PRESENT: Vice Chairperson P. Burnham, Joseph Kennedy, Susan Burnham, Alternate Michael Buganski (sat for Scott Kelley), Louise Neary, James Murray, William Jodice, Daniel Kane, Chairperson David Marsh (arr. 7:31pm)

ABSENT: Linda Jeski, Scott Kelley, Alternates Mindy Lewis and Victor Dorobantu

ALSO PRESENT: Town Manager Michael Maniscalco, Asst. Town Manager Scott Roberts, Town Council liaison Andrew Paterna

1. Call Meeting to Order: Vice Chairperson P. Burnham called the meeting to order at 7:00pm

2. Roll Call: The above-mentioned members were introduced.

A motion was made by Vice Chairperson P. Burnham to add item 7. (a) Strategic Planning Committee to the agenda and was seconded by Commissioner S. Burnham and was unanimously approved. Motion passed.

3. Public Participation: None.

4. Special Presentation: None.

5. Approval of Minutes

(a) Minutes from Regular Meeting on 4/27/2022

A motion to approve the meeting minutes from Wednesday, April 27, 2022 was made by Commissioner S. Burnham and seconded by Commissioner Murray and was approved by majority. Commissioner Neary abstained. Motion passed.

(b) Minutes from Regular Meeting on 5/25/2022

A motion to approve the minutes of Wednesday, May 25, 2022 was made by Commissioner S. Burnham and seconded by Commissioner Neary with the following corrections:
P. 2 Item 9. (a) should read “...that Sakura Gardens has not yet moved to the LL Bean plaza and will have outdoor seating.”

Commissioner Neery's last name should be corrected in the list of members present.

Motion was approved by majority. Vice Chairperson P. Burnham abstained. Motion passed.

6. Old Business

Mayor TV : Mr. Roberts announced that the videos are done and the completed product is up
on the town’s website and asked commissionners to share with family and friends to help spread the word about its existence.

7. Committee Report(s)

(a) Strategic Planning Committee: Mr. Maniscalco stated that the committee is looking for a consultant within CT and that they may need to do an RFP. The committee asked for and received funds to hire a consultant at $50,000. Vice Chairperson P. Burnham asked if anyone in CROG could help and Mr. Maniscalco replied that he got the names of people that could do the work but that no one has been a good fit.

8. New Business

(a) General Discussion: None

(b) Discussion and possible action to recommend the local preference bid ordinance: Town Manager Mr. Maniscalco referenced the paperwork included in the agenda packet and explained that during the annual bid process by the town to lease farm property, one individual placed a bid and lost out by a few thousand dollars. Councilor Kosikowski asked about a local bidding ordinance but it only covers projects that the town is looking for bids not for farmland and it's focused on larger local businesses. This new ordinance would allow for local businesses to bid and for smaller businesses to succeed in bidding. The referenced percentage is related to how close the local bidder needs to be to win the bid and he is suggesting making it 10% rather than 3% as a way to support local businesses and smaller businesses. The local business would be required to match the lowest bid. Commissioner Neary asked why 10% and Mr. Maniscalco explained that it widens the opportunity for businesses to be within range. Commissioner Jodice replied that sometimes markup on a job is 10% and believes that 3% is better. At 10%, it might discourage outside companies from bidding in SW and local businesses may raise their rates knowing that they are the only bidder. Vice Chairperson P. Burnham suggested that 5% might be better to be in line with other towns. Commissioner Kennedy agrees that 10%, for farming, would be beneficial. Mr. Maniscalco stated that he could go back and include various rates depending on use/intent and Commissioner Jodice suggested implementing a sliding scale. Commissioner Jodice asked that a provision be included that if the principal lives in town, they could also have the preferential rate. Mr. Maniscalco shared that the Town Council is hoping that the EDC would support the ordinance. Commissioner S. Burnham asked if it is too late to change the rate and Mr. Maniscalco replied that he could make suggestions to the Town Council. Commissioner Neary stated that other ordinances have to be approved by the finance department. Mr. Maniscalco stated that the town is making the onus on the bidder to ask to exercise the option of the ordinance.

A motion was made by Vice Chairperson P. Burnham and seconded by Commissioner S. Burnham to approve the ordinance concept and that the commission would like a sliding scale of 3-10% based on the value of the project, to benefit all bidders and that the option is extended to principles of firms that live in town and was unanimously approved. Motion passed.

9. Economic Development Opportunities/Updates

(a) Scott Roberts, Assistant Town Manager: Mr. Roberts reported that Cambria Hotel would like to open in August but he is not aware of a pending C.O. He attended the groundbreaking for
Whole Foods, Sakura Garden will be relocated by mid-summer.
Commissioner S. Burnham heard that the Goddard School has stopped and Mr. Maniscalco replied that he spoke with the owner and that they are excited about coming to town. Vice Chairperson P. Burnham shared that they had to redesign the playground area on the backside of the property.
Commissioner Neary asked why the Old Navy and other buildings had to be torn down and Mr. Roberts replied that Whole Foods has a specific look/style that they build and it would not have fit on either side of the road, which necessitated taking down Old Navy. Mr. Maniscalco added that with Whole Foods’ specific business model on being able to view the building, its existence in the Shops at Evergreen Walk predicated on the store being seen from Buckland Road.
(b) Michael Maniscalco, Town Manager: Mr. Maniscalco reported that the demolition of Sakura Gardens will take place around July 5th and then construction and infrastructure will begin on Whole foods. Sakura Gardens will be closed for about a week for them to move into their new location. The same for the Old Navy.
A new story, Lovesac, will be coming to the Shops at Evergreen Walk. The principal at Charter Realty has a few other deals in the works to bring more businesses to Evergreen Walk and they are hoping to announce them in the next 3-4 months.
The housing proposal for the Shops at Evergreen Walk is going before P&Z and includes 164 units. The population base will help the shops and restaurants succeed. The proposed housing complex will be located past Tempo Apartments. Vice Chairperson P. Burnham asked how close the project will be to homes on Smith Street and Mr. Maniscalco replied that they will be closer to Clark Street.
Commissioner S. Burnham asked about Shake Shack and Mr. Maniscalco replied that they are hoping to open by January 2023 with Whole Foods opening in November 2023. Commissioner Buganski asked if there will be another restaurant and Mr. Maniscalco replied yes.
Mr. Maniscalco had a meeting with Lufa Farms about locating at 25 Talbot Lane but they currently don’t have the finances to do something with the property and are looking at other locations in town.
A project on Kennedy Lane of 241,000 sq ft will be built to spec and will be for distribution. The site is across from FedEx (same side) but comes with challenges from the road condition of Kennedy lane.
An application for the LA Fitness building has been submitted. The building is up for sale. A Tesla sales and service facility application has been submitted and Mr. Maniscalco has a phone call tomorrow regarding the application.
Vice Chairperson P. Burnham stated that he was not aware of the groundbreaking for Whole Foods and was disappointed that the EDC wasn’t invited. Mr. Maniscalco replied that the event was private and held by Charter Realty but that he will share the commission’s disappointment with the developer. Mr. Maniscalco stated that he didn’t know who else was on the list.
Mr. Maniscalco stated that the town has been struggling over the last few weeks with staffing and that they are losing staff daily. South Windsor wages are not competitive with other towns. Vice Chairperson P. Burnham believes that issue should be looked at and that the town is also losing businesses. Parksite, although part will stay in town, has moved to East Windsor. He believes the town needs to work harder to retain existing businesses and that they need to bring someone in to do economic development in town. The site on rte 5, the former Maztek property, needs attention. The town needs to work closer with the redevelopment agency and look at the abatement program. Mr. Maniscalco stated that there is an immediate need to have building officials to issue permits to get projects done. Chairperson Marsh asked what Mr. Maniscalco’s thoughts are on what the town can do to supplement staff and Mr. Maniscalco replied that they are conducting a salary review to remain market competitive. Chairperson Marsh asked if there are any companies that can be brought in ad-hoc or to find a 3rd party
advisor. Commissioner Neary asked if there is anyone in-house that can be trained and Mr. Maniscalco replied that they've all left.
Commissioner Kennedy mentioned the environmental issues with the Maztek property and Mr. Maniscalco stated that the property is on the market with 3 interested inquiries but with warehouse moratorium, interest has waned.
Mr. Maniscalco shared that there is a project near Coca-Cola for a 3-story storage facility. Mr. Roberts explained that it is a local company, a personal friend, that wants to build a new state-of-the-art storage facility that is climate controlled. He will be coming to a future EDC meeting to discuss his project. The site is further down the street from 2 houses and to be located on 4 acres of land with a $12,000,000-$15,000,000 project. It will need to be aesthetically pleasing from I-291. Vice Chairperson P. Burnham is concerned about proximity to the storage facility already nearby but Mr. Roberts believes that this storage facility is a different product- similar to the storage facility in Manchester.
Commissioner S. Burnham asked about the Geissler's project and Mr. Maniscalco replied that it is still in litigation.

(c) Paul Burnham, Vice-Chairperson: Vice Chairperson P. Burnham has been talking to a local developer for property on Wright Street/Sullivan Avenue zoned for general commercial and approved for a drive-thru and had some interest. The town can offer an abatement to the owner of the property but it's not helpful for the businesses he is trying to attract. Vice Chairperson P. Burnham wants to create a program to help local businesses with rental space to attract companies to town. Town Council liaison Mr. Patena shared that he has already spoken to the town atty on a similar idea and was told that the town is not in the business of giving loans. Commissioner Neary suggested that the property owner could use abatement funds to lower the rent. Vice Chairperson P. Burnham does not know of a program to help renters. The State has a matching grant program and he wants the commission to think about the concept as a way to help attract businesses to town. He will do more research on what possibilities there are.
Mr. Roberts shared the business application process flow chart and a copy of the abatement application. Applications are now online but the current abatement application targets businesses that are in short supply in town. The commission needs to go through the POCD to ensure there are possible locations for the types of businesses targeted and to look at where the market is going to determine what businesses to attract. It's possible for the town to make packages/shovel ready parcels to ensure a smooth process but there is a need to determine what projects the town wants to develop instead of letting the market dictate. Mr. Roberts suggests forming a sub-committee to work on this project. Commissioner Kennedy asked if there are enough large pieces of land for an enterprise zone. Chairperson Marsh would like the commission to move forward with this opportunity to review the abatement program. The sub-committee will then bring it back to the group and present their findings/suggestions for the future. Commissioner Neary asked about how many acres of land is behind JoAnn's and Mr. Roberts replied about 50. Mr. Roberts stated that large tracts of land have large companies to market them but it depends on how hard they want to market the property. The town could work in advance to get a piece of property to make it shovel-ready. Chairperson Marsh, Commissioners Neary, Jodice, and Buganski will work with Mr. Roberts on updating the abatement application. Meetings will be scheduled in the evenings and Mr. Roberts will coordinate the time and location.

10. General Discussion: Commissioner Neary asked for confirmation of the quad meeting scheduled for July. As of now, the meeting is scheduled, if there are any changes, commissioners will be notified.

11. Executive Session: None
12. Adjournment

Next meeting is scheduled for 7/27/2022

A *motion* to adjourn at 8:22pm was made by Commissioner S. Burnham and *seconded* by Commissioner Kennedy and was *unanimously approved*. Motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,

Catherine Potter

Clerk