

**Arts Culture Torrington
Commission Meeting Minutes - July 21, 2021
City Hall, 140 Main St., Torrington, Connecticut**

Present:

Edward Cannata, Chairman

Kristy Barto

Janet Iffland

Rachel Kelly

William Haywood ~~Haywood~~ HA/GOOD

Ann Johnson

Mike McAllister

City Liaison:

Martin O'Connor, City Planner

Commissioner Ameritus:

Jacque Williams (via Zoom)

Guest:

Rista Malanca, Economic Development

Next regular meetings tentatively scheduled for the 3rd Wednesday of each month at 8:30 am.

Call to order: Ed Cannata called the meeting to order at 8:36 a.m.

Public comment: None

Finances: Ed reached out to the Board of Finance and confirmed there are currently funds in the amount of \$538.85 for the Commission.

Downtown Banner Program: Rista Malanca, Economic Development, detailed the Mayor's commitment to bringing life to downtown Torrington with banners on light poles. The Mayor has committed funds to cover Round 1 of the plan. The plan includes fabricating 50 banners which would be created as a collaborative effort with the community. Current thought is to create a juried process through which organizations and citizens can submit artwork for the banners representing aspects of the City. It should be noted that the light poles are not a public forum for political or religious statements. Rista pointed to the success of a past effort, the "Yarn Bomb" as a program that stimulated community interactivity and excitement.

Rista reached out to ACT to ask how the Commission could play a role in implementing this initiative. Rachel motioned to create a subcommittee, seconded by Mike and was unanimously approved. The following members volunteered for the subcommittee: Ed Cannata, Bill Haywood, Janet Iffland, Rachel Kelly and Mike McAllister.

Jacque expressed his concern about the resources that would be required. Rista suggested a meeting of the subcommittee twice a month at her offices at Economic Development. She reported that the current idea is to change out the banners every 6 months for a period of 2 years.

Bill reported that the town of Winsted has done a similar program and he would touch base with a selectwoman there to get helpful information.

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The first meeting of the subcommittee is scheduled for 8 a.m. on Tuesday, July 27, 2021 at the offices of Economic Development. This would be an in-person meeting only.

In conclusion, Rista spoke about a consultant who was hired to help strategize activating empty spaces, alley, etc. downtown to create vibrancy. This consultant has completed a report which Rista will share with ACT. A date for the consultant to meet with ACT will be planned in the near future.

City Space/City Hall Gallery: Bill brought the members up to date on the current art hanging in the auditorium. The works were hung in 2019 and have had little exposure due to the Covid year. Ed suggested that a press release be drafted and Bill agreed to do the same. Marty suggested hosting wine and cheese evening on a Thursday night when City Hall is open later. Rachel suggested creating some kind of informational bio to hang next to the art. Ed, Janet and Bill agreed to meet to discuss the same.

Holiday Ornaments: It was agreed by all involved in the past with this project, that it was successful in generating buzz and drawing citizens to local shops and businesses. Rachel motioned to resurrect the project, the motion was seconded by Mike and it passed unanimously. Ed reported that the cost to produce the ornaments is around \$8-\$9. Minimum order from The Cat's Meow is 25. The following suggestions were made for additions this year: Bad Dog Brewery, Hotchkiss Fyler House. It was noted that The Christmas Village is extremely popular.

New Business: Marty encouraged the members to attend the Chamber of Commerce's Celebration of Success at the Inn at Mount Pleasant on July 28, 2021. Those honored are: Five Points Gallery, Jacque Williams, and Charlotte Hungerford Hospital. Details can be found on the Chamber's website.

Jacque requested that an agenda item for the next meeting address revisiting Act's original mission and branching out to be inclusive of the mental health community and to address current and future projects and initiatives. Rachel moved to add this subject to the agenda, seconded by Janet and approved unanimously.

Adjournment: A motion was made and duly seconded to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 9:35 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Ann Johnson