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Town of East Haven
Economic Development
ETV, 230 Main Street, East Haven, CT.
Wednesday, January 14, 2026
Meeting Minutes-Special Meeting

1. Call meeting to order-

Chairwoman Lorrie Maiorano called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

All stand for pledge

3. Roll Call taken by Chairwoman Lorrie Maiorano

Present: Commissioner Amy Derbacher, Commissioner Dave Gersz, Commissioner John Tarducci, Chairwoman Lorrie Maiorano

Absent: Commissioner Judy Mison

Also Present: Rich Coppola, Town of East Haven Economic Development Director

4. Approval of Minutes from December 11, 2025

Chairwoman Lorrie Maiorano asked if there were comments after reading the Minutes from December 11. There were none. Chairwoman Maiorano made a motion to approve the minutes. Commissioner Gersz made a motion to approve the Minutes. Commissioner Tarducci seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion carries.

5. Correspondence

Director Coppola said new prospective business owners have come forward in recent days.

6. Directors report from Rich Coppola

Zoning Permits

December 8, 2025 208 Main Street – Approval for a new sign for a new restaurant called “Ade.”

* In December we talked about the sign approval for a new restaurant located at 212 Main Street. The name of the restaurant is Ade and they will be serving authentic Nigerian cuisine.

Site Plan Reviews – Planning and Zoning Commission

Application No. 25-29 - Planning and Zoning Commission. A Petition for a Text Amendment to the East Haven Zoning Regulations regulating accessory outdoor dining areas for restaurants and food service establishments. Public Hearing scheduled for February 4, 2026.

6. Other new business to come before the Commission

Director Coppola said a new Restaurant “Ade” recently held a soft opening. The Restaurant is located at the site of the old Palermo’s Restaurant (212 Main Street) offers authentic Nigerian cuisine. Coppola said he spoke with the

owners, and for now they are doing takeout on Tuesday through Thursday, and dining Friday through Sunday. The Restaurant is closed on Monday. He said come March folks can dine there Tuesday through Sunday. A popular West African dish is called Jollof. Coppola said he is excited because Ade should be popular with respect to the diversity of the town, and because it gives residents another option not found in the area.

On another note, Coppola said it was a good day because a groundbreaking was held in Foxon for the upcoming expansion and improvements to the FireHouse located at 1420 N High Street.

Coppola said blasting will begin next Tuesday at the site of the old Foxon Country House/Season's Restaurant.

Coppola mentioned the former Rite Aid building in Foxon has been sold. The new owner closed on it recently. Coppola also said earlier in the day he spoke with the owners of the former Rite Aid on Main Street and that they assure him they are in negotiations for a lease/sell deal.

Director Coppola talked about the challenges all Economic Directors face with trying to repurpose former drug stores. Something happening all over the country.

Coppola is hopeful that Joe Budrow from Planning and Zoning will join the meeting next month to share his vision with us. In the coming weeks Coppola said that he and Mayor Carfora will meet with Scott Dolch, the President and CEO of the Connecticut Restaurant Association.

Commissioner Derbacher mentioned how the Thrift Store is partnering with other businesses for pop-up events around town.

Visit the ETV Website for information on sponsorship opportunities.

7. Public Comment

None

8. Adjournment

Chairwoman Maiorano asked for a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Gersz made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Tarducci seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion carries.

Meeting adjourned at 7:37p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rich Coppola
Economic Development Director