

**Economic Development Commission  
Meeting Minutes  
November 6, 2014**

Attending: R. Casner; D. Bergeron; R. Parady; D. Mathiasen; P. Rubenbauer; P. Simmons (Economic Development Coordinator);

Absent: J. Albuquerque; G. Rucker; F. Weissbach

Guests: E. Blaschik; D. O'Mara; J. O'Mara; K. Matthews (P&Z); K. Staehly; S. Wheeler

Mr. Casner called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

**Minutes** – The minutes of the September 4, 2014 meeting were reviewed.

MS. MATHIASEN MADE A MOTION, SECONDED BY MS. RUBENBAUER, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE SEPTEMBER 4, 2014 MEETING AS WRITTEN. UNANIMOUS AYE.

**OLD BUSINESS**

**Status Reports:**

Economic Development Coordinator – Mr. Simmons presented his November 6, 2014 report, a copy of which is attached to and made part of these minutes. In response to a question raised by Mr. Casner, he advised that the owner of New England Propeller Services is focused on wrapping up the construction work and, once he has his C.O., they will turn their attention to the tax incentive agreement.

First Selectman Update – Mr. Casner reported that he has spoken with the First Selectmen regarding the Transfer Station. He stated that Mr. Walter advised him that commercial use of the Transfer Station is currently being allowed and that he will notify the commercial haulers and EDC when the Board of Selectmen will next be discussing the issue.

EDC Chairman Update – Mr. Casner reported that the Planning & Zoning Commission has not yet taken any action on the re-draft of Chapter 8 of the Plan of Conservation and Development.

P&Z/EDC Waste Water Joint Committee – Moodus & Rt. 82/151 – Mr. Casner reported that a member of the sub-committee has been conducting an engineering analysis of running the sewer lines to the 4-corners section and septic systems for the Moodus commercial area. He stated that he expects the sub-committee will submit a report, including cost-estimates, in early 2015.

Goodspeed Landing Committee – Mr. Casner reported that the next steps are to develop a master plan for the Village area that can be implemented in phases. He presented a plan that the Goodspeed Theater has previously proposed which identified potential walking paths around the Village area and he discussed potential uses for the Town Office site. Mr. Bergeron supported the concept of a boardwalk along the river and there was a general discussion about the planned dock. Mr. Matthews advised that DEEP has approved the construction of the dock.

Tourism Committee – Ms. Mathiasen reported that she has met with a number of local groups who are interested in participating in spring and/or fall tourism events. She advised that she will finalize the dates for the two events and submit them for listing in the state of CT tourism publications.

Ms. Mathiasen noted that a request had been made for EDC to install additional brochure dispensers around Town and Ms. Rubenbauer agreed to research suppliers. There was a general discussion about locations for the new dispensers and Mr. Parady suggested the footbridge from the Goodspeed parking lot to the Gelston House as a good site.

East Haddam Business Association – Ms. Mathiasen reported that the Board of Selectmen have agreed to conduct an open forum for business owners at the January 21<sup>st</sup> Business Association meeting. She advised that the Business Association requested that EDC assist with sending out invitations to the event and publicity. The Commissioners agreed that a postcard mailing would be the best way to communicate the event to Town businesses and Ms. Mathiasen stated she would create a draft postcard for the Commissioners to review at the December meeting.

## NEW BUSINESS

Tax Incentive Program Recommendations – Mr. Simmons discussed his proposal for changes to the Tax Incentive Program. He stated that the main change is that the proposed incentive for large and medium projects will consider the total value of the investment rather than the increase in the assessed value. He noted, however, that due to the restrictions in the CT statutes, a similar change cannot be made to the tax incentive for small projects (those under \$500,000.00). Mr. Simmons stated that he had reviewed his analysis with the assessor and she stated that she can support the changes to the program.

There was a general discussion regarding the use of the term “improvements” in Mr. Simmons proposal and he agreed to revise the terminology. There was also a discussion about the applicability of the Tax Incentive Program to residential projects.

MR. PARADY MADE A MOTION, SECONDED BY MS. MATHIASSEN, TO RECOMMEND THE PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE TAX INCENTIVE PROGRAM TO THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN. UNANIMOUS AYE.

Food Cart Use – Mr. Simmons advised that several individuals have expressed an interest in operating food carts at various locations around Town but noted that the Land Use regulations are silent on this issue. He suggested that the regulations be revised to allow for the use of food carts in the lake districts. Mr. Simmons introduced Mr. O’Mara who told the Commissioners about his experience with getting his food cart authorized by the Town.

There was a general discussion and it was noted that this item is on the Planning & Zoning Commission’s agenda for consideration. Mr. Casner suggested that food carts should be allowed the lake and commercial districts.

MR. PARADY MADE A MOTION, SECONDED BY MR. BERGERON, TO SEND A LETTER TO THE PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION IN SUPPORT OF CHANGES TO THE LAND USE REGULATIONS TO ALLOW FOOD CARTS IN THE LAKE AND COMMERCIAL DISTRICTS. UNANIMOUS AYE.

Doing Business In East Haddam Flier - Ms. Mathiasen advised that Mr. Simmons had provided her with a draft list of information that should be covered in a “Doing Business In East Haddam” flier. Mr. Casner agreed to meet with Ms. Mathiasen to review and prioritize the information. Mr. Simmons agreed to provide them with an updated version of the materials that they could work with.

Blight Ordinance – The Commissioners discussed the draft Blight Ordinance and it was their consensus that EDC cannot support the ordinance as currently proposed. They agreed it would be useful to investigate East Haddam’s existing regulations/ordinances and identify where the gaps are. They also thought it would be helpful to review the blight regulations adopted by other CT towns. Mr. Parady agreed to reach out to Mr. Walter and get the results of any research he has done on this topic.

Mail Received – Mr. Simmons advised that he had received an email invitation to a 2-hour training on the Fundamentals of Economic Development. He advised that he will research additional information on the training and report back to the Commissioners.

Public Comment/Other/EDC Ordinance Review – Mr. Casner introduced Kevin Staehly and advised that he has applied to be an Alternate Member on EDC. Mr. Staehly provided information on his background and stated that he has recently returned to town to manage the Staehly Farm’s new winery business. He responded to several questions from the Commissioners.

MOTION MADE BY MR. PARADY, SECONDED BY MS. RUBENBAUER, TO RECOMMEND KEVIN STAEHLY TO THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN FOR APPOINTMENT AS AN ALTERNATE MEMBER OF THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION. UNANIMOUS AYE.

Mr. Blaschik advised that the Goodspeed Opera House has had a very good year. He noted that the current production was recently extended for a third time.

THERE BEING NO ADDITIONAL BUSINESS TO DISCUSS, MR. BERGERON MADE A MOTION, SECONDED BY MR. PARADY TO ADJOURN THE MEETING. UNANIMOUS AYE.

The regular meeting adjourned at 8:44 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
/s/ Sharon R. Wheeler  
Recording Secretary