

**TOWN OF HADDAM  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING  
VIA GOTOMEETING  
WEDNESDAY, 14 APRIL 2021  
APPROVED MINUTES  
*Approved as Submitted at the 13 October 2021 Meeting***

**ATTENDANCE**

X	Prem Aithal, Vice Chairman
X	Kate Anderson, Chairman
A	Cortney Emschwiller Swokla
A	Mike Farina
A	David Law
A	Mark Lundgren
X	Cindy MacNeil Sola
A	Robin Munster
X	John Pember
A	Doreen Staskelunas, Secretary
X	Bob McGarry, First Selectman
X	Bunny Hall Batzner, Recording Clerk

**1. Call to Order**

Ms. Anderson, chairman, called the meeting to order at 6:33 p.m. and noted that there was not a quorum. However, due to Jeff Hartmann and Greg Liu, Elm Tree Partners, making a scheduled presentation, Ms. Anderson continued with the presentation.

**2. Pledge of Allegiance**

The pledge was recited.

**3. Approval of Agenda**

**MOTION:** Cindy Sola motioned to approve the 14 April 2021 agenda as submitted. Prem Aithal second. Motion carried unanimously.

**4. Economic Impacts Presentation by Elm Tree Partners**

Jeff Hartmann and Greg Liu, Elm Tree Partners, were present.

Ms. Anderson asked that all questions be held until the end of the presentation with EDC members asking questions first followed by members of the public.

Mr. Hartmann reported Elm Tree Partners is based out of Old Saybrook and are proposing a 56-unit multi-family subdivision in the Tylerville section of Haddam.

Mr. Hartmann gave a brief rundown of his and Mr. Liu's credentials. Mr. Hartmann noted that Bill Warner, Town Planner, has been very helpful in working through this process. Mr. Hartmann stated that the civil engineer, landscape architect, and attorney are all out of Connecticut, and the architect is out of Atlanta, GA; however, they did do Essex Station and Waterford Park.

Mr. Hartmann stated they are in the process of resubmitting to the Architectural Review Committee (ARC) who met with them previously on 03.24.2021 and where they received good feedback and have adopted all but one of ARC's recommendations. Mr. Hartmann stated he would be holding back the impact report as he will be submitting it with Planning and Zoning (P&Z) application and does not want to get out of sequence (wants them to have the first copy). Ms. Anderson asked if there is a date for P&Z. Mr. Hartmann stated their goal is to be on the 05.20.2021 agenda and break ground by 09.01.2021 noting that he has a signed a term sheet with Washington Trust for the financing of this project (fully financed).

Using a site layout, Mr. Hartmann pointed out the first of the three residential buildings as well as a 2,200 square foot clubhouse (secure package drop off, exercise, social and work areas, back patio). The buildings are all two stories and are in compliance with the districts height requirements (35 feet). The larger building will contain 24 units and the two smaller back buildings will contain 16 units each. There are 1.5 parking spaces per residential unit. A demolition permit will be obtained for an existing house (not the Tyler House) and garage that sits on the back portion of the parcel. All setbacks are in compliance with the regulations. Mr. Hartmann stated in the future, if project goes well, he has an option to develop the southerly back parcel (will go back to P&Z). Pointed out the existing house (Tyler House) and will be meeting with the owner to see how to collaborate the structure with the proposed structures.

Ms. Anderson asked if the existing house is part of the parcel. Mr. Hartman stated no, that the seller controls the house and a parcel which she is attempting to develop with a commercial business.

Mrs. Sola asked Mr. Hartmann if he moves forward and purchases the existing home (the Victorian), would it be retained or would it be removed and rebuild. Mr. Hartmann stated his plans are to develop the 56 units with the potential of another 24 units and will work with Ms. Wadge as to what could go into the existing house to complement the project. Mr. Hartmann stated at this point he has no intention to purchase the parcel and accompanying house. Mrs. Sola asked Mr. Hartmann if he were to purchase the property, what would be the plans for the cosmetics of the existing home. Mr. Hartmann stated he has heard loud and clear that the intent is to retain the building; and if he were to purchase it and do something with it, it would be a commercial business to complement the property. Mrs. Sola asked if it would go before P&Z. Mr. Hartmann stated yes.

Mrs. Sola asked about the 1.5 parking space. Mr. Hartmann stated they were guided to do 1.2, but being mindful of snow plowing and snow banks they wanted to make sure there was adequate parking. Discussion followed in regard to the number of spaces per unit – combination of wiggle room for snow removal and the two bedroom units. Mrs. Sola asked about visitor parking. Mr. Hartman stated there is no assigned parking – first come first serve.

Mr. Hartmann stated he wanted to be respectful to the ARC as a full package will be submitted possibly on Tuesday, 04.20.2021 and only showed the exterior of the 24-unit building to EDC. Mr. Hartmann stated each unit will be two stories and have covered porches, stainless steel appliance packages, center island, washer/drier within the units, Kohler fixtures, digital security/surveillance, and protected package pickup at the clubhouse.

Mr. Hartmann reviewed the economic development perspective of the project. The 56 unit development will create one time construction impacts of \$17 million and with total tax revenues of \$2.6 million. Construction impact is \$9.1 million (21 percent of the construction in the county late 2021-2022). In terms of federal, state, and local tax revenues there's \$2.7 million in tax impact. Construction employment - 70 employees in total and 118 jobs created and the labor income will be \$10.8 million on the project. On an on-going basis after construction and the development is up and running as a part of the community, the impact is about \$1 million a year from goods and services; tax revenues on a federal and state basis will be \$290,000; ten permanent jobs and another five jobs (indirect basis) as a result of people working at the project; and the labor income will be \$1.1 million.

Ms. Anderson asked if there were any similar sized projects that would be happening at the same time as this proposal. Mr. Hartmann stated 105 Bridge Road is for sale and there is a potential to build 48 one bedroom units. Mr. Hartmann stated the work being done on Bridge Road is encouraging and the town

has tremendous opportunity to develop itself. Mr. Hartmann stated they have looked at Essex and Saybrook Stations and will try to position themselves right in the middle of the two.

Mr. Pember stated he sees this project as a great opportunity noting that he's a commercial lender out of West Hartford, which this project came across his desk about a month ago; however, his bank's current position with apartment concentration wasn't able to convince them to let him make a proposal. Mr. Pember agreed it seems like a great opportunity and it's a great location. Mr. Hartmann thanked Mr. Pember and stated they had interest from Liberty, Hometown, Peoples and Washington Trust (who they went with).

Clarifying start up time, Mr. Hartmann stated if everything goes smoothly and approvals are received, they aspire to break ground in September 2021. Ms. Anderson asked if everything went according to plan, when the apartments would be complete and ready for occupants. Mr. Hartmann stated the first building would be ready in August 2022, clubhouse and first 24 unit building could be open in 12 months. Ms. Anderson stated she believes it to be a great idea and that all she's hearing at the town and regional levels is that more housing is needed – single parent, retired parent(s) who are downsizing, etc. A brief discussion followed.

Mr. Hartmann stated they are working on the naming of the project and branding the project.

Mr. McGarry stated he, Mr. Hartmann, and Mr. Warner had met a month or so ago and he was impressed with the presentation. Mr. McGarry stated he's looking forward to the project and wishing them success.

Mr. Hartmann asked if the Commission takes a position to recommend or not recommend a project. Ms. Anderson stated yes, they do. Mr. Hartmann hoped they can receive the Commission's support and will provide updated material as it becomes available. Ms. Anderson stated the Commission will be meeting again prior to the May P&Z meeting.

Ms. Anderson asked Mr. Hartmann if this should pass, would this be the first apartment being built in CT. Mr. Hartmann stated yes.

Mr. Hartmann and Mr. Liu left the meeting.

The Commission briefly discussed their excitement over the project and the benefits of having such a development take place – local business and encourage further development. Ms. Anderson asked Mr. McGarry if this project moves forward, will it entice cell phone towers to go up in that area. Mr. McGarry stated maybe.

## **5. Public Comment**

Using the Chat Box feature, Kathy Santillo stated the presentation was very interesting and thanked everyone.

## **6. New Business**

### **a. Budget**

Tabled.

### **b. Purchase of Holiday Decorations**

Tabled.

## **7. Old Business**

### **a. Mucket Day – Tractor Parade – Schedule Date and Delivery Date of Statues – Update**

Tabled.

## 8. Chairman's Report

Ms. Anderson reported on the following: **Town Planner's Report** - Asked the Commission to review Mr. Warner's report that was sent out prior to the meeting (copy on file in the Town Clerk's Office with the minutes). **Goodspeed Tattoo, 310 Saybrook Road** – EDC's letter was very well received and Tylerville business owners in particular thanked Ms. Anderson for doing so as they had not seen EDC do that in a very long time. As reported last month, P&Z reheard the application on 03.18.2021. There was a number of people in attendance who supported the application. Letters of opposition from those residents who could not attend were read by other members of the public. P&Z reapproved the application.

**Zoning Regulations** – Appears P&Z will be reviewing their regulations in the future. **DOT – 1) Swing Bridge Renovations** – Meeting held by DOT was fascinating and there are some very concerned businesses about what will happen when renovations start. DOT provided a schedule of how the project will progress. The project will be quite lengthy and they will try to minimize down time, but there will be a number of weeks when the bridge will need to be shutdown entirely for a few days at a time. The detour is a long one and there is no easy way around it. A few points were brought up by the businesses that DOT will need to address. Mr. McGarry stated the merchants are rightly concerned about bridge closures as there's a six month period based on the DOT schedule that the bridge will be closed to ALL traffic from Sunday night at 7:00 p.m. until Wednesday at 1:00 p.m. The bridge will be closed for opening for extended periods of time impacting river traffic. Better to do this project in a planned way rather than an emergency. There is no good way to do it. Mrs. Sola asked if the bridge repairs will be done the same time as the sidewalks. Mr. McGarry asked if she meant the sidewalk on the bridge. Mr. McGarry stated the State will be doing major repairs to the bridge – replacing electrical and mechanical systems. Ms. Anderson stated the sidewalk projects will only overlap for one construction season; whereas, the bridge will take three years. Mr. Aithal asked when the bridge was last repaired. Mr. McGarry stated they did some extensive work a couple of years ago and was surprised that they didn't address some of the conditions at that time. Ms. Anderson stated everything is very preliminary – packages have not yet been released. Mr. McGarry stated the State has agreed to put the sidewalks across the bridge, but the towns are responsible for paying 20 percent of the costs. Mr. McGarry explained that 80 percent of the whole project is federal and 20 percent is state if it's on the bridge and the approach sidewalks for both towns have to pay for by each town (estimated costs will be around \$300,000-\$400,000 per town). Haddam and East Haddam need to show they have this funding prior to federal funding being provided. **Sidewalks – Tylerville** - Construction should begin sometime next spring and only take a couple of months to complete. **Roundabouts – Tylerville** - Mr. McGarry reported that he attended a meeting on the roundabouts and those engineers were also at the meeting regarding the Swing Bridge; and due to the merchants concerns, work for the roundabouts will take place during the night time only. This will help some. Not only will the roundabouts be installed, a bridge that is structurally deficient will be replaced on Route 154 just before you get to the Route 9 Connector. As a benefit to the town, they will install sidewalks from Bridge Road north to where the current sidewalk ends by the Saybrook at Haddam and down to the southern roundabout so residents can enjoy the view of the cascade and creek. **Informal Merchants Association** – Due to the construction taking place in Tylerville, it sounds as if an informal association has formed with Jennifer Mikulski, Mikes' Auto Service, having taken the reins to keep people updated. Ms. Anderson has not had a chance to speak to Mrs. Mikulski or Larry Maggi to see if they need assistance from EDC. **Road Runner Pub, 12 Killingworth Road** – The pub is opened. **Coyote Blue, 1960 Saybrook Road** – Although located in Middletown, it was noted that they will be adding an outdoor patio dining area. **Town Budget** – The process is almost complete and the final number should be coming out soon. **School Budget – Referendum** – The Board of Education (BOE) has put out their number and the referendum is scheduled for Tuesday, 05.04.2021. Mr. Aithal stated the budget is under two percent. Ms. Anderson stated the proportion of Haddam to Killingworth students has changed a little bit in Haddam's favor; therefore, Haddam's increase is minimal. **105 Bridge Road** – Mr. McGarry stated another developer is interested in the site. **Day Care Center, Brookes Court** – Project still going forward. There was discussion as to its proposed location. Mrs. Batzner stated she believes it will be located on Brookes Court on the lot to the right of the existing house. Ms. Anderson reviewed Mr. Warner's report.

## **9. Approval of Minutes**

Approval of the 10 March 2021 minutes was tabled.

## **10. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:37 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

*Bunny Hall Batzner*

Bunny Hall Batzner  
Recording Clerk

**The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, 12 May 2021.**