

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
NOVEMBER 6, 2014 – 4:30 P.M.
TOWN HALL ANNEX – COMMUNITY ROOM 1

I. ROLL CALL

Commission: Dowling, Obrey, Young, Cote, Cummings Mathanool, Legnos
Staff: Clarke
Others: G. Cerf, R. Moravsic B. Smith, J. Hartley, A. Valente

The meeting was called to order by Dowling at 4:36 PM.

II. PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS – None

III. REPORT OF COMMITTEES

1. Groton Business Association - Report from EDC Liaison

Valente provided the following report: Summer in the City has ended; it promoted over 100 events in the City throughout the summer and created an additional 10. Fall Festival is October 10th and will showcase 115 vendors; applications are still being accepted. October 16th is next general meeting at Avery-Copp House at 7:30 am. November 20th is a C-PACE breakfast meeting at Groton Inn & Suites. Groton Lights Parade is the first Saturday in December. Annual Report: updated mission & vision statements; reprinted Groton Guide; Bridge Street banner Pilot program; GBA rack card.

2. Downtown Mystic Merchants Association (DMMA) – Report

Hartley provided the following report: the DMMA has joined both the Chamber of Commerce of Eastern Connecticut and the Greater Mystic Chamber of Commerce for this year. After working with Al Valente, they have decided to use PayPal to process credit cards. The DMMA has completed several events where they have been able to make donations to other non-profits: Paint the Town Pink supported the Terry Broueder Foundation; Mystic Eats supported MASH. They are partnering with Mystic Seaport for SharkFest next summer; Rotary to sell paper turkey legs as a fundraiser for Pawcatuck Neighborhood Center; and will be a drop off point for Project Warmer Winter. The DMMA is looking for Board members and officers.

3. Town Council - Report from Liaison

Cerf provided the following report: She met with Planning Director regarding the RFQ and what his approach is from a business perspective. The short term goal is to bring in developers and the long term view will be considered as well. The Town Council is excited about the Mystic Indoor Tennis proposal. Could the Seeley School be an agenda item for the future?

Cote commented that he had read about the Mystic Tennis Center Public Hearing in the paper. This is an opportunity to send the message that Groton is open for business.

IV. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING OF OCTOBER 2, 2014.

MOTION: To approve the minutes of the October 2, 2014

Motion made by Cummings, seconded by Young. Motion passed 4-0-1 (Dowling)

V. OLD BUSINESS

1. Airport Development Zone (ADR)

Staff discussed that there has not been much movement on the ADZ this month. A meeting with New London staff was promising but brought up many questions which Groton really needed to know the answers to as well. A Request For Information was sent on October 8th and after several follow up requests, a conference call is scheduled for tomorrow morning.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

1. RFQ - Market Analysis/Zoning Analysis

Staff worked with the Planning Director to put together the RFQ which will look at the land use regulations to identify ways to streamline the process and will look at the marketability.

Cote expressed the need for an explanation of how to get through the approval process and staff mentioned that this is in progress. Obrey discussed that this was brought up last year and could be something for the EDC to focus on again. Legnos felt that a checklist would be very helpful.

2. Any Other Business

Young asked for a recent status of by-laws and history. The Commission discussed the Charter Revision as well as energy issues. It was decided that Young would spearhead the Charter Revision task and Legnos would pursue the energy issues.

VII. REPORT OF STAFF

Staff provided a written report and discussed:

- **Groton Inventory**
Working with Building Inspectors to fill in gaps and create a more comprehensive list of available properties.

Mathanool and Cerf expressed great interest in the inventory being available online and urged staff to make this a priority.
- **USS GROTON Project**
A meeting was held this morning (November 6) and Rick Norris attended. The sites under consideration have been narrowed to 10 locations throughout Groton.
- **Port Authority**
Staff spoke with representatives from New London this morning for an update. A meeting was held on Monday with representatives from the statewide steering committee in attendance. The conversation focused on how to set up a port authority. Kevin Dillon from the Connecticut Airport Authority (CAA) provided insights into how the CAA transitioned from a state function to being an independent agency.

- **Mystic Indoor Sports**
Mr. McCormack is interested in revitalizing the indoor tennis facility located at 90 Welles Road. Staff has been working with Mr. McCormack, who hopes to be the property owner in the near future. Mr. McCormack has submitted a financial incentives proposal to the Town Council. Staff has been asked by the Town Manager to review the proposal and will begin working with the Tax Assessor next week to review the financial implications of the proposal.
- **C-PACE Event**
This is a free breakfast meeting that will take place on November 20th at Groton Inn & Suites to explain the Connecticut Property Assessed Clean Energy program to Groton and Stonington property owners. Groton, Stonington and the Greater Mystic Chamber of Commerce received a grant in June 2014 to host the event.
- **Bloomberg Public Art Grant**
Staff attended a meeting last week to gauge interest in jointly applying for this Public Art Grant opportunity with Norwich, New London, Montville and Ledyard. A call to artists has gone out and hopefully some interesting concepts will be returned. Three grants will be awarded nationally. Applications are due December 14, 2014.
- **OPM Transit Oriented Development Grant**
OPDS staff plans to apply for Office of Policy and Management (OPM) Request for Applications (RFA) for Transit Oriented Development (TOD) planning grant; the maximum that can be requested is \$250,000 and funds must be used for TOD planning studies. If successful, funds would be used to complete feasibility studies that look at redesigning downtown Groton's commercial areas along Route 1, including the construction of a commuter rail station in the area, which is called for in Groton's Strategic Economic Development Plan.

VIII. REPORT OF CHAIR

Mathanool expressed interest in reviewing the Charter as it relates to the EDC as it hasn't been reviewed in at least 12 years.

MOTION: To form a Charter Revision subcommittee

Motion made by Mathanool, seconded by Legnos, so voted unanimously.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION to adjourn at 6:00 p.m. made by Dowling, seconded by Obrey, so voted unanimously.

Lian Obrey, Secretary
Economic Development Commission

Prepared by: Kristin Havrilla Clarke
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