

**TOWN OF HADDAM
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
COMMUNITY CENTER
7 CANDLEWOOD HILL ROAD, HIGGANUM, CT 06441
WEDNESDAY, 16 NOVEMBER 2016
UNAPPROVED MINUTES
*Subject to Approval by the Commission***

ATTENDANCE

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| X | Kate Anderson, Secretary |
| X | Stephen Bayley, Vice Chairman |
| X | Joe Bergin |
| A | Mike Farina |
| X | Dave Fleig (6:10 p.m.) |
| X | Brenda Hunter |
| A | Lori Maggi |
| X | Cindy McNeil Sola, Chairman |
| A | Ed Vynalek |
| X | Lizz Milardo, First Selectman |
| X | Liz West Glidden, Town Planner |
| X | Bunny Hall Batzner, Recording Clerk |
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1. Call to Order

Mrs. Sola, chairman, called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

2. Attendance

Attendance was taken.

3. Approval of Agenda

There were no additions/corrections to the agenda.

4. Public Comment

None.

5. Approval of Minutes

The approval of the 12 October 2016 minutes was tabled.

6. Old Business

a. Halloween Haunted House

Mrs. Sola reported the Haunted House was well attended and the haunted graveyard was inside as well outside for older children and the garage was set up for smaller children. Mrs. Sola also reported by the time they were through packing up at the Community Center, there were still a lot of families over on the Higganum Green and were advised Candlewood Hill Road was being reopened. Mrs. Sola stated Chuck Lewis and his family worked very hard on the event and thanked them.

b. Meet and Greet

Mrs. Sola reported the Meet and Greet went well and was well attended. Mrs. Sola also reported she had heard from Gail Powell, of Hi-Way Package Store, that a number of the merchants were pleased and are willing to move forward with a merchants association. Mrs. Sola stated EDC needs to hit this hard in January and she will be speaking to Greg McKenna, Higganum Pharmacy, who is interested in heading the association. Mrs. Sola also stated there will be a need to round up as many merchants as possible to speak to them about the importance of an association.

Mr. Bayley stated Lizz Milardo, First Selectman, had previously mentioned that there was an attempt, approximately five years ago, to start an association, but there were some road blocks in moving forward. Mr. Bayley also stated he feels a merchants association is a great idea and would like to see it formed. Mrs. Sola stated Mr. McKenna is aware of the paperwork involved and he's willing to do the work; and EDC will be there to guide and support him.

Mr. Bergin stated he was a member of the Essex Board of Trade and thinks the merchants association will be an asset. Mr. Bergin also stated a number of the items discussed at EDC meetings would be well placed in a merchants association in terms of supporting local businesses. Mr. Bergin made it clear EDC and an association would be two separate entities with coordination; but whatever would get developed within the association would be about promoting existing businesses and coordinating events to help promote their bottom line while EDC's roll would be helping existing businesses grow and attracting new businesses.

c. Light Poles in Village

Mrs. Sola reported that Mike Fortuna and Dan Dachelet will be decorating the light poles. Mrs. Sola will email Mr. Fortuna to get the date they will be doing this. A brief discussion followed in regard to the condition of the garlands and bows.

7. New Business

a. Christmas Event in Haddam (2)

Mrs. Sola reported the Higganum Vision Group is putting on a Christmas event, Saturday, 3 December 2016. Mrs. Sola asked for assistance in getting Santa from the Pharmacy to the Community Center.

b. Spring Event – Do our own? Time to put thought in what we can do.

Mrs. Sola asked the Commission if they would like to move forward and connect with East Haddam again or go on their own. Mrs. Milardo stated she felt the Town should connect with East Haddam. Mrs. Sola will reach out. Mr. Bayley stated as a courtesy, EDC should reach out to them. Mrs. Milardo reported that East Haddam is accepting applications for a part-time EDC coordinator and this individual should be able to assist with the Spring Event. A brief discussion followed in regard to a potential date for the event. Mrs. Sola will email Karen Revis, Junior Women's' Club, in regard to the date of their town wide tag sale.

Mr. Bergin asked about the joint meetings between the two EDCs noting the subcommittees that were formed. Mrs. Milardo stated she believes after the special election for first selectman, East Haddam will be able to move forward. A brief discussion followed in regard to contacts within East Haddam's EDC; the relationship between the Essex Steam Train and the Goodspeed Opera House; and the need to develop a plan for Tylerville.

Shailer-Banning House, 85 Bridge Road - Proposed Demolition - Mrs. Glidden reported the house at 85 Bridge Road is currently under a demolition delay (this would be lifted mid-January). The Connecticut Historic Trust and the Haddam Historical Society are trying to work with the present owner on alternatives rather than demolishing the structure. If an alternative is not agreed upon, the owner can move forward with the demolition if she chooses too. Mr. Bergin asked if there was a potential buyer or developer. Mrs. Sola stated the owner believes the parcel will sell better without the house.

Ms. Anderson asked the historic significance of the house. Mrs. Glidden stated it was the original Shailer-Banning House (family who founded Tylerville). Mr. Bergin stated most of the houses down that street are family houses of the Shailer's and Tyler's.

Merchant House, 1583 Saybrook Road - Ms. Hunter asked if anyone knew what was happening with the Merchant House. Mrs. Glidden stated she's been told by the owners they're selling the property; but when the Land Use Office tries to reach out to them, the Office has been advised they are going out of business or they are out of business. Ms. Hunter asked if the signs could be removed if they are out of business. Mrs. Batzner stated they have been opened on the weekend (Christmas decorations in the window and an Open flag hung out). A brief discussion followed in regard to a potential reuse of the building - affordable accommodations for people to stay at whether it is a bed and breakfast, inn, hotel, etc.

Water Issue – Tylerville – Mrs. Milardo reported the alternative tests report is being completed and part of that testing is in regard to the use of a 12 inch main v. an eight inch main. Mrs. Milardo stated part of the language changed to allow Haddam to go with a large main noting that water that stays too long in the piping can go stagnant will cause contamination issues. Mrs. Milardo also stated once the study is completed, a public hearing will be held, and the matter will move forward from there. Mrs. Milardo reported an environmental study will also have to be conducted as there's a conservation area where the lines from Chester will come through. Mrs. Milardo noted that DEEP is shorthanded; however, Haddam's funding has been secured at this time.

c. Moving EDC Forward

Mrs. Sola reported she feels the Commission is doing a lot and has a lot on the list for next year; however, she's looking for input for what the Commission can do throughout the year. Mr. Bergin proposed for discussion the hiring of a part-time EDC coordinator to attract businesses and planning with Mrs. Glidden to determine what kinds of businesses the town wants, go out and find them, and then attract them. Mrs. Milardo stated she'll need support with that. Mr. Bergin stated the town did have a coordinator in the past, but funding was cut. Mrs. Milardo stated she would like to meet with Mrs. Sola to discuss the matter as she feels a coordinator would be beneficial. Discussion followed at length in regard to the need of infrastructure, the need for businesses within town to assist with the tax base as well as putting people on the street, events in the town, and the brick office building on the Rossi property (should it stay or should it go).

Mr. Fleig asked to go back to the discussion pertaining to a part-time EDC coordinator and what would the Commission need to do to get someone to work on their behalf. Mrs. Milardo stated she would need a letter from the Commission. Mr. Bergin stated the Commission would need to make and approve a motion to send a letter to the first selectman. Mr. Fleig stated as a fairly new member, he's wondering if the Commission is working on the right things or are working fast enough or is there something they're missing. Mr. Bergin stated the town has no plan in place to show what is wanted in town and will promote the type of growth wanted. Discussion followed at length.

MOTION: Cindy Sola moved to approach the Town to hire a part-time EDC coordinator by writing a letter to the Board of Selectmen. Steve Bayley second. Motion carried unanimously.

Mrs. Glidden suggested the letter contain some detail such as to regionally coordinate to work with the Chamber in attracting businesses.

8. Land Use Report

Grants – Mrs. Glidden reported she has been working on two grants. **Assessment Grant** – This is a \$200,000 for the Scovil Hoe building. This grant will be used to perform a Phase I study to identify what contaminants are on site and to do some reuse planning. **Transportation Alternatives Program** – The

grant application goes to the Regional Council of Governments who will review; and if selected, will be sent to the Federal Highway Administration for approval. This grant is for a sidewalk plan in Higganum.

Mrs. Glidden also reported she has been working with DOT to get a sidewalk across the bridge and should be hearing whether or not it's feasible within the next couple of weeks. One of the things DOT wants to see are sidewalks connecting with sidewalks.

Building Committee Notes – Mr. Bayley distributed the notes from the October meeting. Mr. Bayley gave a brief rundown of what was discussed at the Building Committee meeting such as different usages for the Jail and rerouting Jail Hill Road (move the road slightly south).

9. Adjournment of EDC meeting in order to join Building Committee meeting at 7:00 p.m. at the Community Center

MOTION: Steve Bayley moved to adjourn. Joe Bergin second. Motion carried unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:52 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Bunny Hall Batzner

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Recording Clerk

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, 14 December 2016.