Minutes not yet approved.
Approval and any edits to be made in succeeding minutes.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION & DEVELOPMENT AGENCY – REGULARLY SCHEDULED MEETING
TUESDAY, MAY 12, 2026, 8:30 A.M.
ZOOM MEETING PLATFORM (DRAFT)

Members Present: Bonnie Bercowetz, Chair; Siddiq Abdullah; Robert Firger; Tricia Martin (joined at 8:40 am); Vivian Nabeta (joined at 8:50 am)
Members Absent: None.

Also Present: Lynda Laureano, Assistant Director of Building and Land Use; Denise Robidoux, and David Driver of Goman + York on behalf of the Town of Bloomfield; and Rebecca Jones, Recording Secretary.

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MAY 19 2026
8:30am
TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE
BLOOMFIELD, CT

I. Call to Order

Chair Bercowetz called the meeting to order at 8:34am.

II. Approval of Minutes

a. April 14, 2026

Motion to approve the April 14, 2026 meeting minutes made by Commissioner Abdullah; seconded by Commissioner Firger. The motion was unanimously approved by a 3-0-0 vote.

III. Old Business

Mr. Colman had nothing significant to report. Ms. Laureano explained the development of a new brochure titled "Zoning and Land Use Permitting Guide for Opening a Business," designed to provide a simple, step-by-step guide for the public on obtaining zoning and land use approvals. The brochure aims to address the complexities of permitting processes at a beginner's level, distinguishing it from existing resources like Goman + York's Business Planning Guide. Chair Bercowetz and Ms. Laureano agreed to schedule a separate meeting to further discuss the brochure's details.

Commissioner Abdullah suggested making it easily accessible online. Chair Bercowetz proposed acting as an "expediter" or translator to help non-experts navigate complex business processes by explaining concepts in simple language.

IV. New Business

a. Support the Arts Commission for a 1% to public arts requests

Commissioner Firger explained a concept for implementing an art fund in Connecticut, where certain commercial property developments above a certain dollar amount would trigger contributions that would go into a special fund administered by the Art Commission. He noted that over 20 communities across Connecticut already have similar programs and mentioned that West Hartford has successfully implemented a similar approach. The proposal would require presentation to the Town Council as it would require formal adoption.

Chair Bercowetz proposed this Commission take the lead and present it to the Town Plan & Zoning Commission. She opined that using developer money rather than taxpayer funds would

make it easier to justify the project, which she believes will indirectly benefit the community. The Commission expressed support for Chair Bercowetz's proposal.

V. Commission Member Updates

Commissioner Firger provided an update for the Commission as it relates to the bear statue. The design will be shared at a future meeting. He also shared information about a collaborative project between the Arts Commission and the Bloomfield Public Library to create art supply kits for youth in town, to be distributed at an event on June 4th. Ms. Laureano suggested exploring potential donations from local entities like the West Indian Foundation and Hartford Proud Drill Drum Line, which have previously donated to the Hartford Foundation for Arts. Commissioner Firger agreed to follow up with Ms. Laureano for specific contact information and mentioned that a previous state grant application was unsuccessful due to bureaucratic hurdles, though they plan to reapply next year. Ms. Robidoux recommended exploring corporate giving programs at Cigna, Campbell's, and Command for potential arts program support.

VI. EDC Consultant Reports (Goman + York)

a. April 2026 Report

Ms. Robidoux reported that while they did not receive congressional funding for the town center, they were shortlisted for a $4 million grant through Senator Larson's office, with results expected in about two years.

VII. Town Planner Report

a. POCD Update

Mr. Colman provided updates on the POCD which is expected to be presented at the May 21, 2026 TPZ meeting, with a public hearing likely in June.

b. Town Development Update

Mr. Colman shared an update related to Popeye's. There have been extended negotiations with Eversource, which is likely slowing the development process.

c. Town Center Update

Mr. Colman stated that the Town will be submitting a new CIF grant. There has only been one response to the RFP.

<u>Development Agency</u>

VIII. Continued discussion on Granby/Tobey TIF District

Ms. Laureano discussed progress on the Granby Street/Tobey Road area, including positive developments with property owners at 31 Tobey Road who are exploring ideas for a food truck park. Town staff also had a successful meeting with the owner of 6, 8 & 10 Tobey Road regarding cleaning up and potentially developing the property as a restaurant and banquet hall.

IX. Public Comment

None.

X. Updates

None.

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XI. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn made by Commissioner Abdullah; seconded by Commissioner Nabeta and unanimously approved by a 5-0-0 vote. The meeting was adjourned at 9:18 am.