East Haddam Economic Development Commission
Regular Meeting Minutes
June 3 2021

Attending: D. Bergeron; R. Casner; W. McEnery; R. Parady; M. Robidoux; J. Stone
Absent: J. Albuquerque; J. Fennema; W. Melon
Guests: S. Wheeler

I. Call to Order - Mr. Casner called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m.

II. Attendance – Mr. Casner sat Mr. McEnery for Mr. Albuquerque.

III. Approval of Minutes

The Commissioners reviewed the minutes of the Regular Meeting of April 1, 2021.

MOTION MADE BY MS. STONE, SECONDED BY MR. ROBIDOUX, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR EDC MEETING OF APRIL 1, 2021 AS WRITTEN. UNANIMOUS AYE.

IV. Old Business

A. Status Reports

1. EDC Chairman Update - Mr. Casner reported that representatives of EDC and the Planning & Zoning Commission have been meeting to discuss ways to improve the Moodus business area and develop it into a village-like setting through traffic calming measures and changes to the zoning regulations. He also briefly mentioned the Goodspeed Landing development proposal.

2. First Selectman Update – Discussion of this agenda item was postponed.

3. Economic Development Administrator Report – Discussion of this agenda item was postponed.

4. EDC/PZC Sub-Committees

a. Moodus Center/Town Street South – Possible New Regulations - Mr. Casner reviewed the activities of the Sub-Committee and noted that P&Z is meeting tonight to discuss changes to the zoning regulations for the Moodus business district. He noted that he is pleased to report that the two Commissions have had a very good working relationship.

b. Rivers, Trails & Conservation Assistance Program – Mr. Casner reported that CT Landmarks has been notified that their grant application to the National Parks Service Rivers, Trails & Conservation Assistance Program (RTC) was approved and they should receive formal written notification within 30-days.

He stated that representatives from EDC, CT Landmarks, and the Rivers, Trails & Conservation Assistance Program will meet to do a feasibility review for installing a walking/bike path loop on Town Street in the area of the Rose Farms Open Space to Chapman Pond. He noted that landscape architects at the National Parks Service Program will design the path.

In response to questions raised by Ms. Stone, Mr. Casner stated that RTC estimates the pre-construction work - design, business surveys, public meetings, etc. – will take approximately one year to complete. He stated that he did not know how many other applications have been submitted or approved by RTC and confirmed that there is a potential for them to work with CT Landmarks and the Town to design an extension of the path after the initial project is completed.

5. East Haddam Business Association

   a. Open Space Commission – Name Representative – In response to a request from Mr. Casner, Ms. Stone agreed to consider acting as EDC's liaison to the Open Space Commission. She stated that she will check the Commission's meeting schedule and then discuss the role with Mr. Casner.

      There was a general discussion regarding existing and potential open space parcels in Town.

   b. Commission on Aging (Joseph Sina) – Welcome Wagon initiative – Ms. Stone confirmed that the Business Association is very interested in participating in the Welcome Wagon initiative. She agreed to attend a Commission on Aging meeting with Mr. Casner to discuss establishing the program.

V. New Business

A. Tax Incentive Program – Scully Land Development LLC Application

Mr. Casner advised that representatives from Scully Land Development LLC will attend the next EDC meeting to discuss their Tax Incentive application.

B. Business of the Month – Nomination and Vote

Mr. Casner reported that R.A. Parady & Sons, Inc. is scheduled as the June Business of the Month.

C. Recommendation for Commission Membership

Mr. Casner stated that the terms of several Commissioners have come up for renewal. He further noted that Mr. Fennema had informed him of his decision not to renew his term. The Commissioners discussed the membership and the following motions were made:

MOTION MADE BY MR. BERGERON, SECONDED BY MR. McENERY, TO RECOMMEND TO THE BOARD OF SELECT PEOPLE THAT MR. ROBIDOUX'S, MR. CASNER'S, AND MS. STONE'S MEMBERSHIP ON THE EAST HADDAM ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION BE RENEWED, EACH FOR ANOTHER 5-YEAR TERM TO EXPIRE JUNE 30, 2026. UNANIMOUS AYE.

MOTION MADE BY MR. CASNER, SECONDED BY MR. PARADY, TO RECOMMEND TO THE BOARD OF SELECT PEOPLE THAT MR. McENERY'S MEMBERSHIP ON THE EAST HADDAM ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION BE CHANGED FROM ALTERNATE TO REGULAR MEMBER, TO FILL A VACANCY, WITH A TERM TO EXPIRE ON JUNE 30, 2026. UNANIMOUS AYE.

MOTION MADE BY MR. PARADY, SECONDED BY MR. McENERY, TO RECOMMEND TO THE BOARD OF SELECT PEOPLE THAT RYAN DAVIS BE APPOINTED AS AN ALTERNATE MEMBER ON THE EAST HADDAM ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION, TO FILL A VACANCY, WITH A TERM TO EXPIRE ON JUNE 30, 2025, CONDITIONAL UPON HIS MEETING ALL OF THE TOWN'S APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS. UNANIMOUS AYE.

D. Goodspeed Landing / Swingbridge Project

Mr. Casner noted the May 20th meeting where the Centerbridge Group presented its Goodspeed Landing development proposal to the public. He queried the Commissioners on whether or not EDC should publicly support the project. The general consensus was that EDC is definitely supportive of economic development; however, several Commissioners expressed concern about some aspects of the proposed development and suggested it might be premature to make a public statement of support at this time.

Ms. Stone further stated that, currently, a number of business owners are very concerned about the impact of the Swingbridge repair project on their businesses and, although both projects will not be concurrent, it might not be an opportune time to express support of a second project that will also cause disruption for existing businesses.

Mr. McEnery suggested EDC could indirectly support the developers by acting as a conduit for the questions and concerns raised by local businesses and the public about the project. Mr. Casner stated he will check with the Village Revitalization Committee to see if EDC can play a role in filtering the public's concerns about the project. He stated that his goal is to have a plan for EDC's role in the project for the Commissioners to consider at their next meeting.

VI. Public Comment

There was no public comment discussed at the meeting.

VII. Open Discussion – EDC Commissioners

Ms. Stone advised that the Business Association has been working on editing a survey for local businesses regarding the CT DOT's Swingbridge construction project. She stated that she expects to have the updated draft shortly and will circulate it among the EDC Commissioners for final comments.

VIII. Adjournment

THERE BEING NO ADDITIONAL BUSINESS TO DISCUSS, A MOTION WAS MADE BY MR. ROBIDOUX, SECONDED BY MR. BERGERON, TO ADJOURN THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT MEETING. UNANIMOUS AYE.

The meeting adjourned at 7:58 pm.

Recorded

Respectfully Submitted,
Sharon Wheeler