

**David R. Martin**  
Mayor

**Thomas Madden, AICP**  
Director of Economic  
Development



**CITY OF STAMFORD**  
**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION**  
**OFFICE OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

**COMMISSION**  
**Jonathan Winkel**  
Chairman

**Stephen Fischer**  
Vice Chairman

**James Huerta**  
Secretary

**Mark Diamond ESQ.**  
Member

**Margaret Feeney**  
Member

**Stamford Government Center-Stamford, Connecticut**  
**Regular Meeting- Thursday, September 9, 2021**

The Regular Meeting of the City of Stamford Economic Development Commission (EDC) Office of Economic Development (OED) was held on Thursday, September 9, 2021 at 4:02pm via Zoom Meeting on the 9th floor in the Urban Redevelopment Commission Conference Room, Stamford Government Center, 888 Washington Boulevard, Stamford, Connecticut.

**1. Call to Order**

Chairman Winkel called the meeting to order at 4:02pm.

**2. Roll Call**

Commissioners Present: Jonathan Winkel, James Huerta and Mark Diamond

Commissioners Late: Stephen Fischer and Margaret Feeney

Staff: Thomas Madden-Director Economic Development, John Varamo-Economic Development Analyst, Tommie Jackson, Assistant Director-URC, and Theresa Bowen, Office Manager-URC

**3. Stamford Chamber of Commerce-Heather Cavanagh**

Ms. Cavanagh provided the Commissioners with highlights of the past 18 months working with both members and nonmembers during the Covid crisis. The chamber partnered with various organizations during this time such as Stamford Health to host webinars and other local chambers and businesses to provide resources.

Commissioners Fischer and Feeney joined the meeting during agenda item #3.

**4. Reading and Acceptance of Minutes**

**a. Approval of minutes from Regular Meeting held on August 12, 2021**

Chairman Winkel asked if the Commissioners have read the minutes from the Regular Meeting held on August 12, 2021. He then asked for a motion to accept these minutes. A motion was moved by Commissioner Diamond with second by Commissioner Fischer. Chairman Winkel conducted a roll call vote. Motion was passed unanimously with all Commissioners present.

**5. Chairperson's Report**

Chairman Winkel commended Mr. Madden on getting the ball rolling on having organizations appear in front of the Commission and Commissioner Huerta on reminding Ms. Cavanagh on the opportunity to obtain opinions when needed and we should be doing with the community at large reminded the Commissioners to promote the opportunity to obtain opinions with fellow city appointed officials and commissioners. In the last month, no new request for an opinions have been received. There is a tremendous amount of economic activity on the horizon for the city and expect requests for opinions in the future. The Economic Development Commission (EDC) based on the City Code of Ordinance can only provide their opinion when requested by organizations and city departments when requested. Under its current the City Code of Ordinance it cannot offer opinions without the request from interested parties.

**6. Director's Report**

Mr. Madden stated the Q2 report has just been completed. It will show a large increase in leasing activity with 328k SF of office space. This is the highest quarter since Q3 2020. The largest lease signed was a renewal of Encompass Digital Media's 136k SF office and production space at 250 Harbor Drive, followed by a new lease from Stamford Hospital at 3001 Summer Street for 44k SF. International consumer goods company Beiersdorf, which includes Nivea, Eucerin, Aquaphor and La Prairie brands, signed a 27k SF lease at 301 Tresser Blvd. relocating their American headquarters from Wilton to Stamford. The unemployment rate of 6.2%, which is a decrease 11% at the height of Covid. Lastly, the City of Stamford once again affirmed an "AAA" bond rating by Standard & Poor's and Fitch. Lastly, he stated that Stamford no longer qualifies by the state for an Enterprise Zone, in which commercial and industrial businesses can receive incentives to set up or expand.

**7. Old Business**

**a. University Zone Overlay**

Mr. Madden stated the minor changes have been finished up and are now under review by the legal department and is back with Ralph Blessing, Land Use Bureau Chief. A final copy will be sent to the zoning board for changes to the zoning code as well as master plan changes. A copy will be sent to the Commissioners for their information.

**b. Minority Business Engagement Update**

Chairman Winkel gave a brief history of this agenda item and moved to remove this item from the agenda. After discussion, it was determined to keep it on the agenda for further updates and follow-up until it's closed.

**c. Ordinance governing short term rentals in Stamford update**

Mr. Madden stated this item is on hold at the attorney's office for further review.

**d. McKinsey Report**

Mr. Madden stated as part of Tom Shirley's Harvard Bloomberg Fellowship, his worked turned into an Economic Equity Recovery plan. Currently, in draft, once he receives the final report it will be sent to the Commissioners. It outlines steps and procedures that will need to change in the city and suggestions for these changes. This report will also be given to the new Diversity, equity and Inclusion Officer when hired.

**e. Film & TV Permit Book**

Mr. Madden stated a glossy handout will be sent out to productions companies that will outline the permitting process for Stamford with the hopes of attracting more production. The book should be completed in 2-3 weeks. Chairman Winkel stated and the Commissioners agreed this item can be removed from the agenda once the book is sent to them.

**8. New Business**

**a. Next Meeting**

**i. Discussion-Next Meeting Agenda**

**ii. Confirmation-Next Regular Meeting (Thursday, October 7, 2021 at 4pm)**

**9. Public Comment**

None.

**10. Adjournment**

Chairman Winkel requested a motion to adjourn the meeting at 5pm. A motion was made by Commissioner Diamond with second from Commissioner Feeney. Chairman Winkel conducted a roll call vote. Motion passed unanimously. With no further business to be discussed, the meeting was concluded.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "James 'Jim' Huerta", with a large, stylized flourish extending to the right.

James "Jim" Huerta,  
Secretary-Economic Development Commission