

**TOWN OF HADDAM
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
SPECIAL MEETING
WEDNESDAY, 1 NOVEMBER 2023
VIA ZOOM
UNAPPROVED MINUTES
*Subject to Approval by the Commission***

ATTENDANCE

X	Kate Anderson, Chairman
A	Kristy Benson Amarante
X	Curtis Browne
X	Cortney Emshwiller Swokla
X	Mike Farina
X	Mike Karam
X	Stacey Kinney
A	David Law
X	John Pember
X	Doreen Staskelunas, Secretary
X	Bunny Hall Batzner, Recording Clerk

DUE TO TECHNICAL DIFFICULTIES, THE MEETING WAS NOT ABLE TO START ON TIME.

1. Call to Order

Ms. Anderson, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 6:42 p.m.

2. Approval of Agenda

Ms. Anderson thanked everyone for attending; and stated as this was a special meeting, the agenda could not be changed.

MOTION: Mike Farina motioned to approve the 1 November 2023 special meeting agenda as submitted. Doreen Staskelunas second. Motion carried unanimously.

3. Public Comment

There was no public in attendance.

4. Approval of Submission of CT Main Street Accelerator Program Application

Ms. Anderson thanked Mr. Browne for keeping the Commission on track regarding the application; and noted that she had sent out an email with a draft of the responses to the questions within the application. As Mrs. Emshwiller-Swokla and Mr. Karam were unable to attend the October meeting, Ms. Anderson gave a brief synopsis of the Accelerator Program.

Mr. Karam asked if chosen, would the Commission be doing the work under CT Main Street's guidance. Ms. Anderson stated yes, and if the Commission successfully completes all the requirements and the project, there may be limited funding available to the pilot projects.

Ms. Anderson stated the application is straightforward and outlined what is being asked for. Ms. Anderson also stated she is trying to get a liaison from each town center and should have people in place before the application is submitted on Friday, 3 November 2023.

The Commission reviewed/discussed the proposed responses to the questions (copy of draft responses attached) and made slight modifications. Mr. Karam asked if identity and branding is something that will be addressed. Ms. Anderson stated it would be part of the project. Mr. Karam stated in certain parts of the town, there is an identity with the shad that is somewhat understood, but it needs to be brought together. Reviewed current team members: Kate Anderson and Curtis Browne, EDC, as well as two business members from Higganum and Tylerville. Mr. Karam stated he has experience in brand identity and brand development. Mr. Browne stated Mr. Karam would be an asset to the team. Mr. Karam was added as a team member. Mr. Karam asked if it would be worth mentioning that one of the challenges is that Haddam does not have a main street and the hope is that the identity will allow Haddam to have a main street atmosphere. Mr. Browne stated one of the activities is defining a project scope, deliverables, and an action plan of tasks and assignments in Phase I and this can be worked through with CT Main Street's help. Mrs. Staskelunas asked if the team will be identifying the milestones throughout the project or would it come from CT Main Street. Mr. Browne stated yes, CT Main Street would identify the milestones; however, the team would work with them on that, but it is something he could do as it is what he does for a living. Mr. Browne stated this can be discussed as a team. Ms. Kinney stated Haddam Neck is not included; and asked if at some point they would be (had anyone from Haddam Neck had been contacted). Ms. Anderson stated it was a good point and would discuss the matter with Bob McGarry, First Selectman. Ms. Anderson stated perhaps the approach to take with Haddam Neck is figure out what to do on this side of the river and then see if they would be interested. Mr. Karam asked when an announcement of advancement would be made. Mr. Browne stated he thought just before Thanksgiving. Ms. Anderson stated between 11-29 November 2023 accepted communities would be notified and must either accept or decline and the project kicks off 7 December 2023.

MOTION: Mike Farina motioned to approve the submission of the application to the CT Main Street Accelerator Program. Doreen Staskelunas second. Motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Anderson to update Commission on who the liaisons will be.

5. Adjournment

MOTION: Doreen Staskelunas motioned to adjourn. Stacey Kinney second. Motion carried unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 7:05 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Bunny Hall Batzner
Bunny Hall Batzner
Recording Clerk

**The next regular meeting is Wednesday, 8 November 2023,
at the Community Center, 7 Candlewood Hill Road, Higganum, CT.**

CT MAIN STREET ACCELERATOR PROGRAM DRAFAT RESPONSES TO THE APPLICATION

Please describe your challenge or project. (500 characters)

Haddam is a charming rural town with five villages along the CT River. However, we lack a clear identity and branding that sets us apart from other towns in the river valley. We are anchored by two town village centers, Higganum and Tylerville centers, along the scenic Route 154. Unique attractions like the Haddam Shad Shack and Higganum Cove are missed, even by town residents, due to poor signage and mapping. We would like to undertake a multi-phased campaign to improve our signage, mapping, and overall beautification efforts to align a cohesive vision between these villages and our entire town.

Please describe your team. Have you worked on a project together previously? Why is this team the right team? (500 characters)

We have recruited willing volunteers who are excited to work on a project that will improve our community. Kate Anderson is a dedicated town volunteer, serving as EDC Chair since 2016 and Selectwoman since 2019. Curtis Browne, EDC member, is a relatively new town resident and offers a strong project management background. Our team is rounded out by (Higganum lead) and (Tylerville lead). These individuals are business owners and town residents who can serve as liaisons with businesses in each village. The team has worked together in varying capacities, mostly relating to economic development initiatives.

Why is now a good time to participate in Main Street Accelerator? (250 characters)

Haddam is undergoing major transformations with projects like the Swing Bridge renovation, Scovil Hoe development, and Higganum Cove restoration that will enhance tourism. With these major projects underway, it is the perfect time to align our town's identity with cohesive signage, branding, and wayfinding.

What do you hope to accomplish by participating in Main Street Accelerator? (250 characters)

Haddam EDC wants to leverage our CT Main Street membership to revitalize our town. With several major projects in progress and more on the horizon, we have a fully staffed EDC ready to learn and apply the Main Street approach. This will help us enhance our current and future projects with best practices, resources, and guidance from CT Main Street.

Emailed by Kate Anderson, EDC Chairman, 1 Nov 2023

EDC – 1 Nov 2023 Special Meeting via Zoom
Exhibit A