

**TOWN OF EAST WINDSOR
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
NOVEMBER 16, 2015**

Members Present: Eric Moffett, Josh Kapelner, Jim Richards, Andy Hoffman and Bill Kehoe.

Also in attendance: Laurie Whitten, Town Planner, Roger O'Brien, Economic Development Consultant and Robert Maynard, First Selectman.

Chairman Moffett called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

Each of the EDC members introduced themselves to First Selectman Robert Maynard. Chairman Moffett explained to Mr. Maynard that one of the duties of the EDC is to educate the people about the Economic Development Commission. He said communication is key. The board had educated the Town about the need to expend some money to get our Economic Development Consultant, Roger O'Brien. He noted that Andy Hoffman has done a good job reaching out to various businesses in town.

Mr. O'Brien noted that at the request of this board he did a report that laid out some direction. It pointed out where the opportunities might be as well as the threats. He said this board identified priorities. One was the parcel with frontage on I-91. He said we used the potential for a casino to establish a dialog with the people that own Walmart and the former cinemas.

MOTION: To approve Bill Kehoe serving as a voting member for this meeting.
Richards / Kapelner / Unanimous

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

None.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Mr. Kapelner pointed out some changes to be made to the minutes of October 19, 2015: On page 3, the first paragraph should read: Mr. Kapelner expressed concern about having the site zoned for a religious institution at the site. First Selectman stepped into the meeting and was asked about other alternatives to the PZC subject to the impact of a religious institution on economic development. Ms. Menard was asked to pursue other alternatives.

MOTION: To approve the minutes of October 19, 2015 with the changes.
Kapelner / Kehoe

In Favor: Kapelner; Kehoe; Moffett; Hoffman

Abstain: Richards

GENERAL DISCUSSION:

Discussion of Economic Development Issues:

Mr. Hoffman asked about the status of the church application at the former LaRenaissance property. Ms. Whitten indicated that the application was approved by the PZC. Mr. O'Brien noted that it will be church / banquet hall / hotel. Ms. Whitten said the church will have over 700 people that will bring business into town. She noted that there is a Federal law (RLUPA) that we have to follow that states that we cannot treat a religious institution any differently than a similar use. It is difficult to say it is a different use. She said the PZC was concerned about traffic. We asked for additional traffic studies. That was a major consideration. The traffic study said that it will work. They will be required to have a uniformed officer at the entrance. We also required that in 3 months they redo the traffic study.

She said she didn't think anyone thought the church was the best use there but it beats an empty facility. Ms. Whitten said according to Carol Madore, the Assessor, not all of the building will be exempt. Mr. Kapelner noted that with the current mil rate if you take the assessment on the LaRenaissance property, the current tax rate would be \$100,358.

Ms. Whitten said that right now churches are allowed in any zone by Special Use Permit. We can eliminate that in certain areas and get it into the Plan of Conservation and Development. It is a simple wording change.

MOTION: That the Planning and Zoning Commission consider eliminating certain non-profit uses in the commercial / Industrial corridor.
Kapelner / Richards / Unanimous

Business Center

Mr. Kehoe said he emailed some people with no response. He said we need to know what resources we have. Once he has some information he will forward it to Andy Hoffman and Andy will forward it to everyone. He said before we start we need to put together a plan. UConn is a great resource. Mr. Hoffman

suggested asking other towns that might have this kind of thing.

Route 5 / HIFZ Area

Ms. Whitten reported that we were supposed to put in two applications for the casino. One was for the Walmart / cinemas site. Only one was submitted to the tribal leaders. Mr. Richards explained that the Walmart / cinemas site would have required the town to submit the proposal and the town would be implicated. He said the Board of Selectmen made a decision to have the private person submit the proposal.

Route 140 Follow-up Status

Ms. Whitten said the EDC members had previously requested a list of every property on Route 140. She said there is not staff to run anything like that any more.

Ms. Whitten reported that the hydroponic farm is gone. They couldn't get the owners to sell. The EDC members briefly discussed the tax incentive program. Mr. Richards said it hasn't gone to a town meeting yet. The Town Attorney hasn't approved it yet.

Other Economic Development Issues

Mr. Richards noted that Roberto's Restaurant is about to open at the Pasco's site.

Ms. Whitten indicated that the PZC approved a new pizza restaurant to go into Bassdale Plaza. They will be connecting to the sewer.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: To adjourn. Hoffman / Richards / Unanimous

The meeting was adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Marlene Bauer, Recording Secretary