

Town of East Windsor
Economic Development Commission
11 Rye Street
Broad Brook, CT. 06016

Regular Meeting
Monday, December 14, 2015
Town Hall Meeting Room, 6:00 p.m.

***** *Draft Document subject to Commission Review/Approval******

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

Members Absent: Marie Rumore

Guests: Laurie Whitten, Town Planner; Roger O'Brien, Economic Development Consultant; and Robert Maynard, First Selectman;

Chairman Moffett called the Meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

ESTABLISHMENT OF QUORUM:

A quorum was established with four Regular and one Alternate Member present.

MOTION: To APPROVE Bill Kehoe as a voting member for the Meeting this evening.

Richards moved/Kapelner seconded/VOTE: In Favor: Unanimous

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: None.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES/NOVEMBER 16, 2015 REGULAR MEETING:

MOTION: To APPROVE the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Economic Development Commission dated November 16, 2015 with the following amendment:

Page 2, GENERAL DISCUSSION: Discussion of Economic Development

Issues: Paragraph 2, final sentence: "Mr. Kapelner noted that with the current mil rate OF 30.31 if you take the assessment on the LaRenaissance property, the current tax ~~rate~~ **REVENUE LOSS** would be \$100,358."

Kapelner moved/Hoffman seconded/**DISCUSSION:** None.

VOTE: In Favor: Unanimous

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GENERAL DISCUSSION:

First Selectman Maynard reported he had recently spoken with the Superintendent of Schools who informed him the school system will be putting out a newsletter. The Superintendent invited the Town to participate as well. First Selectman Maynard suggested the EDC could include development information; he would like material submitted to him first. Chairman Moffett felt it was a good opportunity to educate a large group of residents on EDC matters. Mr. Hoffman suggested it would be a good place to discuss the Business Center if the EDC decides to go forward with that proposal; Chairman Moffett suggested more generic information might be more beneficial.

BUSINESS CENTER:

Mr. Hoffman submitted a document – EW Small Business Center Development Plan Outline – to the Commissioners. The outline includes e-mail exchanges with two people associated with Economic Development at UCONN. He has also been referred to a resource in Hartford. Mr. Hoffman would like the Commission to review his outline before he and Mr. Kehoe follow up with these contacts. He would like Mr. Richards to participate in these discussions as well as he has been working with businesses in East Windsor for some time, and hoped all Commissioners would participate as the center develops. Mr. Hoffman suggested the Commission's minutes should reflect action items so it's clear who is working with whom; he also suggested the Commission should report to the Board of Selectmen (BOS) every couple of months as the EDC will be looking for their support for the Small Business Center and will be requesting funding support from the BOS and Board of Finance as the project grows.

Discussion continued. Mr. Richards suggested Mr. Hoffman and Mr. Kehoe contact representatives from Enfield as they have been trying to work with small businesses as well. Mr. Hoffman cited his prior discussions with EDC Directors from Windsor and South Windsor; he would return to those individuals if the Commission wants to proceed with this proposal. Chairman Moffett felt the purpose of the Small Business Center should be to get information out to potential business owners to help them establish their business; he felt some of the focus should be to determine what they need to set up their businesses – is it sources for financial assistance, referrals for grants, assistance finding a physical location? Town Planner Whitten suggested the Commission could develop a survey through Survey Monkey which could help the Commission identify business needs. Mr. Richards felt the Planning Department should be the point of contact for people questioning the process; Chairman Moffett felt the Town website should reflect a phone number specific to Small Business Development. Contacts made via that number could then be referred to Commission members to follow up with the business owner. Chairman Moffett felt the Small Business Center will be the foundation for economic development.

Town Planner Whitten reported that the majority of the people calling about business potential question what the Town offers for tax abatements. Although the recent abatement proposal was made for a business proposal which was terminated through the Town should not drop that consideration when contemplating economic development. Discussion followed regarding the

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status of the abatement/incentive ordinance. Chairman Moffett suggested the Commission should review that proposal before resubmitting it to the Board of Selectmen. Mr. O'Brien will e-mail his previous proposal to Commission members for discussion at the next Commission Meeting.

With regard to moving forward with the Small Business Center proposal the Board agreed that Mr. Hoffman, Mr. Kehoe, and Mr. Richards will proceed to contact the individuals discussed.

ROUTE 5/HIFZ AREA:

Town Planner Whitten gave a brief status report of East Windsor's proposals for development of a casino. She suggested the Commission continue to consider other uses for available properties within the HIFZ/Route 5 area as well.

Town Planner Whitten also reported CRCOG has approved going forward with a traffic study for Route 5. She also noted she has become aware of a grant for proposals for a regional traffic study; she suggested working with Windsor Locks to promote the connectivity of East Windsor and Windsor Locks as part of the Transit Oriented Development projects.

ROUTE 140 FOLLOW-UP STATUS:

The information requested by Mr. Richards has been provided. Discussion followed regarding potential for development along Route 140.

DISCUSSION OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ISSUES:

Town Planner Whitten provided the Commission with a photo of a new sign which the State has installed at an I-91 ramp – the sign is a *directional sign* – and is therefore acceptable to the State - which directs people to the "East Windsor Industrial Park". Discussion followed regarding the State's refusal to allow replacement of the *directory sign* at Newberry Road which listed businesses in the area. Town Planner Whitten noted the State right-of-way at that location is 400' back; they continue to refuse the request for replacement of the local directory sign.

She also noted a sign identifying the East Windsor Industrial Park which is adjacent to the Mercury Fuel project will be rebuilt; discussion followed regarding funding for part of the repair/replacement.

ADJOURNMENT:

MOTION: To ADJOURN this Meeting at 7:40 p.m.

Hoffman moved/Kapelner seconded/VOTE: Unanimous

Respectfully submitted:

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Peg Hoffman, Substitute Recording Secretary, East Windsor Economic Development Commission.