Town of East Haddam
Redevelopment Agency
December 8, 2022
Adopted January 12, 2023

1. CALL TO ORDER
Chair Kolek called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. at the Municipal Office Complex and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

ATTENDANCE
Redevelopment Agency Members: Melanie Kolek, Andrew Lord, James Curtin, Randy Dill, Jacqueline Nowell, John Cotter, Gary Laskowski, and Harvey Thomas-BOS Liaison.

Absent Member(s): Caitlin Taylor, William DiCristofaro, and Thomas Sevigny.

Other(s): First Selectwoman Irene Haines, Jeff Riley-Centerbridge Group, Gary Bogan, Rob Smith, Marilyn Gleeson, and Ruth Ziobron.

2. Approval of Minutes – Meeting of November 10, 2022
Motion to approve the November 10, 2022, minutes.
Dill/Cotter **Passed Unanimously**

3. Old Business

A. Board of Finance liaison
Harvey Thomas has been appointed as Board of Finance Liaison.

B. Status of RFP for TIF consultant
The RFP for TIF consultant sealed proposals are due December 15th at 12 p.m. No questions have been submitted to date.

C. Subcommittee report: Environmental consultant
Motion to create a subcommittee for an Environmental Consultant. Mr. Cotter, Ms. Nowell and Mr. Curtin were appointed.
Lord/Nowell **Passed Unanimously**

The Environmental Consultant subcommittee will meet with SLR, VHB and DKI Consulting firms starting next week. Agendas/minutes will be posted. Meetings may be in executive session if finances are discussed. Mr. Curtin asked Agency Members to forward interview suggestions.

D. Goodspeed update
Mr. Cotter is rescheduled to meet with Goodspeed on December 21st at 2:30 p.m.

E. Next steps timeline

i. Town Budget – Capital Requests for FY24
Agency members discussed asking for funding for a charette and decided it may be too early in the process; they agreed to contact charette companies for estimates and develop a townwide survey for public input. First Selectwoman Haines added that Ms. Taylor had charrette experience.

4. Centerbridge Group Presentation [possible executive session for part of the presentation pursuant to C.G.S. Section 1-200(6)(D)]

Jeff Riley presented a Comprehensive Overview of Town's Responsibilities. The slide deck may be located on the Redevelopment Agency Website and may be watched on YouTube.

Responsive to a question by Chair Kolek, Mr. Riley replied that the town and developer needed to work together to make grant funding, TIFs, tax abatement and tax funding available for the project. He said that the Agency had the authority to help the developer and that the project needed to make financial sense to investors. Mr. Riley noted a financially successful project would generate over $1,000,000 yearly tax revenue. A financial economic impact study will show the jobs created, collateral impact on other town businesses and beneficial impact to the grand list. Mr. Riley suggested the Agency invest in consultation by Mike Comey regarding grants for the project.

Chair Kolek asked about traffic. Mr. Riley replied that the State Traffic Commission had informally advised that Mr. Bogan's property had the correct site lines to exit. Mr. Riley stated the traffic study determined that the proposed project would generate an additional 2 ½ cars per hour during peak traffic load.

Mr. Curtin noted the original proposal was for an Athens on the Water Architecture and asked if this would still be the case. Mr. Riley replied that the architectural design would be subject to Historic District input and approval. Mr. Riley was more concerned with functional aspects of the design. Mr. Curtain added what people see coming over the bridge/attractive town would bring people in. Mr. Curtin stated he never got tired of looking at the Goodspeed Opera House. Mr. Riley added that Centerbridge Group was known for developments that fit in architecturally with the surrounding properties.

Ms. Nowell stated a survey would give the Agency a broader idea of what people wanted to see in the village. Mr. Riley stated at some point the town will need to hand the project over to the developer if they want the property developed. He stated he was not against a survey but didn't think it would provide answers to everything. He noted the public would have input when presented to the Historic Commission.

Mr. Dill stated Mr. Riley's presentation showed the importance of working with a developer who knows all the steps to be taken to get to a final plan. Mr. Dill stated hiring experts would duplicate Mr. Riley's work, which he already paid for. Mr. Dill stated the survey should focus on the kinds of businesses/apartments/dance etc. to be included in the development and what would attract people to go there; and if it should be a tax producing development. He said this information was important to get the project approved at referendum. Chair Kolek added Agency Statute says that the Redevelopment Agency should develop/adopt their own plan, or a developer submits their own plan for Agency consideration. If there is no developer as partner, then the Agency would be responsible to hire experts such as grant writers, TIF consultants, and environmental consultants. Mr. Dill stated the Agency may still have to hire experts. Mr. Riley recommended hiring a grant writer and TIF Consultant to help make the project feasible to a developer. Mr. Riley stated 7 of the buildings on the Redevelopment Map were vacant and if it wasn't for the Goodspeed Opera

House, the whole place would be vacant. He said the ice cream parlor and bookstore owner would benefit from developing the site because it would attract people to the area.

5. New Business
Mr. Lord will revise the draft Agency Authorities and Charges to reflect this evening's meeting for the next meeting. Mr. Riley noted he had in his timeline two years to develop a purchase and sales agreement, funding sources, plan development and surveys.

The Agency cancelled the December 22nd meeting. The next scheduled meeting will be January 12th, 2023, at 7p.m. Chair Kolek will invite Pat McMann from Main Street USA to attend.

6. Public Comment
There were no emails to the RA Chair.

Mr. Bogan voiced concern with the additional traffic, drainage, traffic speed, additional parking needs and impacts on water quality which development would add to the village.

Marilyn Gleeson thanked the Agency for their work. She suggested expanding the Redevelopment Map. Chair Kolek replied the Agency was not in a position now to expand the Redevelopment Map until they had more information. This would require a Public Hearing and Board of Selectman approval. Mr. Riley stated his proposal was within the Redevelopment Map except for 2 houses which Goodspeed owned (needing negotiations). Ms. Gleeson stated she would like to see a cohesive plan throughout the village, not just in one section with maybe more than one developer. She stated she liked Mr. Riley's plan. Ms. Gleeson stated she hoped the Agency was not abandoning the idea of doing a charrette. She said the public needed to have input to feel they were a part of the decision. Mr. Riley stated he was not dismissing public input.

Mr. Smith stated the Agency was not properly funded. He stated the Agency needed more funding for grant writing, Tif Consultant and needed studies by the town. He stated relying on an individual developer would lose credibility with townspeople. Mr. Smith suggested increasing the area of the Redevelopment Map, noting it would help with TIF funding and allow for multiple developers. Mr. Smith stated Form Based Code would help potential developers.

Responsive to a question by Mr. Bogan, Chair Kolek replied that the Agency would not know the property value until an Environmental Consultant estimates the cost of cleaning up the site. It was noted that the recent reevaluation was for private property owners. Chair Kolek added this information could be viewed on the RA website.

7. Adjournment at 9:24 p.m.
Lord/Curtin **Passed Unanimously**

Respectfully Submitted,
E. Ruth Ziobron
Recording Secretary