

East Haddam Village Revitalization Committee (VRC) Meeting
Wednesday, April 25, 2018
Minutes

DRAFT

Committee Members Present: Bill Gerrish (Chairman), Melanie Kolek (Secretary), J.T. Smith (for Mr. Casner), Randy Dill, Jim Curtin, Will Brady

Others in Attendance: Emmett Lyman, Irene Haines, Rob Smith, Donald Donner, Jim Venditti, Ray Pelletier, Mark and Zoey Belcher

Absent: Mike Gionta, Mark Walter, Bob Casner

Mr. Gerrish called the meeting to order at 7:34 pm. He appointed J.T. Smith to replace Bob Casner as a voting member.

Approval of minutes from March 28, 2018 meeting with changes **MOTION CARRIED**
Dill/Smith

Mr. Curtin noted that the Riverhouse is on the National Registry, not old town office as referenced by Mr. McMahon. (Mr. McMahon stated that it was the old town hall that was on the National Registry.)

First Selectman Update

Mr. Lyman discussed the landscaping being completed at the new town hall and the budget coming up for a vote. There was also discussion regarding the TIGER grant which the Town was late for filing the application last year. Much more money for the grant (\$1.5 billion) is being offered this time, largely earmarked for rural and joint projects. \$25 million of that is more than adequate for the appealing bridge sidewalk. July 19th is deadline. In terms of a grant application, the EHVRC would not play any role in that. Mr. Lyman discussed the criteria for the grant. Mr. Smith agreed with Mr. Gerrish that putting together a letter from the committee would be helpful for supporting the grant.

Mr. Curtin asked about a timeline for repairs from the DOT. OPM is controlling the timeline according to both Mr. Lyman and what Mr. Smith learned from the DOT.

Mr. Brady stated that town of Haddam is seeking opinions regarding the development of Tylerville.

New Business

There was discussion regarding Connecticut Main Street Center's invitation to have East Haddam join its yearly membership of \$500.00. There was discussion regarding the value of having this membership. Mr. Lyman discussed his preliminary research regarding TIFs. There was a question

of asking Suffield how they did this. Mrs. Kolek discussed the familization event and if we are not proceeding with CT Main Street Center's invitation now, when would the event take place?

MOTION to recommend that Mr. Lyman talk with other towns that have utilized Main Street Center and if their experiences have been good, then it will be worthwhile to advance the familiarization project.

Dill/Brady

MOTION CARRIED

Old Business

A. Environmental Assessment

Still deciding what vendor will perform this work.

B. DOT

Holding off on now per OPM, nothing to pursue given the budget situation.

Mr. Curtain discussed Plan of Conservation and Development survey.

MOTION to add the following question for survey: "There is a committee looking into development of the old town office area. What are your thoughts about what should be developed there?"

Curtain/Dill

MOTION CARRIED

Audience of Citizens

Rob Smith noted that a special meeting agenda was needed for meeting with HDC and VRC. Rob Smith recommended that contact with a long range planner at DOT should be made for further discussion regarding the future of the bridge. He will research this and report to the committee about a contact.

Donald Donner, a commercial real estate appraiser, is interested in purchasing and developing the village property. Mr. Donner believes that all three buildings are usable, including the garage which could be converted into a brewery. Mr. Donner has spoken to many for planning purposes and all have expressed interest and excitement, including potential restaurateurs/retailers, Goodspeed and town officials.

Mr. Brady discussed water issues and moving the East Haddam sign. Mr. Donner met with Mr. Ventres who indicated the town sewer system is running well below average and more waste would actually be beneficial to the system. Mr. Brady noted that the HDC wants the sign to remain somewhere within the historical district.

There was further discussion about putting in a fixed access/dock to the restaurant/brewery area. Water taxi to bring people across.

Mr. Dill asked about ingress/egress and having another access point to the property. A state DOT certified paver walked the property with Mr. Donner, and the plan is to expand and improve the existing site line.

Mr. Gerrish asked if a proposal had been made yet and Mr. Donner indicated it had not. Mr. Dill noted the town meeting would be required because this is town owned property.

Adjournment

MOTION CARRIED

Dill/Curtain at 8:56 pm.

Next meeting May 23rd at 7:30 pm at the Municipal Office Complex, Meeting Room 1.