

**Economic Development Commission
Meeting Minutes
January 7, 2010**

Attending: R. Casner , M. Gionta; D. Mathiasen; E. Sabetta, R. Scherrer; P. Stricker; M. Ziobron (EDC Coordinator)
Guests: A. Ciccarello, J. Clark; H. Kittner; P. Maxwell; D. McMahon; S. Wheeler - M. Walter joined the meeting at 7:36 p.m.

Mr. Scherrer called the meeting to order at 7:08 p.m. Ms. Mathiasen distributed a list of the 2010 meeting dates and copies of the Town's approved Plan of Conservation and Development. She noted that the Plan must be reviewed annually and a Town Meeting has been scheduled for this purpose on February 23rd at the Grange. She noted that an EDC representative should attend that meeting to provide information on the Commission's progress on the goals outlined in the Plan.

MINUTES

The minutes from the regular November 5th meeting and the notes from the December 3rd meeting were reviewed. Ms. Mathiasen suggested one change to the notes from the December meeting. MS. STRICKER MADE A MOTION, SECONDED BY MS. MATHIASEN, TO APPROVE THE NOVEMBER 5, 2009 MEETING MINUTES AS WRITTEN. UNANIMOUS AYE.

OLD BUSINESS

Status Reports:

Goodspeed Properties – Ms. Kittner reported that there was a minor set-back on the plans for the new actors' housing project. She noted that the State and the Chatham Health District are requiring that the proposed well-system be replaced with a community water system. She stated that they expect to break-ground in February. Mr. McMahon stated that the Theatre had received and signed-off on the DEDC contract proposal, which was the next step in having the grant funds distributed.

Ms. Kittner stated that they have wrapped up the Emmet Otter's Jug Band production and she reported on several educational programs the Theatre is sponsoring this winter.

Economic Development Coordinator – Ms. Ziobron introduced Joseph Clark and asked him to talk about his plans to open a micro-brewery in East Haddam. Mr. Clark stated that he recently retired from his position as Technical Director and Assistant Manager of the NY Metropolitan Opera and that he had spent time last year training in a brewery outside of Munich in anticipation of pursuing his retirement goal of opening the East Haddam Brewery. He stated that he has lived in East Haddam for 15 years, has considered several properties for his brewery and finally settled on the Cofish building in the Village. He stated that he expects to start renovations to the building this summer and that the brewery should be able to accommodate a small tap room for up to 50 people.

In response to a question from Mr. McMahon, Ms. Ziobron stated that the site can support staff parking and visitors will use the municipal parking areas in the Village. She stated that she is helping Mr. Clark organize a neighborhood Q&A meeting for January 31st. Mr. Scherrer thanked Mr. Clark for attending the meeting and stated that EDC is very enthusiastic about his plans and will help in anyway they can.

Ms. Ziobron introduced Anthony Ciccarello who told the Commissioners that he was attending the meeting as part of a Civics project.

Ms. Ziobron also reported on the following projects:

- CT Farm Fresh recently signed a lease for space in the Industrial Park and received a grant from the State of CT for the purchase of a walk-in cooler. She is helping the owner to re-write her application for a loan from the Middlesex Chamber Revitalization Commission.
- She continues to work with Darcey Farr on a project to extend the Village commercial district up to and including the Weeds gift shop. The project is on the P&Z's January 12th agenda for an informal discussion and its January 26th agenda for a public hearing.
- She is meeting with the director of the Midstate Regional Planning Agency on January 8th to review the old plans for a walkway on the Swingbridge.
- She assisted a business in Town who was a secret Santa for two middle-school families this holiday season.

Ms. Ziobron stated that the next joint meeting of the East Haddam/Haddam EDCs is scheduled for 7:00 p.m. on January 25th in Haddam. She also noted that the Brownfield grant approvals will be announced in March or April and asked the Commissioners to think about potential members for a Brownfield Committee. Mr. Scherrer stated the topic will be added to the Commission's March agenda. In response to a question from Ms. Mathiasen, Ms. Ziobron stated she would follow-up on the date of the next MCRC website meeting.

First Selectmen's Report – Mr. Walter reported on the following items:

- Village Pedestrian Safety Improvement Project: The Town is in the process of negotiating an engineering contract with Fuss and O'Neil which is a CT Department of Transportation requirement for approval of the project plans.
- Former Sunrise Resort DEP follow-up – Ms. Ziobron advised that she will follow-up with the Acting Deputy for the CT Department of Environmental Protection regarding the State's plans for the property. Mr. Walter stated that the State Police are using the site for police dog training and Ms. Stricker inquired if there is an opportunity for East Haddam to provide additional space for State Police Training programs. She and Mr. Walter agreed to discuss the issue off-line.

Revitalization Commission – Mr. Gionta reported that the Revitalization Commission's vision for the Village is a walkable retail district with limited residential and office space above the shops. He stated that they estimate it will cost approximately \$7500.00 to have an architect develop conceptual drawings which will be needed to attract a developer. He stated that the Commissioners feel that a lease or outright purchase of the site could be equally beneficial to the Town.

Signage Ordinance – Next Steps – Mr. Sabetta distributed a grid created by Mr. Puska of a sampling of Town businesses detailing their signage criteria. He noted that that the information collected reflects conflicting requirements of the existing signage regulations. Mr. Casner stated that Mr. Ventres will present the information gathered by Mr. Puska at the next Planning & Zoning Commission meeting. There was a general discussion regarding this issue and what the appropriate next steps should be.

Tax Incentives – Ms. Ziobron distributed copies of a PowerPoint presentation and a draft tax incentive program she and Ms. Stricker created. She reviewed the CT Statutes related to tax incentive plans and noted that municipalities must stay within the parameters outlined in the statute. The Commissioners reviewed the draft plan and suggested several revisions.

Mr. Sabetta left the meeting at 9:54 p.m. Ms. Ziobron stated that she would update the draft and distribute it to the Commissioners for final comments before she sends it to the Town's attorney for review. Mr. Scherrer thanked Ms. Ziobron and Ms. Stricker for their work on the draft and, in particular, he thanked Ms. Stricker for her persistence in pursuing this goal.

Moodus Commercial Infrastructure – Next Steps – This item was set as the main topic for the February meeting.

Goodspeed 2nd Theatre – Next Steps – Due to the late hour, discussion of this agenda item was deferred until the February meeting.

Johnsonville – Due to the late hour, there was no update on this agenda item.

Banner – Due to the late hour, there was no update on this agenda item..

Other Businesses Updates/New Businesses/Events/Tourism:

- January Business Night – Ms. Mathiasen reported that the Business Night has been scheduled for January 29th.
- Other – Ms. Mathiasen stated that she will contact the Eagle Flyer Train for information on its schedule so that East Haddam business can organize possible tie-ins. She noted that the Chowder Cook-Off is scheduled for March 20th and that LaVita Gustosa will again host the event.

MOTION WAS MADE BY MR. CASNER, SECONDED BY MS. STRICKER, TO HAVE THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION UNDERWRITE THE COST OF THE CHATHAM HEALTH DISTRICT PERMIT FEE FOR THE PARTICIPANTS OF THE CHOWDER COOK-OFF. UNANIMOUS AYE.

NEW BUSINESS

Mail received – Ms. Mathiasen advised that EDC had received an invitation for the next Environmental Roundtable on January 16th and she is planning on attending. She also noted that the Commission received a notice that a Freedom of Information seminar is scheduled for 7:00 p.m. on January 28th at the Grange.

Public Comment/Other – There was no public comment.

There no other items discussed at the meeting.

THERE BEING NO ADDITIONAL BUSINESS TO DISCUSS, MR. CASNER MADE A MOTION, SECONDED BY MS. STRICKER, TO ADJOURN THE MEETING. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

The meeting adjourned at 10:07 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon R. Wheeler
Recording Secretary