East Haddam Economic Development Commission
Regular Meeting Minutes
October 7, 2021

Attending: D. Bergeron; R. Casner; R. Davis; W. McEnery; M. Robidoux
Absent: J. Albuquerque; W. Melon; R. Parady; J. Stone
Guests: I. Haines; S. Jezek; R. Smith

I. Call to Order - Mr. Casner called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

II. Attendance – Mr. Casner noted that all in attendance were regular members.

III. Approval of Minutes

This agenda item was postponed.

IV. Old Business

A. Status Reports

1. EDC Chairman Update – Mr. Casner reported the following:

- Nutmeg Pharmacy's application for a new 9,600sf building on Ray Palmer Road is moving through the Planning and Zoning process.
- The Moodus Auto property was sold to Goodspeed Realty and leased to Scott Energy.
- He provided a review of the Fall Festival.

2. First Selectman's Update – Mr. Smith reported the following:

- Deb Mathaisen has been reappointed as East Haddam's tourism representative for the Central Region Tourism District.
- The Planning & Zoning application to subdivide the Gristmill Plaza site for a potential new store was withdrawn to address several issues that were raised; he expects it will be resubmitted
- The old Cumberland Farms property was sold to Shahani Fuels which currently operates 51 stores in the state. The future use of the property has not yet been disclosed.
- The Board of Finance chairman recommended establishing a Redevelopment Agency to oversee the Centerbridge proposal for the 1 and 7 Main Street property and the EHVRC unanimously supported the recommendation. Mr. Smith advised that the Board of Selectmen is working to develop a draft ordinance to establish the agency and the Town has earmarked a tentative date December 21st for a referendum date on the issue.

  Mr. Smith responded to several questions raised by Mr. McEnery. There was a general discussion regarding the responsibilities and scope of authority of a Redevelopment Agency.

- The Getaway project is moving forward. The roads have been roughed out and the company is currently blasting for the installation sewer system.

- He reviewed the state's upcoming Swingbridge repair project, particularly the proposed closures. He noted there is a link on the Town's website that includes the latest information regarding the project.

  In response to a question raised by Mr. Robidoux, Mr. Smith advised that the bridge on Town Street will be closed for approximately one month for the repairs by CT Department of Transportation.

- The Town will be mucking out Wigwam Pond which is the emergency water supply for the Municipal Office Complex.

3. Economic Development Administrator Report – Ms. Haines provided the following report:

   - The Fall Festival inserts were not included in all of the newspapers, otherwise the event went well.

   - EDC and the East Haddam Business Association are hosting a business strategy meeting on October 18th to discuss the state's Swingbridge repair project. There will be a number of presentations regarding potential impacts, how to identify new markets, and the use of social media to build their markets. They are considering holding additional workshops on this topic. There was a general discussion regarding publicizing the event.

   - She has submitted her resignation as EDC Administrator effective October 15th. Mr. Casner and the Commissioners thanked her for the good work that she has done.

4. EDC/PZC Sub-Committees

   a. Moodus Center/Town Street South – New Regulations – Mr. Casner reported that the Moodus Center regulations were approved by the Planning & Zoning Commission, effective October 1st. He reviewed some of the changes to the regulations.

   b. CT Landmarks EDC – Rivers, Trails & Conservation Assistance Program – Mr. Casner stated that he is continuing planning meetings with CT Landmarks and the Rivers, Trails & Conservation group.

5. East Haddam Business Association (EHBA) –

   a. Welcome Wagon initiative – Mr. Robidoux reported that they are looking into the Neighbor-to-Neighbor program to facility the Town's Welcome Wagon program. He stated that there is no additional new update on this initiative.

6. Tax Incentive Program – Scully Land Development LLC Application – Mr. Casner reported that Scully Land Development's application and agreement for the Tax Incentive Program were acted on by the Boards of Selectmen and Finance and will go before a Town Meeting for final approval on October 22nd.

7. Goodspeed Landing – Swingbridge Project – This agenda item was discussed earlier in the meeting under the First Selectman's report.

V. New Business

A. Business of the Month – Ms. Haines reported that Roots Salon has declined the Business of the Month award. She suggested the East Haddam Airport be considered for the award and Mr. McEnery nominated Learn 2 Fly CT, the flight school at the airport.

Mr. Davis made a motion, seconded by Mr. Robidoux, to approve Mr. McEnery's nomination of Learn 2 Fly CT as the Business of the Month for November and December. Unanimous aye.

VI. Public Comment

Mr. Jezek stated that Celebrate East Haddam was a great event.

VII. Open Discussion – EDC Commissioners

Mr. Bergeron stated he would like to see the state's Swingbridge repair project be a regular discussion item on EDC's agenda. He also requested that businesses receive regular updates on the state's plans for re-routing traffic. Ms. Haines noted that the state has committed to providing updated work schedules every two weeks.

VIII. Adjournment

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

The meeting adjourned at 8:27 pm.

Recorded

Respectfully Submitted,
Sharon Wheeler