

# *Economic Development Commission*

*Town of Bethel, Connecticut*

*Bethel Municipal Center \* 1 School Street \* Bethel, Connecticut 06801*

*(203)794-8540 Facsimile (203) 778-7520*

## **MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING**

**WEDNESDAY, APRIL 24, 2024**

**4:00 PM**

Via Google Meet

**PRESENT**- Chairman Mike Boyle, Nick Vitti, Jay Streaman, Kevin McMahon, and John Francis. Also present was Janice Chrzescijanek, Economic Development Director

**ABSENT**~ John Lennon, Steve DeMoura.

**CALL TO ORDER**~ Chairman Boyle called the meeting to order at 4:02 p.m. with the pledge of allegiance.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**- Jay Streaman made a motion to approve the minutes of the meeting dated 3/27/2024. Kevin McMahon seconded the motion. Vote, all in favor, motion accepted.

**CLARKE PARK UPDATE** (see attached)

Janice has submitted paperwork to state funding, hopefully within the next two weeks funding will be approved. The funding for Clarke Park maintenance was approved at a town meeting. Janice is still waiting on the Governor for an answer as to whether he can attend a ribbon cutting for the park. It seems he may be interested but it is not locked in yet.

Mulching was done, plantings were discussed. Kevin McMahon inquired as to the sale of the lots. Janice stated that lots 20, 21 and 23 have sold, there has been a closing on one, the other two are awaiting the normal approval process with Planning and Zoning.

Lot #19 located next to the retention basin has not sold.

### **2024 INITIATIVES:**

No further ideas were put forth. Discussion revolved around previously discussed initiatives.

Janice reported the following:

Marketing Plan: In the process of finalizing a contract.

RECEIVED

2024 APR 25 A 10:31

TOWN CLERK  
BETHEL, CT.

Mobility Plan: Has been approved by D.O.T. a meeting is scheduled for Thursday regarding public accessway from the westside of the train tracks to the east side where the station is. We have just received a grant for the development on the westside of the tracks, DOT may be open to this.

Commercial Land and Development: Janice looking into WCCOG funding.

**ECONOMIC DIRECTOR'S REPORT**- (see attached)

Janice reported 4 new businesses with one of them being home based.

Many of the restaurants are interested in a downtown summer campaign with a 3-month plan with possible radio and streaming, it is costly, Janice reaching out to her contacts.

June 21<sup>st</sup> is "Make Music Day" which is a national organization. The event brings free music downtown. Many of the restaurants will be hosting. The event runs 11:00 a.m.- 11:00 p.m.

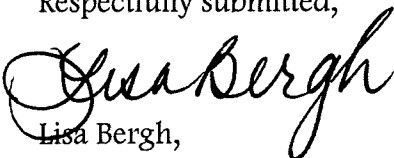
The chamber is being managed by the same four business owners; discussion was that they need to hire a full-time person. Burnout is a real possibility.

**INVOICES:** None

**ADJOURN-** A motion to adjourn was made by Nick Vitti, the motion was seconded by Jay Streaman. Vote was taken, all in favor, motion approved.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:26 PM

Respectfully submitted,

  
Lisa Bergh,  
Recording Secretary



# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT MONTHLY REPORT

APRIL 2024

## 2024 INITIATIVES

1. Marketing Plan
  - Finalizing contract
2. Parking and Mobility
  - Mobility plan draft has been approved by DOT
  - Awaiting final plan draft
  - Investigating funding options
3. Transportation
  - **Thursday, April 25<sup>th</sup>** - Meeting with DOT about pedestrian access from the West side of the train tracks directly to the Bethel train station.
4. Commercial Real Estate Land and Redevelopment Opportunities
  - Brownfields Program

## BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT AND SUPPORT

**Business Visitation Program** – 768 visits

**Business Assistance** (relocation, financial, expansion, location, permit) – 1,142

### New Businesses

Name	Location	Industry
Bocca Motors	11 Francis J. Clarke Circle	Auto Repair and Sales
EFI Performance LLC	8 Sympaug Park Rd.	Auto Repair and Maintenance
Tranquility Wellness	40 Highland Avenue	Psychotherapy Practice
Gather Boutique LLC	123 Greenwood Ave.	Home Décor and Gifts

### Educational Workshops

- **Early June 2024** – “Accessing Capital” with SCORE, SBDC, WBDC, SBA, HIDC.

### Marketing

- Facilitating summer campaign for downtown restaurants.

### Chamber of Commerce

- **May 1** – Business networking event from 5:30-7:30pm at Putnam House. Tickets: <https://bethelchamberofcommerce.com/events/2024/summer-kickoff-special-networking-event>

### The Arts

- **June 21<sup>st</sup>** - Make Music Day

**Inventory**

Date	Available Commercial Properties	Occupancy Rate*	Sq. Footage Available	Available Sites	Acres Available
<b>April</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>98.13%</b>	<b>38,569</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3.02 – Expansion</b>
March 2024	8	98.13%	39,919	1	3.02 – Expansion
February 2024	6	99.2%	34,487	1	3.02 – Expansion
January 2024	9	98.8%	36,410	1	3.02 – Expansion
December 2023	7	99.1%	35,760	1	3.02 - Expansion
October 2023	6	99.2%	68,575	1	3.02 - Expansion
July 2023	9	98.8%	55,675	2	5.57 – Expansion
June 2023	9	98.8%	57,482	4	13.20 - Expansion
April 2023	10	98.67%	69,155	4	13.20 - Expansion

\*Occupancy Rate: Available Commercial Properties / 750 commercial properties

- **June 30<sup>th</sup>** - AdvanceCT is discontinuing their SiteFinder commercial real estate search platform program. Researching a replacement.

**Current Commercial Development/Redevelopment**

Building	Square Feet	Estimated Completion
8 Trowbridge Dr.	10,000	tbd
15 Trowbridge Dr.	15,000	tbd
20 Trowbridge Dr.	20,000	tbd
185 Grassy Plain	10,000 – Light Manufacturing.	tbd
36 Stony Hill Road	20,900 - Medical	tbd
48 Stony Hill Road	9,606 – Retail	Q4 2024
70 Stony Hill Road	9,000 - Office	Q4 2024

**Commercial Sales Transactions**

Building	Sale Date	Sale Price	Price/SF	SF
5 School St.	1/8/24	\$120,000	\$105.26	1,140
45 Turkey Plain Rd.	1/23/24	\$950,000	\$950.00	1,000
8 Francis J. Clarke Circle	2/12/24	\$1,500,000	\$79.26	18,926

YTD - \$2,570,000  
2023 YTD - \$17,849,000

- Wells Fargo property (159 Greenwood Avenue) – Referendum passed

**CLARKE PARK EXPANSION**

- Completing the reimbursement paperwork for the state funding.
- Park Maintenance Account – Funding approved.
- **Ribbon Cutting** - tbd - Clarke Park expansion area.

**Property Status**

Property	Offer Accepted	Contract	P&Z Application Review	Application Approved
19 Trowbridge Drive				
20 Trowbridge Drive	Yes	In Process	April 2024	
21 Trowbridge Drive	Yes	Complete		

## ECONOMIC DATA

### Bethel Labor Statistics

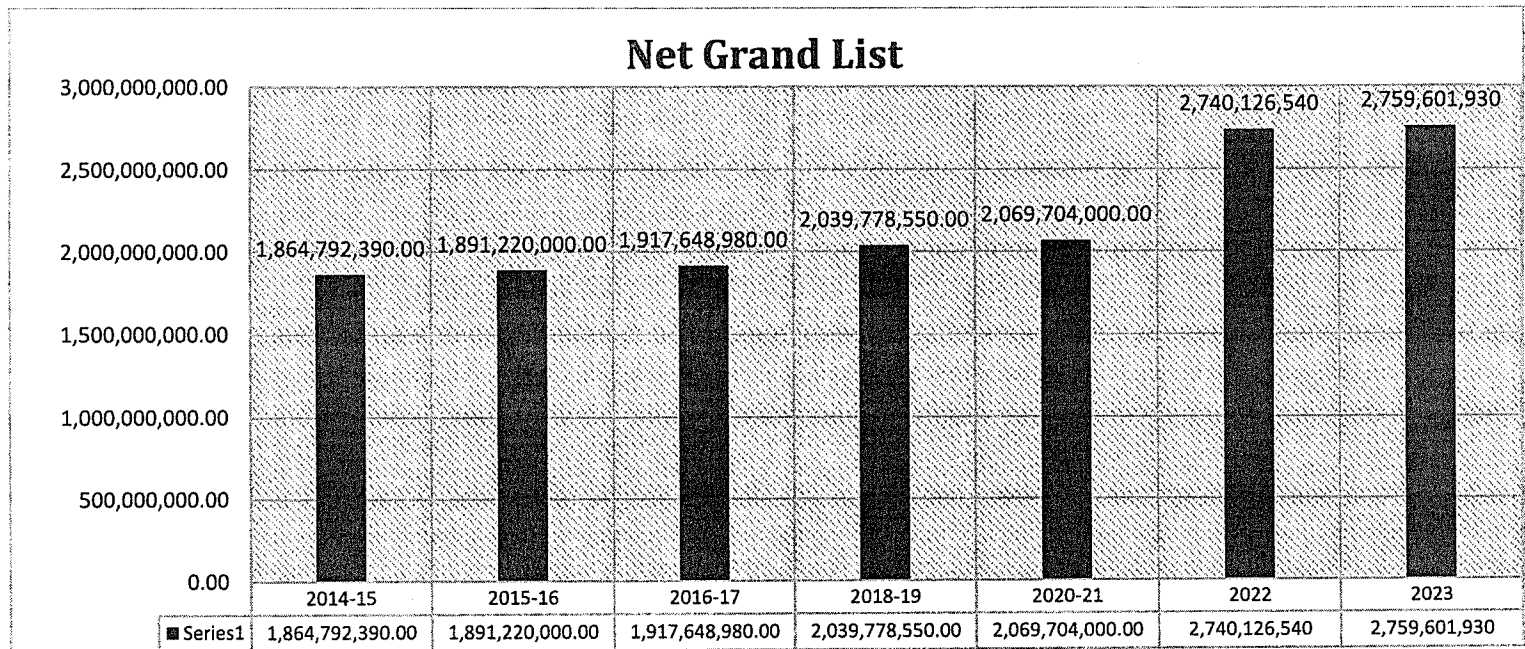
	Labor Force	Employed	Unemployed	Unemployment Rate
February 2024	10,959	10,445	514	4.7%
January 2024	10,991	10,525	466	4.2%
December 2024	10,585	10,483	376	3.5%
November 2023	10,935	10,589	346	3.2%
October 2023	10,896	10,562	334	3.1%
September 2023	10,957	10,659	295	2.7%
August 2023	10,985	10,631	354	3.2%
July 2023	11,238	10,808	430	3.8%
June 2023	11,173	10,775	398	3.6%
May 2023	10,907	10,563	344	3.2%
February 2023	10,893	10,435	458	4.2%

Source: CT Department of Labor

\*Danbury LM UR – 5.0%  
Connecticut UR – 5.4%

The CT Economic Digest: <https://www1.ctdol.state.ct.us/lmi/digest/pdfs/cedmar24.pdf>

### Net Grand List



### 2023

	# of Accounts	Gross Assessment	Exemptions	Total Net Assessment
Real Estate	7,677	2,354,931,190	5,286,410	2,349,644,780
Commercial				216,817,550
Industrial				82,418,210
Personal Property	1,435	230,698,100	44,555,950	186,142,150
Motor Vehicle	18,568	225,442,660	1,627,660	223,815,000
Final Total	27,680	2,811,071,950	51,470,020	2,759,601,930

### 2022

	# of Accounts	Gross Assessment	Exemptions	Total Net Assessment
Real Estate	7,660	2,341,692,170	3,932,950	2,337,759,220

<i>Commercial</i>				216,471,260
<i>Industrial</i>				82,045,110
Personal Property	1,360	213,542,730	44,046,350	169,496,380
Motor Vehicle	18,310	234,899,610	2,028,670	232,870,940
Final Total	27,330	2,790,134,510	50,007,970	2,740,126,540

*\*Reassessment year*