

**Joint Meeting of the East Haddam and Haddam
Economic Development Commissions
Special Meeting Minutes**

October 14, 2015

Attending:

East Haddam EDC: R. Casner; D. Mathiasen; P. Rubenbauer

Haddam EDC: S. Bayley; M. Farina; M. Fortuna; E. Vynalek; C. MacNeil-Sola; E. Schwing

Guests: L. Glidden (Haddam Town Planner); P. Pinnell; M. Schlag (Haddam First Selectman); S. Wheeler

Mr. Casner called the meeting to order at 7:22 p.m.

NEW BUSINESS

Introductions – The Commissioners and guests introduced themselves and provided brief comments on their background and experience.

East Haddam EDC Projects Overview – Mr. Casner's opened his comments by stating that East Haddam and Haddam have a common interest in developing the Route 82 corridor for tourism purposes. He advised that the rehabilitation of a school building to municipal offices was recently approved at referendum which will open up the 2.5 acre site in the Village for possible commercial use. He reviewed East Haddam EDC's efforts to identify and rectify barriers to marketing the site to potential developers. In response to a question raised by Mr. Schwing, Mr. Casner stated that the town has not decided whether a lease or sale of the property would be preferable.

There was a general discussion concerning the various entities that would have a say in the development of the site, such as the public, the town's Historic District Commission, the Gateway Commission, etc. In response to a question from Ms. Glidden, Mr. Casner advised that the Riverhouse would remain on the site and the town garage would be demolished, but it would be up to a developer whether or not the Town Office building could be re-purposed. There was a general discussion regarding extending rail service to the area.

The Commissioners noted that the size of the site does not provide a developer with a critical mass and discussed the possibility of adding additional properties to the marketing plan, including parcels on the Haddam side of the river.

Haddam EDC Projects Overview – Ms. Glidden advised that Haddam is pursuing Village designation for Tylerville and will develop appropriate Village District regulations that recognize and preserve its remaining historic buildings. She noted that the town is developing bike/pedestrian trails and is working with Rep. Ziobron to encourage the governing authorities to add a walkway to the swing bridge.

In response to a question from Mr. Casner, Ms. Glidden noted that Haddam's Tylerville study is on the Town of Haddam's website.

Discussion of Common Interests – The Commissioners discussed the challenges for small businesses to get well approvals from the CT Department of Public Health. First Selectman Schlag noted that Tylerville businesses can take advantage of community wells and that Haddam is also in discussions with the CT Water Company about connecting to their lines. She agreed to keep the East Haddam EDC informed about the progress of those discussion and will invite the appropriate town representation to critical meetings. There was a general discussion regarding possible funding sources for connecting to the CT Water Company lines.

In response to a question raised by Mr. Casner, Ms. Glidden advised that sewers for Higganum are not a top priority for Haddam at this time but noted that the area also has water contamination issues. There was a general discussion regarding connecting Tylerville to East Haddam's sewer system.

The Commissioners discussed the possibility of pursuing a joint study/market analysis of the Route 82 corridor and Ms. Glidden stated she would research possible funding sources for such a study.

Mr. Farina suggested that the two EDCs cooperate on creating visitor packages and submit them to appropriate tourism vehicles. Ms. Mathiasen provided an overview of recent tourism events sponsored in East Haddam as well as some of the state and regional publications where she lists the events. She agreed to share her information with the Haddam EDC. The Commissioners brainstormed possible joint tourism opportunities such as bike/road races and coordinated spring/fall weekend dates.

Mr. Bayley suggested linking the East Haddam and Haddam EDC websites. Ms. Glidden recommended that the EDCs schedule regular joint meetings two to four times per year.

The special meeting adjourned at 8:39 p.m.

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