Meeting Minutes
Town of East Haddam
Redevelopment Agency
January 9, 2025

1. **Call to Order**
   The meeting was called to order by Chair Andrew Lord at 7:00 p.m. at the Municipal Office Complex, Meeting Room 1. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Attendance
Redevelopment Agency Members Present: Andrew Lord, Randy Dill, William DiCristofaro, James Curtin, Jacquelin Nowell, John Cotter, Cameron Hendry, Thomas Sevigny, and Harvey Thomas (BOF Liaison).
Absent Members: Caitlin Taylor
Other(s): Linda Zemienieski, VHB Representatives Amy Valencourt and Tommy Boston.

2. **SHPO Grant Status Report**
   Ms. Zemienieski provided an update on the SHPO grant, noting that the RFP had been sent to SHPO for review. The draft was updated to include a mandatory RFP conference requirement, and the final approval from SHPO is expected soon. She also highlighted delays with the insurance review process but confirmed that efforts are ongoing to expedite this.
3. **Election of Officers**
   Motion: To elect William DiCristofaro as Chairman of the Redevelopment Agency.
   Nowell/ Curtin.
   Passed unanimously.
   Mr. DiCristofaro expressed his sincere appreciation for Mr. Lord's dedication and hard work over the past 12 months, acknowledging the significant effort he has put in. He thanked Mr. Lord for his valuable contributions and emphasized the Commission's gratitude for his continued active involvement. Mrs. Nowell also recognized Mr. Lord's commitment to other committees, noting the wealth of experience and insight he brings.

Motion: To elect Andrew Lord as Vice-Chairman.
Curtin/ Hendry.
Passed unanimously.

Motion: To elect Jim Curtin as Secretary.
Nowell/ Cotter
Passed unanimously.

4. **Approval of Minutes**
   Motion: To approve the December 12, 2024 meeting minutes.
   Dill/Sevigny
   Passed unanimously.
5. **Financial Report**
   Mr. Sevigny reported that the draft for the town's Tax Increment Financing (TIF) policy

has been initiated. However, the committee is still awaiting input from the town attorney regarding the contract, which has been delayed for about two months. Despite this, work on the policy is ongoing.

The TIF policy will define the criteria for establishing TIF districts for new developments, including guidelines for providing tax incentives or other assistance through Credit Enhancement Agreements (CEAs).

Several important decisions remain regarding the TIF policy, including the threshold for qualifying developments, whether an application fee should be charged, and whether CEAs should require approval at a town meeting or administrative approval. The team is leaning towards administrative approval to avoid complications. The TIF policy is still in draft form and will undergo review by the appropriate boards (Board of Finance, Board of Selectmen, etc.). Once the draft is finalized, it will be circulated for further review before final decisions are made.

The draft TIF policy serves as a broad guideline and will be flexible for use in various areas, such as Moodus or East Haddam Center. There will be flexibility for developers to propose TIF districts in these areas.

A meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, January 22nd, where a presentation will address questions related to the TIF policy and finalize the draft. Afterward, the draft will be circulated for additional input before the final version is prepared.

6. **Environmental Investigation Status Report**

   John Cotter introduced representatives from VHB to discuss the implementation strategy for the Brownfield Assessment project at 1 & 7 Main Street. VHB detailed the plan for phase one and phase two site assessments, addressing concerns about arsenic, lead, and other contaminants. They proposed background soil sampling to establish naturally occurring arsenic levels and outlined a timeline for the next steps, including a DECD kickoff meeting. The Agency requested signage on site. The project timeline is approximately 1 year. A draft schedule will be shared with the agency following the meeting.

7. **Community Outreach Report**

   Randy Dill stated that there were no significant updates in community outreach for the past month. Members agreed that upcoming public workshops and meetings would focus on engaging stakeholders and informing the public about the progress of the Redevelopment Agency's initiatives.

8. **Other Business**

   • **New Member Update:** Jeffrey Miller was announced as a new agency member, pending final ratification at a town meeting.

   • **Coordination with Sons of the American Revolution:** Jim Curtin reported ongoing discussions regarding potential collaboration with the Sons of the American Revolution. A list of potential areas of mutual interest, including access for soil testing and property rights, will be shared at a future meeting.

   • **Village Center Development and Next Steps for RFP Process:** The Agency discussed the use of the Riley plan as a starting point for future development in the village center, specifically focusing on properties 1 and 7. There was a consensus that while it is important to have a clear vision of what the town wants, flexibility should be maintained. The Agency is cautious about getting too involved in the specifics of the development to avoid taking on the role of the developers. The objective is to

communicate the town's expectations clearly while allowing developers to bring their expertise. Feedback from stakeholders and the community is considered crucial in shaping the vision.

• **Delays in Insurance Review:** There was also frustration over delays in reviewing necessary insurance documents, which has slowed progress. The Agency stressed the importance of pushing for quicker action, particularly as the next steps involve preparing for a developer RFP. The next meeting is set for January 21st, where consultants will present and further discussions on development plans will take place. The Agency plans to involve key stakeholders such as finance and economic development officials to address concerns and move the process forward.

• **Brownfield Assessment Funding and Insurance Coverage:** Mr. Cotter clarified that additional funding may be necessary for the Brownfield Assessment project, particularly for unforeseen costs related to site assessments. It was discussed that once the project scope is finalized, the Agency will pursue the appropriate funding options. Additionally, the Agency emphasized the importance of ensuring proper insurance coverage for the project to mitigate any future liabilities.

9. **Public Comment**
   There were no public comments.
10. **Adjournment**
    Motion: To adjourn the meeting at 8:45 p.m.
    Lord/Dill
    Passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,
E. Ruth Ziobron
Recording Secretary