



TOWN OF HAMDEN, CONNECTICUT

Economic Development Commission Minutes

Hamden Government
Center
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Regular Meeting

5:30 PM, October 13, 2026

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1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chair Commissioner K. Good at 5:33 PM.

2. ATTENDANCE

The roll was called by the Clerk, and the following members were present:

Present

Commissioner Ken Good, Chair
Commissioner Petra Gardella
Commissioner Tammy Robinson
Commissioner Anthony J. DelGrego
Commissioner Howard K. Hill
Commissioner Maggie Murolo

Absent

Commissioner Romeo Ibanez

Also in attendance were Steve Fontana, Economic Development Director; Briana J. Belton-Robinson, Boards and Commissions Clerk; and three members of the public, who attended virtually.

Roll Call Summary: Present, Voting: 6; Present, Not Voting: 0; Absent: 1; Excused: 0.

3. APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES

1. Meeting Minutes for September 8th, 2026

Chairman K. Good requested a motion to adopt the minutes from Tuesday, September 8th, 2026, with the following corrections:

Chairman K. Good requested that the attendance roll-call summary reflect seven voting members rather than eight.

Commissioner M. Maggie moved to approve the minutes with that correction, and Commissioner T. Robinson seconded the motion.

Present

Commissioner K. Good, Chair
Commissioner T. Robinson
Commissioner A.J. DelGrego
Commissioner H.K. Hill
Commissioner M. Murolo

Absent

Commissioner R. Ibanez

Abstentions

Commissioner P. Gardella

The previous meeting minutes with corrections.

The motion passed.

- **Roll Call Vote Summary:** Yes 5, No 0, Abstentions 1, Absent 1.

4. PUBLIC COMMENT

1. Please limit your comments to three minutes.

Clerk B. Belton-Robinson read three written submissions sent directly to the Commission email:

Diane Hoffman asked when the Commission incorporates trees and green infrastructure, including adequate tree pits, shade, stormwater management, and traffic-calming, into development planning and budgets.

An Anonymous commenter, submitted through *Sarah Clark*, asked how business attraction could help lower the mill rate or offset its phase-in.

Stocky Clark asked about financial due diligence and the capacity of nonprofit developers to complete large redevelopment projects. Mr. S. Clark also spoke, emphasizing predevelopment and construction cash-flow capacity.

Commissioner P. Gardella commented that financial risks can arise with both nonprofit and for-profit developers. No further public comments were received.

5. CORRESPONDENCE

There will be a brief summary of the correspondence submitted between the last

correspondence update and this one. This includes but is not limited to any correspondence with council members that members wish to submit for the record. It can also include written communication to the council from the administration, community members, etc.

Chairman K. Good noted that the three written public submissions had been addressed during public comment. Clerk B. Belton-Robinson reported no additional correspondence.

6. EXECUTIVE SESSION

(if recommended by the town attorney)

No executive session was held.

7. CHAIRMAN'S REPORTS

1. Business Community Update

Chairman K. Good reported activity at the newly opened Ross Dress for Less and Bagel Bagel at 2404 Whitney Avenue. He discussed opportunities for Hamden to attract businesses associated with the New Haven region's growing quantum-computing sector. He reported approximately 67 business registrations during September, including retail/food/personal care, real estate, professional/creative/technology, construction/property services, healthcare/education/social care, transportation/delivery, manufacturing/fabrication, and other businesses. He emphasized manufacturing as an opportunity to create jobs and expand the tax base.

2. EDC Alliances

Chairman K. Good described outreach to the University of New Haven, including a homecoming visit with Finance Commissioner Tom Fortuna, and continued engagement with Quinnipiac University through student-business mentoring and advisory discussions. Commissioners were encouraged to participate in future mentoring opportunities.

3. Finalizing 2027 Economic Development Meeting

Chairman Good presented the proposed 2027 meeting schedule, generally retaining meetings at 5:30 p.m. on the second Tuesday of each month with hybrid/in-person participation.

After discussion and review of the dates, Commissioner T. Robinson moved to approve the calendar, and Commissioner P. Gardella seconded.

Vote by Roll Call:

Yes

Commissioner Ken Good, Chairman
Commissioner Petra Gardella
Commissioner Tammy Robinson
Commissioner Anthony J. DelGrego
Commissioner Howard K. Hill
Commissioner Maggie Murolo

No

Absent

Commissioner Romeo Ibanez

The motion passed.

- **Roll Call Vote Summary:** Yes 6, No 0, Abstentions 0, Absent 1.

8. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Director Stephen Fontana responded to the public comments and provided the following development and economic-development updates:

- *Trees and Green Infrastructure:* The Town is working with the Tree Commission and Hamden Alliance for Trees on grant-supported planting in eligible southern Hamden neighborhoods. New development proposals may include landscaping plans reviewed through Planning and Zoning.
- *Business Attraction and Tax Base:* Economic development and grand-list growth require multiple years. Director Fontana highlighted the potential for expansion by existing Sherman Avenue businesses and for multifamily development along major corridors, while noting financing, site availability, zoning, and infrastructure challenges.
- *High Meadows and Former Middle School:* The Community Builders (TCB), selected through a prior competitive process, is advancing affordable-housing concepts for High Meadows. Further due diligence, public engagement, regulatory review, and financing remain ahead. No nonprofit developer was identified as currently managing redevelopment of the former Hamden Middle School property.
- *Town Center Master Plan:* Consultant SLR is collecting survey and virtual-workshop input, with public engagement anticipated through October and preparation of draft recommendations thereafter. Director Fontana encouraged broader participation, including students, residents outside the town center and Quinnipiac stakeholders. Chairman Good noted 273 survey responses at the time of a prior project meeting.
- *Cooper House Square:* Town approvals have been obtained; developers are working on financing and project phasing.
- *Hamden 2040:* A public community conversation is being coordinated, with date and venue still to be determined.
- *1666 Whitney Avenue (former Spring Glen Hardware):* The property owners are developing a proposal and were encouraged to seek feedback from the Spring Glen Civic Association and nearby stakeholders.
- *Business Openings and Recruitment:* Director Fontana discussed Ross Dress for Less and Bagel Bagel, and reported that Panda Express is expected to occupy part of the former Panera space at Hamden Plaza. Outreach to additional expanding businesses continues.

- *Dixwell Reconnection Project*: The Town plans to seek a Community Investment Fund grant for planning improvements connecting Dixwell Avenue with the Linear Trail, potentially including pedestrian/bicycle access, sidewalks, trees, parklets and public art.
- *3360 Whitney Avenue*: An easement request associated with the Linear Trail was before Planning and Zoning and could enable a small commercial development, subject to approvals.
- *Old Coach Highway*: Town staff are reviewing development application materials; no public hearing date had been set at the time of the meeting.
- *Sewer Feasibility Study*: A consultant is studying the technical and financial feasibility of extending sewer service north toward the Cheshire line. No implementation decision has been made.
- *Industrial Expansion Assistance Program*: Director Fontana is preparing a submission to the Legislative Council to support industrial/commercial business expansion or relocation.

Town Center Master Plan — Director S. Fontana's project report and public participation resource; the survey will remain open through Saturday, October 31, 2026:

<https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/0f6a98a6ff694764a0bf687527e39584>

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/9DM36MS>

The commission discussed housing density and affordability, project design, community input, and neighborhood concerns related to the Old Coach Highway proposal.

9. OLD BUSINESS

Chairman K. Good reported that the planned Chamber-sponsored candidate meet-and-greet had been canceled, and the town was exploring a smaller gathering. He also discussed damage to the town clock tower from a vehicle collision. Director S. Fontana stated that the Town Engineer was reviewing cost-effective repair or replacement options; no final decision was reported. Commissioner P. Gardella raised examples of housing-development partnerships and second-home taxation for consideration.

10. NEW BUSINESS

Chairman K. Good announced the Hamden Regional Chamber of Commerce Awards Dinner scheduled for November 12, 2026, at Cascades Fine Dining, and highlighted award recipients across business, civic, education, nonprofit, and environmental categories. A formal event announcement will be circulated to commissioners.

11. ADJOURNMENT

Chairman K. Good reminded commissioners that the next month's meeting (November) would be in person.

Commissioner P. Gardella moved to adjourn; Commissioner H.K. Hill seconded.

The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at **6:50 PM**.

https://hamden.zoom.us/rec/play/m_EtUAG3HqAdSA_U-r9l9uKTXrM7qW9OcqRgcx6jDHmmON9qP3nj1-lg_PX5OgwdvVVT_jFOmlfingw.dB1GyvU6euK2h-IN?accessLevel=meeting&canPlayFromShare=true&from=share_recording_detail&startTime=1791926809000&oldStyle=true&componentName=rec-play&originRequestUrl=https%3A%2F%2Fhamden.zoom.us%2Frec%2Fshare%2F-5H3qOuvWEeGfmf6Vmgjr5VRVpegRqAn_zfCOwU-DxUBV9QtZ-Cc9V26ktYGjqvR.j0SMDRwjvPS_u7YO%3FstartTime%3D1791926809000