

MINUTES
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
October 6, 2016 – 4:45 P.M.
TOWN HALL ANNEX – COMMUNITY ROOM 1

I. ROLL CALL

Present: Dowling, Preka, Cote, Hatcher, Legnos, Mathanool (5:24)
Absent: Young
Other: Obrey, Valente, Nault, Barber
Staff: Bronk, Eisenbeiser, Post

The Chair called the meeting to order at 4:49 p.m.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

September 1, 2016

MOTION: To approve the minutes of the September 1, 2016 meeting

Motion made by Dowling, seconded by Legnos; so voted unanimously

III. PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS- None

IV. REPORTS

1. Chairperson – Preka consistently communicates with Staff via email and phone calls and meets with Bronk monthly. Preka did meet with Oefinger regarding new commission members. Preka said it was a positive meeting and 3 names were submitted as recommendation to choose for appointment as commission members to fill the two vacancies.

2. Staff- Staff report was previously submitted by email for review.

ADZ- Staff submitted the application to the State. The State will review the application and will run it through the state's REMI model.

Great Blue- Staff is expecting the final version any day. A final report will be available to the public in October.

Public Property Redevelopment-
517&529 Gold Star Hwy- the RFP was issued and will close on October 17, 2016.

Mystic Oral School- Staff does not have a key but is still active in marketing the property and showing the property from the exterior.

Groton Heights- Staff has gained access to this building and completed a walk through. Showings are being scheduled.

Marketing/Web- Staff participated in internal meetings and is working with Camoin who will write the RFP. Staff is anticipating a 2017 launch for the stand-alone website.

CT Next- This project is moving forward, notification regarding funding approval from the State is anticipated by late October.

CT/RI Economic Group- Staff participated in a meeting this past summer. The goal is to unite coastal areas, jointly craft statewide legislation to streamline economic development efforts.

TIF- Staff coordinated a successful presentation about TIF with the Town Council. This presentation focused on a specific multi use development located at the intersection of 117/184.

Incentives- Staff continues to work to develop an easy to use document.

Economic Assistance Fund- Eisenbeiser completed a first draft. A meeting to present the draft to the EDC Economic Assistance Fund TASC force will be scheduled in October.

Northeast Corridor- Staff explained the process to the commission and has also been addressing inquiries regarding the process with the public as they come in. Staff stated that completion of this project will take years.

3. Liaisons:

Groton Business Association – Valente reported that they had an informative meeting at CURE. The speakers were great and the facility is outstanding. They are also promoting the Thames River Innovation Places Grant Opportunity which will span both shores. The Fall Festival is this weekend (October 8th) the next GBA meeting is Tuesday night, October 18th at Outer Lights Brewing Company.

Downtown Mystic Merchants – Valente reported that the DMM is more events driven. The last event hosted was Mystic Eats and it was a great weekend. They are looking at what the profits were. The Pirate Invasion is coming up on September 30 through October 2nd. This event has grown quite large since the first event was held. Paint the Town Pink is coming up as well, the merchants will be participating in a fundraiser for the Terri Brodeur Breast Cancer Foundation.

RTM – Nothing to report

Town Council – Councilors Antipas and Nault attended the Alexy von Schlippe meeting and stated the Town had a large presence.

There was more discussion regarding the railway. Preliminary decisions will be communicated in the fall.

4. Subcommittee- No meeting, no report

V. OLD BUSINESS

1. Preka stated that elections are coming up in November. The By-Laws state that officers will be elected by succession. It was discussed that the By-Laws are revised and that officers are elected each year being left to a vote instead of by succession. If it is opened up to a vote it is less disruptive. Dowling and

Legnos agreed that yearly elections would be best. Preka wants to make sure that whoever holds position of Chair is invested, and involved. Cote thinks that 1 year is not long enough to which Dowling agreed. Bronk stated that a more active Vice Chair is needed to work together with the Chair to have a stronger leadership team.

2. School Referendum- There was a lengthy discussion last meeting where a lot of ideas were shared. It was decided that the EDC members would email Staff with comments to draft a letter. Hatcher asked who the letter was going to be addressed to, Bronk stated the Town Council. Eisenbeiser suggested that it can be addressed to the Town Council and also send a copy to the Groton Schools 20/20 PAC. Hatcher would like to see what the Town Attorney says about the EDC endorsing the referendum and doesn't know if it would be impactful to write a letter. Obrey stated that the purpose of the EDC is to advocate for things that would make a positive impact on the economic development of the Town.

Motion to draft a letter based on comments received by Staff was made by Legnos and seconded by Mathanool. Motion passed unanimously.

Legnos left at 5:58.

Motion made by Hatcher to have the letter reviewed by the town legal counsel for an opinion. Motion was seconded by Mathanool; so voted unanimously.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

1. Strategic Planning Meeting Summary- Table for next meeting

2. Business Breakfast- Preka stated that there is another Connecticut town that does a business breakfast monthly, Preka would like to think about doing this in Groton to get the word out that the EDC exists. Valente stated it is hard to start; it has taken the GBA time to build attendance and a following. Valente suggested to have the EDC piggy back on the GBA annual business update in May. Preka wants to put their presence out there for the EDC to get people to come in to the meetings to express their concerns or any comments they have about business in Groton. The commission discussed different ways to get the word out regarding the EDC.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn at 6:24 pm made by Dowling, seconded by Hatcher; so voted unanimously.

Catherine Young, Secretary
Economic Development Commission

Prepared by Lauren Post
Office Assistant II