

**TOWN OF HADDAM
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
REGULAR PUBLIC MEETING
HADDAM YOUTH CENTER
Wednesday, 11 November 2009, at 7:00 PM
UNAPPROVED MINUTES
*Subject to Change by the Commission***

X	Heather Batzner
X	Joseph Bergin
X	Dan Dachelet
A	Charles Everett
X	Barbara Fernandez
X	Michael Fortuna, Chairman
X	Peter Gillespie
A	Lori Maggi
X	David Papallo
X	Edward Vynalek
A	Liz West, Town Planner
X	Paul DeStefano, First Selectman-elect
X	Bunny Hall Batzner, Recording Clerk

1. Call to Order

Mr. Fortuna called the meeting to order at 7:08 p.m.

2. Attendance

Attendance was taken.

3. Approval of Agenda

Approved as submitted.

4. Approval of Minutes

MOTION: Peter Gillespie made a motion to approve the 9 September 2009 minutes as submitted. Ed Vynalek seconded. Motion carried with Ms. Fernandez abstaining.

5. Public Comment

Application for New Member – Mr. Fortuna stated Dan Dachelet would like to join the Commission. Mr. Dachelet distributed copies of his resume and gave a brief summary of himself. A brief discussion followed in regard to the number of commissioners allowed by charter, making meeting quorums, and the possibility of having regular and alternate members in order to make a quorum more readily. Mr. DeStefano stated he would like to bring on an EDC staff person similar to the way Melissa Ziobron in East Haddam.

MOTION: Dave Papallo made a motion to accept Dan Dachelet as a member of the Economic Development Commission. Heather Batzner seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Tax Abatement Update – Mr. Papallo asked for an update regarding the proposed tax abatement policy. Mr. Fortuna stated the policy along with a letter of recommendation has been given to Tony Bondi, first selectman, and Bruno Morasutti, town counsel. A copy of both will be emailed to Mr. DeStefano for his information as wwho will see that it's placed on the BOS agenda (if not on the upcoming agenda, then the following agenda). Mr. Vynalek stated Mr. Gillespie did not address specific people, but rather procedure. Mr. Gillespie stated the policy spells out the qualifying activity (detailed; pre-qualifies certain uses that would be entitled to the benefit). Mr. Papallo stated he would like to see this item expedited. Discussion followed in regard to a recent request for tax abatement and the manner in which it was presented.

Ms. Fernandez stated a concern of her's not only as a taxpayer as well as a member of EDC is it's difficult, if not impossible, to obtain data/financials to back up how tax dollars are being spent in town. Ms. Fernandez also stated she believes the town should invest in economic development, but there has to be process that is fair and transparent.

Notification of Meetings - Mr. Papallo asked Mr. DeStefano to work on better informing town residents of town meetings/public hearings and commission meetings/hearings. Discussion followed in regard to the town website not being up-to-date, a possible email list where residents could sign up to received notification annually, the manner in which the agendas a put together (need to be more descriptive, what the project is), and the appearance by commission of not wanting public input.

New Resident Trooper – Mr. Papallo asked if the town has a new resident trooper, due to the promotion of Trooper Byrne to sergeant. A brief discussion followed regarding how the town will acquire a new resident trooper.

6. Old Business

a. Proposed Potential Sewer Project – Wright-Pierce Study – Higganum Center – Final Report

Mr. Fortuna stated after doing some research in regard to the issue of ledge, he has found the ledge is 30-40 feet down through most of the Rte. 154 corridor to Middletown (information was obtained through DOT, power line project and various other small projects). Mr. Fortuna stated with this new information, it may possibly reduce the project by \$3.5-5 million, noting the project is currently budgeted for 4.5 miles of ledge. Mr. Fortuna stated he has asked Wright-Pierce to put the budget into a Matrix (base project cost with reasonable assumptions and if the City of Middletown participates in the project).

Mr. Fortuna also stated he has a proposal from a geo-technical engineer to study the ledge for \$5,200. Mr. Fortuna suggested waiting until the Matrix can be reviewed and then perhaps move forward with the study.

The report will be emailed to all Commissioners for their review in order to discuss the matter more fully at the December meeting. Discussion followed in regard to researching whether there would be any federal and state funding that could help with the project and possible "strings" attached to those types of funding. Mr. Fortuna stated he has had discussions with DEP and the City of Middletown.

Mr. Dachelet stated as a new resident of Haddam, one difficulty he has seen is in getting information out to the residents. Discussion followed in regard to the lack of information with the local newspapers and information being passed along by word of mouth. Mr. Dachelet agreed with Mr. Papallo in regard to the use of email and the town's website in disseminating information. Mr. DeStefano agreed. A brief discussion followed in regard to the website.

b. Tylerville Subcommittee – Update

Mr. Fortuna stated the first public meeting went well, but momentum seems to have been lost. Mr. Gillespie stated the town received a STEEP Grant for a water analysis study in Tylerville (feasibility of connecting with Connecticut Water Co.). Mr. DeStefano stated representatives from the Chatham Health District were present at the 11/05/2009 P&Z meeting who presented several options. Mr. DeStefano also stated from those who have reviewed Tylerville, other than Citizens for Clean Groundwater, total remediation is almost impossible. Mr. DeStefano stated spot remediation along with other programs to bring in clean water is more favorable at this point in time. Discussion followed in regard to providing clean drinking water and then working on remediation and who would be responsible for cleaning up the contamination.

Country Market, Tylerville – Mr. DeStefano stated he has been advised the Market will open 12/01/2009 and he would like to have a ribbon cutting ceremony (open up to the public/media publicity). Discussion followed.

Country Market, Higganum – Mr. Fortuna stated construction on the building has picked up. Mr. DeStefano stated he would like to get all the parties together to get a possible opening date. Mr. Vynalek stated a loan has been obtained for the renovations.

7. New Business

a. East Haddam/Haddam Joint EDC Meeting – Update

No minutes have been made available from the joint meeting held in East Haddam. Mr. Fortuna will contact Melissa Ziobron, EDC Coordinator, East Haddam, regarding the minutes. A brief discussion followed in regard to the content of the meeting by those members (Batzner, Fortuna, Fernandez, Bergin) who had attended.

Discussion followed in regard to attempts to control/reduce speed on state roads going through residential and village areas and a pedestrian bridge (attached to existing swing bridge) over the river.

A brief discussion followed in regard to a conceptual idea of a sidewalk from Higganum Center to Walkley Hill Road, the proposed walking path in Higganum Center and the possibility of having these two items tying in together, and bike paths.

b. Higganum Vision Group

Mr. Fortuna distributed copies of information concerning the group and stated the group is trying to identify issues within Higganum Center that they may be able to help move along. Mr. Fortuna stated the group held a walking tour of the Center and the possibility of a second tour. Mr. DeStefano stated he has met with Ms. Bazazi and Ms. Meyers provided them with copies of the Village Regulations and the Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD)

with it being recommended they use them as guides to work from. Mr. Fortuna stated the group has asked for a liaison to EDC on their committee (meet monthly)

c. New EDC Projects/Initiatives/Discussion

Signage - Mr. Fortuna stated the Mardi Hanson, Conservation Commission, contacted him in regard to replacing two signs – Welcome to Higganum and Welcome to Haddam – which were stolen. Mr. Dachelet suggested a combinational sign - informational (informing residents of events taking place in town) as well as welcoming.

Mr. Papallo asked about the Adopt-A-Highway program. Mr. Fortuna stated Route 154 is part of the Scenic Highway program and it may not qualify.

Mr. Fortuna will contact Ms. Hanson to discuss further details. Ms. Fernandez stated she does not believe the Commission should get into the signage business. Discussion followed in regard to marketing the town through the signs.

Parking Regulations – Mr. Fortuna stated Ms. West has been working on revising the parking regulations. Mr. Fortuna will forward the draft to all members for their review. Any comments are to be forwarded to Mr. Fortuna within a week and he will compile the comments and forward to Ms. West.

9. Adjournment

MOTION: Dave Papallo made a motion to adjourn. Barbara Fernandez seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

The meeting adjourned 8:32 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Bunny Hall Batzner

Bunny Hall Batzner
Recording Clerk

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, 9 December 2009, 7:00 p.m.