

**Economic Development Commission
Special Meeting Minutes
September 8, 2011**

Attending: J. Albuquerque; R. Casner; D. Mathiasen; E. Odell; R. Parady; G. Rucker; P. Stricker; M. Ziobron (EDC Coordinator)

Absent: M. Gionta; P. Rubenbauer

Guests: M. Walter

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

The minutes of the August 4th meeting were reviewed and Ms. Mathiasen requested two changes. MR. CASNER MADE A MOTION, SECONDED BY MS. STRICKER, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES AS AMENDED. UNANIMOUS AYE.

OLD BUSINESS

Status Reports:

Goodspeed Properties –Ms. Mathiasen reviewed an e-mail she received from Mr. McMahon and Ms. Kittner providing updates on the Actors Housing project and reporting that the Gov. attended the Goodspeed’s “Governor’s Night” and toured the new Artists Village.

- Economic Development Coordinator – Ms. Ziobron distributed copies of a number of e-mails she had received during her leave-of-absence and provided the following updates:
 - The Brewery project is progressing according to schedule.
 - The CT Economic Development website contains a directory of statewide EDC organizations, several of which have a short descriptive paragraph. East Haddam is currently listed by name only and Ms. Ziobron and Ms. Mathiasen agreed to draft a paragraph for East Haddam’s EDC.
 - Shagbark requested EDC’s support to pursue a grant from the TrueValue Foundation for free paint for schools. Ms. Ziobron recommended asking someone on the Board of Ed to champion the project and Ms. Mathiasen agreed to bring it up at the next Board of Ed Ad Hoc Committee meeting that she attends.

Ms. Ziobron stated she had also received an e-mail from Mr. Nedovich expressing his dissatisfaction with the Planning & Zoning Commission’s disapproval of his last application. She stated that the Building Inspector and Fire Marshal have provided Mr. Nedovich with a list of items, regarding his planned campground site, that need to be addressed. She advised that Mr. Nedovich will be submitting an updated application for review at the next P&Z meeting and that she will talk with him before the meeting. Mr. Odell stated he would attend the meeting. Ms. Ziobron pointed out that P&Z applications have to be reviewed by the Town engineer and noted that Mr. Nedovich’s application had changed several times during this process. She observed that subsequent reviews of the revised applications result in an expense to the Town.

Regarding the Brewery project, Ms. Mathiasen stated that Mr. Clark would like to donate some of the Cofish netting machines to a museum but has not had much luck. Mr. Walter agreed to contribute some Town resources to moving the machines and possibly storing them. Ms. Stricker stated she would talk with Mr. Farrow about moving them to the East Haddam Historical Society’s museum. The Shad Museum and CT River Museum were also discussed as possible locations.

Signage Regulations – Ms. Stricker reported that the revised signage regulations were discussed at the August 23rd Planning & Zoning’s meeting. She advised that there were several attendees who voiced objections to internally lit signs along Route 82. Mr. Odell stated that some of the concerns voiced were, in his opinion, unwarranted and felt EDC should address them in a letter to the Planning & Zoning officials. Ms. Mathiasen noted that only a few of the Business Association members had attended the meeting and suggested drafting a brief letter in support of the revised regs that the business owners could sign and send to P&Z. The Commissioners agreed with the suggestion.

East Haddam Village Revitalization Commission – Mr. Odell noted that, at the last meeting, he had incorrectly reported that the Village Revitalization Commission’s RFQ has been posted. He advised that he had received an update from Mr. Gionta who said that the Town Attorney had finished his review of the document and Ms. Zemienieski is now preparing it for posting.

Mr. Walter stated he had to leave the meeting at this point. Before he left, Ms. Stricker complimented the Town and the Emergency Management Department with the way they coordinated resources and communications during Hurricane Irene.

Other Businesses Updates/New Businesses/Events/Tourism:

Project Safe Halloween – Business Expo decision – Ms. Mathiasen provided some background on EDC’s and the local business participation in the Business Expo during Project Safe Halloween. She noted that business participation has been dropping and advised that the Business Association is coordinating a community tag sale at the Grange the week before Project Safe Halloween. She stated that the Association and the active business owners feel they cannot participate in two events so close together and felt that they had better response from the Business Expo during the Chowder Cookoff. Many EHBA members have elected to forego contributing give-aways and promotional materials at the Business Showcase during Project Safe Halloween this year. Town Businesses had been alerted in the August EDC letter that they could participate with their own table if the EDC elected not to coordinate the Business Showcase tables.

MR. CASNER MADE A MOTION, SECONDED BY MS. STRICKER, THAT THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION WOULD NOT PARTICIPATE IN PROJECT SAFE HALLOWEEN THIS YEAR. UNANIMOUS AYE.

Ms. Stricker agreed to inform Ms. Malavasi of EDC’s decision. Ms. Ziobron suggested having a supply of EDC’s business directory on the Selectman’s table at Project Safe Halloween. Ms. Mathiasen will coordinate that promotion.

Village Walking Tour – Bill Hosley Historic Tourism Talk – There was no update on the Village Walking Tour. Ms. Mathiasen reported that Bill Hosley, of Terra Firma Associates, will be giving a Historic Tourism lecture entitled “Small Wonders: Rediscovering East Haddam’s Cultural & Environmental Treasures” at First Church on September 14th. She will attend and welcomed other Commissioners.

Conservation Commission Trails Brochure Distribution: Mr. Odell reported that he had met with Mr. Walter and representatives from the Conservation Commission and discussed using the Commission’s trail guides to raise funds for their projects. He noted that he had invited them to the EDC meetings to brainstorm opportunities to partner with local businesses in this effort. In response to a question from Ms. Ziobron, he confirmed that the Conservation Commission is working with Ms. Zemienieski to put the trail guides out on the Town’s website.

NEW BUSINESS

Review Draft of EDC Annual Report – Ms. Mathiasen noted that she had previously distributed EDC’s draft Annual Report via e-mail and solicited feedback. The Commissioners all expressed approval of the document as written.

MR. CASNER MADE A MOTION, SECONDED BY MS. STRICKER, TO APPROVE THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION’S ANNUAL REPORT AS WRITTEN. UNANIMOUS AYE.

MR. CASNER MADE A MOTION, SECONDED BY MS. STRICKER, TO ENTER INTO AN EXECUTIVE SESSION AT 8:03 PM TO DISCUSS VILLAGE PROPERTIES. UNANIMOUS AYE.

Ms. Ziobron was invited into the executive session.

MR. CASNER MADE A MOTION, SECONDED BY MS. MATHIASEN, TO CONCLUDE THE EXECUTIVE SESSION AT 8:43PM.

No action was taken.

The meeting reconvened at 8:43 p.m.

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

The meeting adjourned at 8:44 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon R. Wheeler
Recording Secretary