

Essex Economic Development Commission (EDC)
Regular Meeting Minutes
November 5, 2025, 11:00AM
Meeting Held at 81 Main Street, Essex Junction VT 05452
Draft Minutes Submitted by Clerk Keith Dunbar, November 8, 2025

Attendees

Commission Members:

Present: Ken Signorello, Vice Chair; Keith Dunbar, Clerk; Irene Wrenner (elected chair during meeting); Anne Miller

Remote: N/A

Absent: Igor Polenov

Staff: Jean O'Sullivan, Tammy Getchell (Remote)

Public:

Partners: Alex Demoly, Vice President, Greater Burlington Industrial Corp. (GBIC)

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 11:01 AM by Vice Chair Ken Signorello

2. Agenda Additions/Changes

- Motion made and seconded to amend the agenda to add an election of Chair after agenda approval.
- Status of map added to agenda
- Motion to approve the changes to the agenda:
Wrenner motioned to approve the agenda, seconded by **Miller**.
Vote passed unanimously 4-0.

3. Public to be Heard

No public comments were offered in person or online.

4. Minutes to approve

a. October 1, 2025 – Motion to approve as amended. Amendments included:

- Add attendee: Brittany McGregor (present for the full meeting).
- Correct minor template artifacts (e.g., duplicate 'Staff' line).
- Clarify reference to 'CHIPS' vs. 'CHIP/mini-TIF' where applicable.
- Motion to approve the changes to the agenda:
Signorello motioned to approve, seconded by **Miller**.

Vote passed unanimously 4-0

b. October 16, 2025 (Prolytix site visit) – Motion to approve as amended. Amendments included:

- Correct spellings and clarify that Haematologic Technologies operates DBA Prolytix (HTI DBA Prolytix).
- Minor copy edits noted on the record.
- Motion to approve the changes to the agenda:
Wrenner motioned to approve, seconded by **Miller**.
Vote passed unanimously 4-0

5. Election of Chair (added item)

- Nominations opened for Chair. Irene Wrenner was nominated; nomination seconded.
- Hearing no further nominations, motion to elect Irene Wrenner as Chair.
- Motion to approve:
Signorello motioned to approve, seconded by **Dunbar**.
Vote passed unanimously 4-0

6. Partner Update – Alex Demoly (GBIC)

GBIC's Alex Demoly, provided a brief update:

- CHIPS: State guidelines expected within weeks; applications anticipated to open in January 2026.
- Sam Andersen is expected to attend the next EDC meeting.

7. Business Items

a. Introduction of Quarterly Business Bulletin and Updated Web Pages – Tammy Getchell

- Presented refreshed 'Doing Business' web content, Small Business Saturday assets, and an Essex Business Bulletin (quarterly) tied to Constant Contact sign-ups and business directory intake.
- Commission feedback included: add EDC as a listed business resource; consider 'Business Outreach' page; seasonality features (e.g., ag/sugar houses); highlight new businesses and note closures; link for hosting monthly Business Outreach visits; explore Essex-in-the-News page; verify Local Option Tax phrasing (businesses collect the tax).
- Staff to print brochures and QR business cards; Commissioners may assist with flyer distribution for Small Business Saturday.

b. Discussion – South Burlington Economic Development Study

- Members compared focus areas and presentation style; emphasized identifying core sectors, after-hours activation, and situating Essex's strategy relative to neighboring municipalities.
- Branding: consensus to include brand development in the Essex study (tagline/positioning to be tested with audiences).

c. Staff update on TPMA & CATMA study progress; Selectboard presentation – Jean O'Sullivan

- TPMA Economic Development Study timeline (subject to staff scheduling):

- November: share draft to Commissioners for review.
 - December (regular meeting): TPMA attends for feedback on draft.
 - Early January: EDC reviews final;
 - Late January/February: Selectboard presentation targeted.
- CATMA workforce transportation survey: ~40% employee participation across employers; next step is presenting findings and exploring district-scale options.

d. Proposed Temporary Signage Ordinance – possible vote – Ken Signorello

- Discussion on regulating temporary commercial signs, QR-coded permits, duration (suggested 30 days), exemptions (political), and practical enforcement involving Police/Public Works.
- No vote taken; Ken to revise draft to: include QR code provision; set 30-day display limit; continue evaluating garage sale/agricultural/seasonal use cases.

e. EDC Mission Statement – discussion and possible vote – Irene Wrenner

- Edits agreed in concept:
 - 'The EDC advises relevant staff departments and Town boards of the Town of Essex, including the Selectboard, Development Review Board, and Planning Commission.'
 - 'The EDC, through its members, should strive to...' (grammar/clarity).
 - 'Propose and nurture proactive programs... that position Essex as an attractive municipality in the State of Vermont.'
 - Ken to circulate a revised draft before next meeting for action.

f. Advise DRB of upcoming applications.

- Motion made and seconded to advise the DRB regarding the Shenk parcel application to preserve the required 50-foot roadway buffer (no stormwater facilities in the buffer) to maintain an attractive streetscape for recreational users and related economic activity.
- Motion to approve:
Signorello motioned to approve, seconded by **Dunbar**.
 Vote passed unanimously 4-0

8. Next Meeting

- Business Outreach at Aviatron, 17 Thompson Drive, Essex VT. 8:00am on 11/20/2025

9. Adjournment

- Motion: **Signorello** motioned to adjourn the meeting at 1:00 PM, seconded by **Miller**.
 Vote: Passed unanimously 4-0.

Meeting recording available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ochKu9-RQ2c>