

**TOWN OF HADDAM
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
REGULAR PUBLIC MEETING
HADDAM YOUTH CENTER
Wednesday, 8 October 2008, at 7:00 PM
APPROVED MINUTES**

Approved as Submitted at the 12 November 2008 Meeting

X	Joseph Bergin
A	Paul DeStefano
X	Charles Everett
X	Barbara Fernandez
X	Michael Fortuna, Co-Chairman
X	Peter Gillespie
A	Gregg Lallier, Co-Chairman
X	Lori Maggi
X	David Papallo
X	Edward Vynalek
X	Liz West, Town Planner
X	Bunny Hall Batzner, Recording Clerk

1. Call to Order

Mr. Fortuna called the meeting to order at 7:16 p.m.

2. Attendance

Attendance was taken.

3. Approval of Agenda

Approved as submitted.

4. Introduction – Liz West, Town Planner

Mr. Fortuna introduced Ms. West to the Commission. A brief discussion followed regarding the scope of Ms. West's work compared to Mr. Colegrove's and the time frame for transition.

5. Approval/Corrections of the Minutes

Tabled.

6. Public Comment

None.

7. NEW BUSINESS

a) Higganum Center

Sewer Project - Mr. Fortuna stated that he has met with Wright-Pierce regarding the sewer project and have agreed for purposes of this study to leave the district the same as the last

two studies. The Commission will need to decide as a group whether or not to expand the district to keep O & M costs down and if so, how far that expansion will be.

Discussion followed regarding the sewer district, extending the district, the need to amend the rules to allow certain properties outside the district to connect to the sewer, and the potential for additional commercial and non-residential development outside of the district along Rte. 154 (zoning issue). Ms. West stated that development in Haddam is currently regulated by soils (septic/well); however, public sewer/water will open up development and therefore, would require the zoning regulations to be revamped in order to control development if so desired. Ms. Fernandez stated that the Commission needs to contemplate what they would like for Higganum Center as part of the idea of economic development is not only the tax base but a center which is more dense and vibrant and that by limiting the development the Commission could be forcing development into other areas.

Ms. West asked if the Commission is contemplating both water and sewer. Mr. Fortuna stated that they are only looking at sewer as there are only spot issues regarding water. A brief discussion followed regarding issues in Higganum and Tylerville.

Mr. Fortuna stated that Wright-Pierce should have the study completed in approximately six weeks and that a public hearing to present the report should be held after the holidays.

Streetscape Project Funds - Mr. Fortuna stated that he's working with Brian Dillon, Dept. of Economic and Community Development, trying to obtain the last \$30,000 related to the Streetscape Project. Mr. Fortuna stated that the last project manager closed out the project, but did not issue the remaining funds.

b) Tylerville Village - Subcommittee

Subcommittee members: David Papallo, Lori Maggi, Debbie Sims, Karen Blaschik, Marianne Smith, and Joe Bergin.

Mrs. Maggi stated that a meeting was held (minutes distributed), that a mission statement was created, and that a subcommittee member has been assigned to define the boundaries of Tylerville. Mrs. Maggi outlined the other issues that the subcommittee discussed high-lighting traffic speed. Mrs. Batzner noted that Bridge Road is a state road (Rte. 82) and not a town road.

Mrs. Maggi stated that Lisa Wadge, one of the owners of the former Bogdan property, will be asked to attend the next subcommittee meeting to discuss what is taking place on the parcel.

Mr. Fortuna stated that he is pulling together the information that was used for Higganum Center for the subcommittee to use it as a template for Tylerville.

Eco-Tourism Center – A brief discussion followed regarding the status of the sale.

c) Town's Tax Incentive Policy

Draft Policy – Ms. Fernandez stated that the draft consists of portions of tax abatement policies from Wethersfield, Middletown, and Deep River as well as a portion of Haddam's POCD in regard to economic development. Ms. Fernandez stated that the tax abatement schedule comes directly from the state statute.

Ms. Fernandez stated that she believes the two main items of this policy are: 1) what is going to be the body that approves the tax abatement and 2) what will be the mechanics of getting the abatement done (noted that other towns have an employee who specifically handles this).

Mr. Gillespie stated that Wethersfield has had only three requests and explained their process. Discussion followed regarding the process other towns follow.

Commissioners are to review the draft over the next two weeks and to email comments/suggestions to Ms. Fernandez.

Cocommo – Mrs. Maggi stated that the incentive policy passed. Mr. Vynalek stated that the incentive will run for three years, however, if the parcel is sold, the incentive will be canceled.

d) New EDC Projects/Initiatives/Discussion

Membership – Mr. Fortuna stated that Gregg Lallier has resigned clearing the way for Heather Batzner to become a member.

Higganum Village Market Group – A letter from Ed Vynalek outlining his concerns pertaining to a request for funding by the Higganum Village Market Group (farmer's market) was distributed to the Commission.

MOTION: Ed Vynalek made a motion to not approve the funding at this time as requested by the Higganum Village Market Group.

Mr. Vynalek stated that the EDC's charge is to come up with expertise and funding for villages within the township by strengthening the infrastructure and that the Commission does not fund private businesses. Mr. Vynalek stated that the farmer's market is in a gray area as the Commission doesn't know how receptive it will be with the town.

Ms. Fernandez asked why the Commission was asked for funding and whether the Commission is the right committee to request funding from. Mrs. Maggi stated that she believes the request came to the EDC with the thought that the farmer's market will generate economic growth in Higganum Center. Mr. Everett stated that the EDC is an advisory committee and doesn't have authority to award money to anyone; however, a letter of recommendation could be provided. Ms. Fernandez doesn't believe the EDC is the right committee to request funding from.

Mr. Fortuna stated that funding has been requested noting that precedent has been set with River Days receiving funding from an EDC line item. A brief discussion followed regarding how the River Days funding came to be a part of the EDC budget. Mr. Fortuna stated that he has generated a letter for grant funding for the Higganum Village Market Group and that their request to EDC may no longer be an issue.

Discussion followed regarding Mr. Vynalek's concerns as outlined in his letter, vendors not being primarily local due to the lack of local producers, the need for the Higganum Village Market Group to go through the proper budget process, and whether EDC should generate a letter of recommendation.

Ms. Fernandez amended the motion to state that the farmer's market is a valuable idea; however, the EDC is not the right commission to request funding, but rather a finance commission to go through the budget process. Mr. Bergin asked if the motion were to pass, would the people requesting the funding have a route of appeal and might that route of

appeal be the person they should be speaking to at this time. Mr. Everett noted the following 1) that monies within the EDC line items are fixed and committed; 2) Mr. Fortuna has indicated that an application for state grant money has been submitted; 3) the farmer's market is done for this year and they could take this request to the Board of Finance and create their own line item for the next fiscal year; and 4) whether or not EDC should provide a letter to the Board of Finance supporting this project. Mr. Vynalek stated that in a discussion he had with Mr. Bondi that Mr. Bondi had suggested to the Higganum Village Market Group to request funding from the EDC. Mr. Bergin suggested that the Market Group be advised to withdraw their request for funding and request a recommendation. Mrs. Maggi stated that she's not comfortable with giving them funding or a recommendation and felt that a motion be made to deny the funding and recommend that they approach the Board of Finance or an appropriate funding committee for their funding. Mr. Gillespie voiced concern over having the EDC's name attached to any type of denial as it relates to this as it may be misinterpreted especially since the Commission does support the concept. Mr. Gillespie recommended tabling the item until further information is received in regard to the grant. Commission members agreed.

Mr. Vynalek withdrew his original motion noting that no second was given.

MOTION: Peter Gillespie made a motion to table action on the request for funding by the Higganum Village Market Group pending a decision on the grant request. Barbara Fernandez seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

8. Old Business

a) Proposed Potential Sewer Project – Higganum Center and Tylerville

Discussed earlier under Higganum Center.

9. Adjournment

MOTION: Lori Maggi made the motion to adjourn. Chuck Everett seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Bunny Hall Batzner

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Recording Clerk

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, 12 November 2008, 7:00 p.m.