possible Town Ordinance
 - State leaves it up to each town to decide how to handle
 - Would regulations stifle business - should be safety driven
 - Some complaints were noise, excess vehicles on smaller streets, too many people for size of accommodations, etc
 - Quick internet search had 15 listings but probably more
 - Maybe check and see what other towns are doing
 - License through Town Clerk rather than a permit?
 - Having would also affect their taxes
- What's happening in Town?
 - 508 Main Street
 - demolition permit pulled
 - working with CT DOT to coordinate
 - Wallens Hill project - no update at this time
 - Forsaken Lands site work has started and hopes to open for the 2027 season
 - Tyler Johnson (bike shop) no updates
 - Safe Streets 4 All -
 - Main Street, Newfield Road in the works
 - Get them the Brownfields Info
 - Citgo gas station/gasman - looking to have car sales in back - no updates
 - Kawa Coffee is moving into the old LIVE Space and will open Thursday.
 - Deli and Mini Mart - interior work continues slowly due to contractor issues
 - Former day care building across from LRB is under contract
 - 3 Meadow Street town owned property grant application in on time, capping and paving brownfield site; area to include Eversource gas regulator station
 - 32 Lake Street - new agent supports parking lot across the street, meeting with Paul and Geoff, ideas for space - public/private partnerships
 - Former Gilson space - ambitious plans October/November - a small soccer area in main theater; 2nd floor theater; Padre's space for coffee/crepes; possible gathering space as well
 - Ledgebrook - Lola's Bagels Torrington looking for bigger space - no updates
 - Acreage in Barkhamsted to be listed for sale, 50 acres, Winsted/Winchester records in order
- Liaison Updates
 - Safe Streets 4 All (SS4A) - presentation set for October 3, 2026 at Town Hall at 2:00 PM in the Hicks Room - see Town website for details - Members only meeting set for October 20, 2026
 - PZC/Town Development

- Properties covered in What's Happening in Town
 - Firewood processing text change denied as an allowable use in Rural Residential Zone unless home occupancy is on the property
 - Perhaps create "Heavy" and Light" use regulations
- Cultural District Commission
 - Deb Jablonski advised Facebook page has been set up
 - Work continues on the application to the State for recognition
 - Maybe springtime town walkthrough
- FOMS - Fall Foliage Festival canceled due to weather
- Water Quality
 - Next meeting not set yet
 - Winter will be looking over Wetlands and Zoning regulation revisions
- Sue Grossman Trail
 - Received the \$749,000 grant through trails program
 - Also able to get water/sewer grant to combine with trail construction
 - Cardinal Engineering Review still in progress
- Business Visitations
 - None
 - Barkhamsted EDC inquired on what this was
 - Form is used to visit our businesses and seek out number of employees, contact information for master file
- Ribbon Cutting Ceremonies
 - Recently held
 - Gages Retro Rewind - went well and customer busy
 - Knick Knack Nook - was busy and owner also had goodie bags for attendees - went well
 - Kawa looking for one in the near future to introduce their new space and offerings
 - Jessica's Barbershop, Park Place Hardware - keep checking back with them
 - Yequob Ahif at Deli Mini Mart in old Cumby space will reach out once close to opening
 - Kay's Crazy Deals and Steals - toys, electronics, overstock liquidation items located at 450 Main Street opening soon - stay tuned
- Spotlights - none but Jess is working on
 - State of the Town slide show
 - Updates to Town and EDC Facebook pages

6. Communications

- None.

7. Old Business

- NHCOG/CT Main Streets Promise Program Targets for survey

- Tom has a list of 25 or so and will reach out to Rista with it
- Job Fair 2026 - recap
 - 5th Annual went well with 125 visitors/job seekers
 - 30 businesses
 - Exit survey 2 responses to far
 - Should we do a 6th - YES
- Fall 2026 Function
 - Coming up in a weeks time on October 13, 2026
 - Little Red Barn at 5:00 PM
 - Eversource and Live Green CT to have booths set up
- BAR Grant - no updates
- Real Estate Committee - 132 Florence Street sold by Town
- Restaurant Week
 - Should we do it again in 2027
 - Check with town and restaurants as didn't seem as busy as first year
 - Speculation that some thought the kick off event was THE EVENT
 - Economy also a factor - maybe do just one night
 - Revisit topic in the future

8. Adjournment - 7:42 pm motion by Gary Giordano, second by Stephen Plumlee. Vote 7-0-0

Respectfully Submitted,
Jamie Coligan