

MINUTES  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION  
FEBRUARY 19, 2009  
TOWN HALL ANNEX  
12:00 P.M. - COMMUNITY ROOM 3

I. ROLL CALL

Present: Peter Pappas, Susan Dowling and Lian Obrey

Staff: Barbara Strother

Other: George Mathanool

II. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Chairman

MOTION: To elect Peter Pappas as Chairman.

Motion made by Dowling, seconded by Obrey, so voted unanimously.

Vice-Chairman

MOTION: To elect Lian Obrey as Vice-Chairman.

Motion made by Pappas, seconded by Dowling, so voted unanimously.

Secretary

MOTION: To elect Susan Dowling as Secretary.

Motion made by Pappas, seconded by Obrey, so voted unanimously.

III. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF DECEMBER 11, 2008

MOTION: To approve the December 11, 2008 minutes as written.

Motion made by Pappas seconded by Dowling and so voted unanimously.

IV. ITEMS OF BUSINESS

1. Continued Review of Strategic Plan Implementation/EDC 2008 Work Program

Staff reviewed work items from the Strategic Plan including:

- Route 1 Gateway (Route 1/Kings Highway) – Staff is currently completing the contract with the selected consultant. Phase I includes the study of the intersection at Kings Highway and Route 1 and preliminary design recommendations for traffic operation improvements and construction funding for identified improvements.

Funding would then be needed for Phase II of this project which would include detailed engineering design, including, but not limited to, median landscaping, median reconstruction and renovations, and other associated improvements to be determined after completion of the preliminary design effort.

- Crystal Lane Road (Submarine Base Gateway Project) - \$50,000 in funding was approved in FY 07 to refine the project and prepare the required documents for submission to the State DECD for funding in FY 12 or FY 13. State funds may be available to make improvements and fund the resurfacing. Town staff has prepared schematics of the road work and ancillary projects such as the construction of a bike path from the intersection of Pleasant Valley Road South to the main entrance. This would provide a multimodal link to the major Navy Housing areas.

## 2. Flanders Road Industrial Area Utilities Update

Flanders Road Utilities – Fuss & O’Neil is undertaking additional research to further refine the design and develop more detailed costs of construction for the recommended route. This effort was funded in last year’s CIP Program.

## 3. Zoning Regulation Review and Update

Staff provided a handout which outlined the status of the Zoning Regulation update project. She noted that there will be a joint meeting with the consultant, Kendig Keast Collaborative, and the Zoning and Planning Commissions on Wednesday, March 4<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m. at Town hall Annex. This is a workshop for the Commission members and the consultant (without direct public participation). EDC members were encouraged to attend.

## 4. Staff Report

- Signage issue (real estate signs) – The first proposal received by the Town regarding real estate signs was referred to the Town Attorney. The Town Attorney determined that real estate signs are considered off-site, non-accessory commercial signs. The Town cannot allow this type of sign for certain parties but not others because the nature of the business cannot be used as a basis to justify disparate treatment (these types of standards are not defensible).

A new proposal has been received and staff is evaluating the proposal. Estimated timeframe for completion of the review is March/April.

- Staff reported that she has continued coordination and meeting with several Downtown Mystic property owners to review proposed easements and other required legal documentation for the Mystic Streetscape Project. She also provided information to several attorneys and banks regarding the legal documentation needed.
- Staff reported that she will be looking into the potential for a Business Caravan to Airport Business Park (late April – early May?).
- Staff reported that she is working with seCTer on the possibility of holding a Community Builders session in Southeastern Connecticut (September 30<sup>th</sup> is a potential date at Town Hall Annex). The class, a “Crash Course in Economic Development” would be an excellent session for the EDC to attend.
- Staff reported that upon learning of a Groton company relocating (American Laboratory Trading) she contacted the company owner to determine why the company was moving and then the property owner regarding available space following the move. She then provided information on laboratory space to the UCONN Incubator Program and office space to a business seeking office space (warehouse building at this site has already been leased).
- 23 Library Street House – Staff reported that the Town is in the process of taking the legal steps necessary to move forward on the demolition of the burned house.
- Staff reported that she has recently received two inquiries from real estate companies representing major Groton shopping centers (Groton Square and Groton Shopping Center) requesting information on the local economy. She also received similar inquiry from an appraisal company regarding an approved multi-family project. She provided several reports and documents regarding major employers, development activities, and recent newspaper articles.
- Drinking Water Quality Management Plan

Staff distributed a fact sheet on the recently completed project.

## 5. Other

Lian Obrey expressed interest in pursuing a train station in Downtown Groton. Staff encouraged her to undertake research on the issues involving this and noted that she is currently working on several of the short-term projects from the Economic Development Strategic Plan which she will need to complete prior to taking on an additional project.

Questions arose regarding development at the Groton-New London Airport and off site properties for transportation related business. Staff will try and have the airport manager attend a future meeting to discuss the airport.

V. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 1:00 p.m.

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Susan Dowling, Secretary  
Economic Development Commission

Prepared by Barbara Strother, Economic  
Development Specialist