East Haddam Economic Development Commission
Special Meeting Minutes
April 4, 2024

Attending: R. Casner; W. McEnery; R. Parady; D. Merrick; M. Robidoux
Absent: J. Stone
Guests: L. Pszczolkowski, Economic Development Administrator

1. Call to Order - Mr. Casner called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

2. Attendance – All Commissioners in attendance were regular Board members.

3. Approval of Minutes

   - Regular Meeting of October 19, 2023 – It was noted that the minutes of the October 19, 2023 meeting were amended and approved at the November 16, 2023 meeting and no further action was required.

   - Regular Meeting of November 16, 2023 – Mr. Casner called the Commissioners' attention to the minutes of the November 16th EDC meeting. Mr. McEnery noted the following correction:

     Page 3 – New Business Item B: "MOTION MADE BY MR. ROBIDOUX, SECONDED BY MR. MERRICK, TO RECOMMEND THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN NOT RENEW MR. ~~PARADY'S~~ *DAVIS'S* TERM AS A MEMBER OF THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION. UNANIMOUS AYE.

     MOTION MADE BY MR. ROBIDOUX, SECONDED BY MR. MC ENERY, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF NOVEMBER 16, 2023 AS AMENDED. UNANIMOUS AYE.

   - Regular Meeting of February 1, 2024 – Mr. Casner called the Commissioners' attention to the minutes of the February 1st EDC meeting.

     MOTION MADE BY MR. MC ENERY, SECONDED BY MR. PARADY, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF FEBRUARY 1, 2024 AS WRITTEN. UNANIMOUS AYE.

4. Old Business

   A. EDC Chairman Update - Mr. Casner reported on the following items:

      - EDC's FY2024-2025 proposed budget was accepted by the Boards of Selectmen and Finance. The only change was a $500.00 reduction to the Communications line item. Mr. Casner noted that EDC's FY2024-2025 capital budget includes $12,000.00 for professional services which he expects will be used for engineering services on the bike path.

- He had presented EDC's roadway design for the Village to the Redevelopment Agency who stated they would need more detail. Mr. Casner noted that there are 3-4 other roadway proposals being considered and, at this time, the First Selectmen did not want EDC to use funds from its budget to develop engineering details.

- The Redevelopment Agency is considering purchasing the LaVita Gustosa and Pellitier properties to enlarge the footprint of the redevelopment area. There was a general discussion about this issue and Mr. Casner responded to several questions from the Board members.

- Completion of the renovations to Society Hall should wrap up in about two months. There was a brief discussion regarding the business plan for the building.

B. First Selectwoman's Update – The First Selectwoman was not in attendance; therefore, discussion of this agenda item was postponed. The Board agreed to remove this item from future agendas.

C. Economic Development Administrator Report – Ms. Pszczolkowski reported the following:

- The Easter Egg Hunt on the Municipal Office Complex went well and approximately 100 children participated. She noted that the Fire Department is considering different locations for next year.

- She discussed several fall events and promotional items that are being considered.

- She stated she will help Thomas with the flier for the next Airport Festival.

- She would like to organize a Block Party to celebrate the end of the construction on the Swingbridge and the opening of the bridge walkway.

D. Sub-Committee Reports

a. <u>CT Landmarks/EDC – Rivers, Trails & Conservation Assistance Program</u> – There was no update on this agenda item.

b. <u>EDC/PZC – Moodus Development Plan – Parking Regulations</u> – Mr. Casner advised that an engineering plan had been developed for the re-alignment of State Road 149 in the Moodus business district. He stated that the proposal will need to be approved by P&Z and then it will be presented to the state DOT. If it is approved by the state, the Town can then pursue funding to implement the plan.

c. <u>Route 82 Bike Path / Zoning Uses in the Area</u> – Mr. Casner reported that CT DEEP has signed off on the Town's draft RFP soliciting engineering proposals for the bike path on south Town Street. Mr. Casner advised that the RFP will be released shortly and he responded to questions from the Commissioners.

i. <u>Village Zone Regulations</u> – Mr. Casner distributed copies of a draft proposal he had worked on with Land Use Administrator Ventres proposing the creation of a South Town Street Village District. Mr. Casner advised that the purpose of the proposal is to expand the allowable uses in the zoning district to encourage denser commercial development

which would also be consistent with existing structures in area. In particular, he noted the inclusion of restaurants, liquor licenses, B&Bs and hotels, and 4-6 unit multi-family dwellings in the list of allowable uses. He noted the proposal also recommends allowing farm wineries in the district to serve alcoholic beverages that are not produced on their property.

There was a general discussion about the proposal. Mr. Casner reviewed a map of the area and responded to several questions from the Board. He requested the Commissioners review the proposal and provide him with their input and stated that the next step is to present the proposal to the Planning & Zoning Commission.

E. East Haddam Business Association (EHBA) – There was no update on this agenda item.

5. New Business

A. East Haddam Village

a. Discussion of Road Design – This agenda item was discussed earlier in the meeting and is covered in these minutes under Old Business – EDC Chairman Update.

B. Business of the Month

Mr. Merrick agreed to contact Kristin Haddad (aka Lady Pinstripe), owner of Killustrateit, as a potential Business of the Month.

6. Public Comment

There was no public comment discussed at the meeting.

7. Open Discussion – EDC Commissioners

Mr. Robidoux reported that he participates on an EDC Steering Committee sponsored by the Middlesex County Chamber of Commerce. He noted that, at their last meeting, the Steering Committee discussed a Canadian company that is looking into establishing a day spa in Middlesex County, specifically affiliated with the Brownstone Exploration & Discovery Park in Portland. He further stated that the Steering Committee would like to hold one of their next meetings in East Haddam.

8. Adjournment

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

The meeting adjourned at 8:15 pm.

Recorded

Respectfully Submitted,
Sharon Wheeler