

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
COMMUNITY CENTER
7 CANDLEWOOD HILL ROAD, HIGGANUM, CT 06441
WEDNESDAY, 11 MAY 2016
UNAPPROVED MINUTES
*Subject to Approval by the Commission***

ATTENDANCE

X	Kate Anderson
A	Stephen Bayley
X	Joe Bergin
X	Dan Dachelet
A	Mike Farina
X	Dave Fleig
A	Mike Fortuna, Chairman
A	Lori Maggi
X	Cindy McNeil Sola
A	Ed Vynalek
X	Bob Casner, Chairman, East Haddam EDC
X	Liz West Glidden, Town Planner
X	Bunny Hall Batzner, Recording Clerk

1. Call to Order

Mr. Bergin called the meeting to order at 7:07 p.m.

2. Attendance

Attendance was taken.

3. Approval of Agenda

MOTION: Joe Bergin moved to approve the 11 May 2016 agenda as submitted. Dave Fleig second. Motion carried unanimously.

4. Public Comment

None.

5. Old Business

a. Spring Weekend Event – Follow Up/Recap

Mrs. Sola reported that the event went well and that the merchants have indicated they all had a decent weekend and saw new faces. Mrs. Sola also reported there was some concern that perhaps the town wide tag sale may have brought merchant sales down a bit (something to consider next year). Other than that, there have been no negative comments regarding the event. Mrs. Sola stated the feedback has been that all the merchants are willing to participate in the Fall Weekend Event, 1-2 October 2016.

Mrs. Sola reported that the Tourism Committee has schedule a meeting for Wednesday, 1 June 2016, to be held either at the Nehemiah Brainerd House Bed and Breakfast or the Community Center to recap and fold up the Spring Weekend and begin discussion regarding the Fall Weekend Event. Mrs. Sola invited Mr. Casner and the East Haddam Tourism Committee members to the meeting. Mrs. Sola briefly discussed possible events for the Fall Event – food trucks, scare crow and mucket contests, activities, etc.

Bob Casner, Chairman, East Haddam EDC, reported that the Taste of East Haddam was held on Saturday, 30 April 2016, and was well attended – 700 attendees compared to 480 in 2015. Mr. Casner thanked Mrs. Sola and Mrs. Glidden for putting the fliers together.

Mrs. Glidden stated she felt the event went very well noting that she saw the event from both sides of the river. Mrs. Glidden thanked Mrs. Sola and the subcommittee for the great job they did.

Ms. Anderson suggested creating a Facebook Event page for the Fall Event and explained how it works. Ms. Anderson volunteered to create the page if the Commission were interested in having it. Mr. Dachelet stated that it wouldn't be hard to do and offered to assist Ms. Anderson.

b. Discuss Haddam/East Haddam EDC Subcommittees - Update

Mrs. Glidden reported that she would like to formulate a listing of subcommittee members. Mrs. Sola gave the names that she had. Mrs. Batzner read the names from the minutes. Mr. Casner stated he will work on getting some people to work on the Communication subcommittee.

Mr. Bergin asked if the joint meetings should be taking place periodically. Mr. Casner stated yes, whether it be quarterly or bi-annually; and that the subcommittees would be reporting back to the Commissions with something to work with. Mr. Casner also stated that it's important to get these subcommittees organized and up and running; and once that's done, a joint committee meeting should be scheduled.

c. Bridge Replacement Project – Higganum Center

Mrs. Glidden reported that Arborio is still on target to complete the bridge work by 1 November 2016.

d. 2016 Bridge Work: Swing Bridge

Mrs. Glidden reported work was initially scheduled to begin in 2018; however, due to an emergency, DOT has begun work on the electrical system and will be engineering as-builts this summer. Mrs. Glidden also reported there was an email sent out by DOT that went to East Haddam only in regard to a meeting pertaining to the bridge work. This meeting is scheduled for Thursday, 12 May 2016, Gelston House, 9:30 a.m. and Mrs. Glidden and Lizz Milardo, First Selectman, will attend. Anyone else who is available may attend. Mrs. Glidden stated that one of the questions will be if communication can be improved.

Mrs. Glidden reported she had called DOT, did not talk to David Hiscox, but spoke to someone in the engineering dept. who indicated that due to the emergency work, they would not be doing the pedestrian walkway. Mrs. Glidden also reported she received a call from a contact in DOT who indicated there have been more recent discussions in regard to the walkway.

Mr. Dachelet asked if the senators and representatives are involved in this project. Mrs. Glidden stated they are both aware of the situation and are invited to the meeting. Mr. Casner asked if someone from the state will be there. Mrs. Glidden stated yes, David Hiscox.

Mrs. Glidden stated that Senator Linares and Representative Miller have been aware of the project for the last year as Haddam as put in for Local Transportation Capital Improvement Program (LOTICIP) funds and the Connecticut Connectivity Program (replaces DOT's pedestrian program). Mrs. Glidden will follow up with the elected officials.

Mrs. Glidden stated that in her conversation with the DOT engineer, it was made clear that everything on that bridge hinges on one point and everything has to be balanced. Mrs. Glidden also stated the conversation wasn't positive. Discussion followed in regard to weight, balance, sufficient room for when the bridge is swinging open.

e. C-PACE – Follow Up

There was nothing new to report at this time.

f. Local Bidder Preference – Follow Up

There was nothing new to report at this time.

g. Budget

Mr. Glidden reported that she's still waiting for the bill for the ad in the Connecticut Visitor's Guide (copies distributed). The total cost for the ad is \$750 with Haddam and East Haddam splitting the cost (need to be paid by the end of June).

Mrs. Sola asked if EDC can hold fundraisers specifically for EDC. Mrs. Glidden stated when appointed people handle money, it becomes sticky. Mr. Casner stated that any money that is brought in must be deposited into the town's account and it cannot be retrieved without going before the Board of Finance. Mr. Casner stated that it's complicated and may be more aggravation than it's worth. Discussion followed.

Mr. Dachelet and Mrs. Sola spoke in regard to a Business Owners or Merchants Association. Mr. Bergin talked about an association in Essex that he belonged to and how they handle raising funds.

Mrs. Glidden reported that Mrs. Milardo is working with the Chamber and EDC to put together a meet and greet with the businesses. Mr. Fleig stated that it needs to be made clear that that the meet/greet is more of a gathering, networking, and collaborating event and not about issues. Mr. Fleig also stated that he believes for the first meeting, the merchants would be respectful with that. Mr. Bergin asked if a location for this meeting has been selected. Mrs. Glidden stated she doesn't believe Mrs. Milardo has gotten to that point, but will follow up on this.

Discussion followed in regard to possible meeting locations and using a local business(es) – Brookside, Riverhouse, etc..

6. New Business

a. Main Street Investment Fund Grant and b. Higganum Green

Mrs. Glidden reported that there's an opportunity to apply for a Main Street Investment Fund Grant which is similar to a Small Town Economic Assistance Program (STEAP) grant. Mrs. Glidden stated the funds can be used for a municipality or 501.3c project such as infrastructure improvements that will benefit the community and the business people.

Mrs. Glidden stated that the plans pertaining to the improvements to the Higganum Green and Candlewood Hill Road (make one way in the area of the Green) would qualify for this grant. Mrs. Glidden gave a brief rundown of the proposal.

Mrs. Glidden reported that the grant is due 31 May 2016 and one of the prerequisites is that the town needs a town or village economic development plan that has been accepted by the Board of Selectmen (BOS). Mrs. Glidden stated although there are a couple of plans, there's one in particular from 1998 that wasn't accepted that she would like to bring to the BOS and ask them to accept it in order to get a \$500,000 grant (no matching funds).

Mr. Dachelet asked Mrs. Glidden if she needs something from the Commission. Mrs. Glidden stated no, but she will draft a letter of support. Mr. Bergin asked if in accepting the plan, it would bind the town to anything in terms of executing it. Mrs. Glidden stated no. Mrs. Glidden also stated the plan has bullet points (recommendations). The Commission voiced some concern/hesitation in regard to approving or accepting this document without fully looking at the matter to see what may be outdated or not a part of the vision for the Center. The Commission agreed to work on this matter in the next few months. Mrs. Glidden stated an action plan document would be separate from the Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD), but could be referenced within the POCD.

7. Approval of Minutes

Tabled.

8. Announcements

Mr. Bergin read the following announcements: a. **Memorial Day Parade** - Monday, 30 May 2016, 9:30 a.m. (parade steps off), Higganum Center and b. **Farmers' Market**, Opening Day – Friday, 3 June 2016.

Mr. Dachelet asked if the Farmers' Market will be opening at the same time. Mrs. Batzner stated she neglected to ask the start time.

Mrs. Sola reported that she had spoken to Mrs. Milardo in regard to having the jets fly over the Green during the Memorial Day Parade since the jets already fly over Middletown. Mrs. Glidden will follow up.

Mrs. Sola stated the American flags need to go up on the utility poles prior to the parade. Mrs. Batzner stated the flags were put up last week.

9. Adjournment

MOTION: Joe Bergin moved to adjourn. Kate Anderson second. Motion carried unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:51 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Bunny Hall Batzner

Bunny Hall Batzner
Recording Clerk

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, 8 June 2016.