



# Town of Madison, CT

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## Economic Development Commission

Draft

Minutes of the regular meeting of the Economic Development Commission held on January 10, 2019, 7:30 p.m. at the Town Campus

Present: Commissioners Ryan Duques, Matt Bloom, Anne Foley, Lisa Miksis, Mark Steffen

Mr. Duques called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

1. Approval of minutes of regular meeting, December 13, 2018. On motion made by Mr. Steffen, and seconded by Mr. Bloom the Commission voted unanimously to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of December 13, 2018 as submitted.
2. Public comment. There were no public comments.
3. UPDATE: Discussion on Madison's Marketing Attributes: Education and Recreation Development. Mr. Bloom noted that he and Mr. Steffen had agreed develop a basic inventory of the recreational facilities including beaches, outdoor recreation, hiking trails, mountain bike trails and open space in Town, to provide a list to use in a conversation about marketing the Town. Their research would aim to quantify why, from an economic development perspective, these assets and the factors about them are important in an effort to show what distinguishes Madison from other towns with similar assets to highlight what is unique about Madison. The next step will involve meeting with community and Town groups like Beach and Recreation and the Land Trust to determine more specific data available about the facilities on the list and what additional data would be beneficial. Mr. Steffen and Mr. Bloom reviewed the extensive list of parks, beaches and other related recreation activities and resources. As the next step they plan to talk to the Beach and Recreation Director and obtain his input on recreation assets.

Mr. Duques reviewed the assets cataloging initiative which will provide a list of Madison's core assets that should be adopted and recognized as important elements in the Town that need to be maintained and monitored since these are highlights and features in Madison that are a part of the decision when people are looking to come to Madison to live or work. This list could be provided to serve as a tool to consider during the budget process to help encourage any efforts to provide funding to protect these assets, which support economic development interests.

Mrs. Foley suggested that a list of important historic places be developed since these are assets that can be attractive to prospective residents since they can add to the charm of the Town. She agreed to put together a list of historic assets and historically significant buildings. Mr. Anderson agreed to forward a copy of a list that is currently available that Mrs. Foley can use as a base.

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Mr. Anderson noted that is important that any list developed highlight assets that are unique and that differentiate Madison from towns with similar assets.

Mr. Duques noted that he and Ms. Miksis had agreed to focus on Board of Education assets and at the last meeting had provided a handout of school data. They had previously met with representatives from the Board of Education and they are very excited about the efforts of the Commission to develop marketing attributes for the Town. One of the outcomes from the dialogue developing between the Town and Board of Education is the development of a plan to have the EDC host a forum for the business community possibly in January or as a part of the EDC February meeting. It would be beneficial to have a one page summary of the EDC's efforts in the area of the marketing available for this meeting. The list should be able to demonstrate what the EDC has identified, through research and conversation, as the important assets in Town that help contribute to the Town's grand list and quality of life. This information will be beneficial in helping Town officials and the public recognize the importance of these assets in helping encourage economic develop and maintain a growing community.

Mr. Anderson commented that education assets are an important consideration of people when considering relocating so it will be important to market the positives of Madison's quality education system.

Mr. Steffen questioned if the research was too narrow with a focus only on recreation, education and historic assets. He suggested that consideration be given to including an inventory of the businesses in Town especially to highlight the diversity of businesses in the community. Mr. Duques agreed that including businesses in the inventory would be an important area to include along with access to transportation facilities, information on financial data and soundness, bond rating and the variety of places to worship. Mr. Duques noted that they will continue efforts to put all of this data together on a spread sheet.

4. CERC Project update. Mr. Duques noted that there is no update on the CERC Project.

5. Madison Center Project update. In response to a question by Mr. Steffen, Mr. Duques noted there has been some discussion on the snow removal process in the downtown area, however, this issue will have to actually be addressed for next year. One option for consideration is having the businesses contribute to the costs for snow removal but have the actual work be facilitated by the Town so there is no damage to the newly laid brick. One of the challenges will be to find a business that would like to take the lead in working with the Town on this issue. A total of 80% participation would be needed to develop an association to work out a joint effort for snow removal. The EDC could consider putting together a meeting and inviting the downtown businesses to attend a meeting to be facilitated by the EDC to discuss snow removal in the downtown area.

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Mr. Steffen commented that one of the challenges has been the need for parking ban to be able to adequately clear the sidewalks.

Mr. Duques suggested that the next step include obtaining prices for snow removal and then getting a letter out in February to the property owner and tenants to invite them to a meeting in March to discuss snow removal.

6. Planning and Zoning Report. Mr. Anderson provided the following Planning and Zoning highlights:

- The restaurant project on Wall Street did not work out and there will be a new application to convert this to office space. The original restaurant is looking for other options for space in Town.
- The Dowler project on cottage Road is moving forward toward becoming a reality.

7. BOF Report. Mr. Anderson reported that he had attended the Board of Finance meeting and provided a report on upcoming and approved projects that have the potential to provided additional projected revenue.

8. BOS Report. There was no Board of Selectmen report.

9. Old Business. There were no items discussed under Old Business.

10. New Business. Mr. Duques highlighted a type of business that might be encouraged to apply to participate in the tax credit program. A business with a large fleet of vehicles recently relocated its headquarters to Madison which is benefit because it will bring property tax revenue to Madison without any impact since many of the vehicles will actually be housed and utilized out-of-state. He recommended that Mr. Anderson work to investigate if any similar businesses are looking to relocate and would consider Madison.

Mr. Anderson noted that he had a discussion with John Matthews and Senator Christine Cohen regarding tourism and the efforts at the State level to encourage economic development.

Mr. Duques asked Mr. Anderson to encourage representatives from the Chamber of Commerce to attend an EDC meeting every quarter to provide input and to keep informed on EDC activities. Mr. Anderson also recommended that the State Economic Development Commission be invited to attend an EDC meeting.

11. Adjournment. On motion made by Mr. Duques, and seconded by Mrs. Foley, the Commission voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 8:35 p.m.

Terry Holland-Buckley  
Clerk