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## **2020 Year in Review: Christopher Edge, Town of Berlin (CT)**

December 25, 2020 - Spotlights

Christopher Edge  
Economic Development Director  
Town of Berlin (CT)

What was the most difficult part of working during the pandemic of 2020? Finding ways to remind residents and those who work every day in town about the restaurants and other small businesses here and to support them. In particular if they were open, what their hours were, etc. Created something called Eat Local, Win Local which offered customers a chance at prizes if they spent \$15 at each of two restaurants in Berlin. It was a success!

What aspects of working from home have you enjoyed most? I have gone to the office every workday since COVID started.

What was your greatest professional accomplishment or most notable project, deal, or transaction in 2020? Two mixed-use projects with a total of 148 market rate apartments and almost 40,000 s/f of retail and medical office space both broke ground in 2020. The total investment between these two is over \$30 million and the construction is happening right in the middle of COVID.

What are your predictions for commercial real estate in 2021? Restaurants will rebound in late 2021, but the real proof will be in early 2022 to see how many are not just surviving, but growing in size or locations. Industrial real estate will continue to churn as manufacturers, contractors and distribution firms continue to grow, shrink and move within markets.

What is the best advice you have received, and who was it from? “Keep plugging ahead, even when things look bleak” – Derek Wheeler (blogger).