

East Haddam Economic Development Commission
Special Meeting Minutes
June 16, 2016

Attending: R. Casner; D. Bergeron; R. Parady; P. Rubenbauer; K. Staehly; F. Weissbach
Absent: J. Albuquerque
Guests: E. Blaschik

Mr. Casner called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and sat Mr. Staehly for Mr. Albuquerque. He noted that Mr. Rucker's term has expired and that there are two openings for regular members.

MOTION WAS MADE BY MS. RUBENBAUER, SECONDED BY MR. STAEHLY, TO NOMINATE DON BERGERON AS A REGULAR MEMBER OF THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION AND SEND SAID RECOMMENDATION TO THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN FOR APPROVAL. UNANIMOUS AYE.

MOTION WAS MADE BY MS. RUBENBAUER, SECONDED BY MR. PARADY, TO NOMINATE KEVIN STAEHLY AS A REGULAR MEMBER OF THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION AND SEND SAID RECOMMENDATION TO THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN FOR APPROVAL. UNANIMOUS AYE.

Minutes – The Commissioners reviewed the minutes from the April 7, 2016 meeting.

MR. CASNER MADE A MOTION, SECONDED BY MS. RUBENBAUER, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE APRIL 7, 2016 REGULAR MEETING AS WRITTEN. UNANIMOUS AYE.

OLD BUSINESS

Status Reports:

1. **EDC Chairman Update**
 - i. EDC Coordinator Position - Mr. Casner reported that he has been in touch with the town of Haddam which is interested in a shared Economic Development Coordination position with the Town of East Haddam. He stated that, in the meantime, East Haddam is considering creating a 6-month contract position for the role.
 - ii. Chapter 8 - Plan of C&D P&Z Status – Mr. Casner reported that the Planning & Zoning Commission has accepted the proposed updates to Chapter 8, EDC's section in the Plan of Conservation and Development.
2. **First Selectmen's Report** – Mr. Walter was not in attendance and, consequently, there were no updates to the items under this section of the Agenda.
3. **P&Z/EDC Waste Water Joint Committee**
 - i. Moodus & Rt. 82/151 area – Mr. Casner noted that the final report on this project had been submitted, however, in light of the Goodspeed Landing project, he did not think any EDC follow-up would occur until approximately September.
4. **Goodspeed Landing Committee** – A report on the Committee's activities was given during the New Business discussions and is reported on under New Business item #2 below.
5. **Agriculture Committee** – Mr. Casner reported that the poultry issue at Shady Brook was resolved, however, Planning and Zoning is working on revising the ordinance regarding raising of poultry in/near residential areas.
6. **Tourism Committee** – There was no update on this agenda item.
7. **EH Business Association** – There was no update on this agenda item.
8. **East Haddam News – consideration for EDC ad support** – Mr. Staehly agreed to speak with a representative of the East Haddam News to determine whether to post EDC's complimentary business ads in the newspaper or continue posting them in the Events Magazine.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Mail Received

- i. Conservation Commission – request for funds for mapping – Mr. Casner advised that the Conservation Commission had submitted a request to EDC for assistance with the cost of re-printing their individual trail maps. The Commissioners discussed the request and the distribution of the maps. They agreed that it does not appear that the individual trail maps, posted at the applicable trail heads, drive economic business to the Town and, therefore, declined to support the Conservation Commission's request.

2. Review and vote on Goodspeed Landing Master Plan proposal from Centerbrook Design

Mr. Weissbach recapped the Committee's exploratory meeting with the Goodspeed representatives. He stated that the purpose of the meeting was to determine Goodspeed's interest in collaborating with EDC and the Town to create a vision for the development of the Village center. He noted that Goodspeed wants to position itself as the home of the American musical in the U.S. and they expressed an eagerness to collaborate on the Goodspeed Landing project.

Mr. Weissbach stated that all agreed to have Centerbrook Design submit a proposal to develop a master plan for the project. Mr. Casner advised that the Goodspeed had agreed to split the cost of developing a master plan and the Commissioners reviewed the proposal submitted by Mr. Riley.

Mr. Parady noted the need to plan for sufficient parking in the Village and expressed his concern that the Town not lose control of the Town Office site property. He noted that the Town had invested in several previous studies and plans for the Village which he feels may still be useful. He further stated that he is concerned about the Goodspeed's intentions with this project.

Mr. Weissbach stated that the Town did not have to sell the property and could retain control of the development by a well-structured lease. He said that he feels this is the most important project that the Commissioners' will work on during their tenure on EDC and noted that he believed the Goodspeed representatives were sincere in their desire to be equal partners with the Town and EDC.

In response to questions raised by the Board members, Mr. Casner advised that he has spoken with the Planning & Zoning Commission who are working on developing a hotel ordinance for the Village district. All agreed that it is in the best interest of the Town that the development of Village Office parcel should build the grand list and increase the tax base for the Town. Mr. Casner further advised that he has requested quotes from three companies to do appraisals of the Town Office site parcel and two other related properties.

The Commissioners discussed the budgetary requirements for the development of a master plan and the appraisals.

MOTION MADE BY MR. WEISSBACH, SECONDED BY MR. PARADY, TO AUTHORIZE THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION TO MOVE FORWARD ON STEP 1 OF THE EXISTING MASTER PLAN PROPOSAL AND EXPEND \$15,000.00 FOR SAME.

The Commissioners reviewed Mr. Riley's proposal and a map of the area and Mr. Staehly suggested that it may make more sense to implement Step 2 of the proposal first. The Commissioners agreed with Mr. Staehly's suggestion and Mr. Weissbach stated that it would also make sense to include the review of code/regulatory requirements in the first phase of the project.

MR. WEISSBACH WITHDREW HIS PREVIOUS MOTION, SECONDED BY MR. PARADY, AND MOVED TO AUTHORIZE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF STEP 2 FROM THE ORIGINAL PROPOSAL AS PHASE 1 AND TO INCLUDE A REVIEW OF CODE/REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS IN PHASE 1 AND TO AUTHORIZE AN EXPENDITURE OF \$15,000.00 FROM EDC'S 2015/16 BUDGET FOR THE WORK. MR. PARADY SECONDED THE MOTION AND IT PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Mr. Casner noted that the Goodspeed's financial commitment to Step 2, now being implemented as Phase 1, is \$5,000.00. He stated that he would inform Mr. Riley and the Goodspeed of EDC's recommendation to change the order of Steps 1 and 2 in the proposal to develop a master plan.

MR. CASNER MADE A MOTION, SECONDED BY MR. BERGERON TO PURSUE APPRAISALS FOR THE TOWN OFFICE SITE, THE SMALL PARCEL ADJACENT TO THE TOWN OFFICE SITE OWNED BY THE GOODSPEED OPERA HOUSE AND 19 MAIN STREET. UNANIMOUS AYE.

3. Discuss and vote on tourism visitors' guide – Mr. Casner stated that the visitors' brochure has been updated and there is money in the budget to reprint it. He noted that he would also like to re-design the existing brochure and there are funds available to do so.

MOTION MADE BY MR. WEISSBACH, SECONDED BY MR. STAEHLY, TO APPROVE THE PRINTING AND REDESIGN OF THE VISITORS' BROCHURE FOR AN EXPENDITURE NOT TO EXCEED \$2,000.00. UNANIMOUS AYE.

4. Discuss public water study – Mr. Casner recapped the proposal to run water lines under the CT River from Haddam to the Village and noted that he would like to have an engineering firm develop an estimate for the cost of same.

MOTION MADE BY MR. STAEHLY, SECONDED BY MR. BERGERON, TO ENTER INTO A CONTRACT WITH AN ENGINEERING FIRM TO DO A PUBLIC WATER STUDY AND DEVELOP AN ESTIMATE TO RUN PIPING UNDER THE CT RIVER FROM THE TYLERVILLE SECTION OF HADDAM TO THE VILLAGE SECTION OF EAST HADDAM AND TO AUTHORIZE AN EXPENDITURE FOR SAID CONTRACT NOT TO EXCEED \$3,000.00. UNANIMOUS AYE.

5. Discuss Four-Corner proposed zoning changes before PZC – Mr. Casner stated that eleven zones currently exist within the Four-Corner section of Town. He stated that P&Z has reviewed the existing zones and has proposed to consolidate the area into three districts. He noted that the proposed changes will be presented to the public in a future Public Hearing.
6. Discuss Town Anti-Blight Ordinance – Mr. Casner reported that a second Public Hearing was held the previous evening to allow citizens an opportunity to ask questions and express their opinions regarding the updated proposed Blight Ordinance. He noted that the consensus of the individuals in attendance was not in favor of adopting such an ordinance. Mr. Blaschik informed the Commissioners, however, that the Selectmen moved to add the proposed ordinance to the call for the June 28th Town Meeting for action.
7. Pay Bills – No bills were discussed at the meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Blaschik stated that he was attending the meeting as a private citizen, a tax-payer, and an employee of the Goodspeed Opera House. He expressed concern about "we/them" discussions regarding the Town's relationship with the Goodspeed and recommended the Commissioners enter into the proposed collaboration on the development of the Village center with open minds.

OTHER, EDC ORDINANCE REVISION

Mr. Bergeron advised that a representative from the East Haddam Newspaper contacted him and asked if EDC could supply a directory of the businesses in Town for publication. Mr. Casner agreed to follow-up with the newspaper and get clarification on their request.

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

The regular meeting adjourned at 8:59 p.m.

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