

TOWN OF EAST WINDSOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

11 RYE STREET, P.O. BOX 389

BROAD BROOK, CT 06016

Website: <http://www.eastwindsorct.com>

Special Meeting Minutes

March 31, 2011

I. ESTABLISHMENT OF QUORUM

Members Present: Eric Moffett, James Richards, Richard Covill, Josh Kapelner and Ryan Nilsson.

Additional Speakers: Art Enderle, Superintendent, W.P.C.A.
Paul Anderson, Chairman, W.P.C.A.

Also in attendance: Laurie Whitten, Town Planner

Chairman Moffett called the meeting to order at 6:04 p.m. at the meeting room of the Town Hall, 11 Rye Street, Broad Brook, CT. Mr. Moffett thanked everyone for coming to the meeting. He said we are getting close to the budget time. They wanted to reach out to the businesses and get their input.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

MOTION: To approve the minutes of February 28, 2011.

Richards / Kapelner / Unanimous

III. BUSINESS ROUNDTABLE:

Development/Commercial Real Estate Listing Service

Eric Moffett indicated that STR is coming into the industrial park and will upgrade the private road in the park to a town road. That will open up 5 more lots and help us gain more properties to market. He said they want to start promoting commercial real estate listings and they want to work on getting those listings on the town web site. An audience member asked if that would include rentals. Mr. Moffett said they want to promote all aspects of commercial business, including rentals.

Sewer Line Extension Update

Richard Covill explained that Art Enderle will be giving an update of the North Road sewer project and then turned the meeting over to Mr. Enderle, the Superintendent for the Water Pollution Control Authority. Mr. Enderle thanked the EDC members for inviting him. He presented 3 handouts: 1) a map showing the area to be serviced by the North Road sewer extension; 2) the anticipated path of the sewer extension; and 3) a tentative time table for the project. He indicated that in February they put it out to bid. In March nine contractors submitted bids and the contract was awarded to Spazzarini Construction Company of Enfield. He said construction should begin by the end of April. Mr. Enderle referred to the map and explained that there will be over a mile of gravity sewer and one-quarter mile of force main. He noted that in most areas they can maintain 2-way traffic during the project. He said they are concerned about the businesses on Route 140. Mr. Enderle said in the next few weeks they plan to go along the road and meet and speak to all the businesses and homeowners. He said communication is key. He said if the businesses have certain deliveries going on, they should make the contractors aware. Mr. Enderle said they anticipate that it will take one construction season, which is through December 2011. They will put a binder coat on and have it winter over. In the spring of 2012 they will do the final paving. Mr. Enderle noted that they will have a pre-construction meeting which includes all the utilities and the town hall staff. Mr. Covill said he would gladly go out there with them to the homeowners and businesses.

Mr. Enderle turned the meeting over to Paul Anderson, Chairman of the WPCA. Mr. Anderson said they expect that the line will be completed in the fall. He said they are going to cooperate with every business to keep the business functioning. He said they have all the financial issues ironed out. They are trying to get the water and gas companies to cooperate and get their lines in at the same time. He said they have been working with Chris Davis' office trying to get things worked out. Mr. Anderson noted that they will have people on site all day, every day. He said they will have to adhere to our specs. Mr. Anderson indicated that they are making changes to their regulations to have all future systems built to town standards and owned by the town.

Upcoming Budget / Impact of Charter Rev. / Analysis of 2010/11 Budget

Josh Kapelner indicated that he will be going through a slide presentation and looking for feedback. He said recently the Tax Foundation put together some rankings for state business taxes and Connecticut is #47. He said the big one in

Connecticut is property tax. For state property tax our ranking is #49. Mr. Kapelner said they want to change that in East Windsor. The mission of the EDC is to provide an environment for our business community to be successful. He said they need to provide some certainty. People can't make decisions unless they know what their tax structure will be. They need stability. Mr. Kapelner noted that during the past two years property tax rates in East Windsor increased by 14.8%. He pointed out the neighboring community of Enfield has maintained a tax rate for four years. He said that shows that they have some stability. He said he wants to see the tax rate at no more than the rate of inflation. Mr. Kapelner referred to a chart that showed the tax rate compared to inflation. He pointed out that it showed a big gap. Mr. Kapelner indicated that during the 2010-11 budget process, the initial budget contained a 16.17% tax increase. He said with the town charter, the previous year's budget would be increased by 2% if the budget fails after 3 referendums. He said it was over a 10% tax increase. Mr. Kapelner said he would like to recommend that the charter be modified so that the tax rate, rather than the spending, have a limit of up to 2%. Mr. Anderson said the charter would have to define what to do to make it work. The budget actually has to function. Selectman Richard Pippin explained that in the past they were robbing the savings account to keep the mill rate low and couldn't continue to do this.

Bob Lyke commended the Board for having the commitment. He said the town needs to have a three to five year strategic business plan. He said that has to come with charter changes. Also, he said we can't have a new sewer line without at least water and gas lines.

Jack Mannette, Chairman of the Board of Finance said that they were going to take money out of the designated fund for the purposes of reducing the tax burden. He said the town employees took austerity measures; they tightened their belts and last year they didn't use that fund. He said this year they are asking for a zero spending increase.

Mr. Richards asked what concerns some of the business owners had.

Lou Martin, of the Riverview Restaurant on Route 5, expressed concern about signage. He said they are only visible as you go toward Enfield. He said they should try to promote the businesses on Route 5. He said there is a plaza sign and they have 2 signs on the building. They want to be more visible. He wants something that he can take in and out to promote his restaurant, such as a portable A-frame sign.

Mr. Richards noted that the Planning & Zoning Commission looked at it and came up with a sign regulation that allows those types of signs four times a year. Mr.

Richards said he knows that South Windsor's zoning is different for the Buckland corridor. He said that Route 5 is not a neighborhood in Broad Brook. It is more of a business commercial area. A lot of businesses depend on traffic going through. He suggested that they could ask PZC to look at it again.

MOTION: Based on public input, to have the Planning & Zoning Commission review the sign regulations to make them more location specific.
Covill / Kapelner / Unanimous

Mr. Moffett explained that their monthly meetings are open to the public. He invited the businesses to feel free to come to the meetings.

IV. ADJOURNMENT:

MOTION: To adjourn. Covill / Richards / Unanimous

The meeting was adjourned at 7:22 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Marlene Bauer, Recording Secretary