

MINUTES
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
March 2, 2017 – 4:45 P.M.
TOWN HALL ANNEX – COMMUNITY ROOM 1

I. ROLL CALL

Present: Cote, Dowling, Hatcher, Preka, Young, Melin, Mathanool (5:07p), Legnos (4:53)
Absent: Denno
Other: Nault, Valente, Obrey, Smith Powers, Barber
Staff: Bronk, Eisenbeiser, Reiner, Jones

The Chair called the meeting to order at 4:48 p.m.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

December 1, 2016

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

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

III. PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS-

IV. REPORTS

1. Chairperson – Ask business how things in the community, 5 out of 5 starts. Each month meeting with Paige to set agenda and discuss what is going on. Reached out to Mystic Chamber for liaison, Peggy Chambers and Preka will meet. Congratulations to staff for ADZ award
2. Staff– Staff report was previously submitted by email for review
Nault Property in Norwich, grant from town Norwich economic development from state, do we ask for money for that. Bronk stated that we haven't asked for money but Mystic Oral school has brownfield money attached
Bronk will pursue it further
3. Liaisons:
Groton Business Association – Preka reviewed report that was submitted by Valente via email GBA sent letter in support of zoning
Downtown Mystic Merchants –Preka reviewed report that was submitted by Valente, DMMA sent letter in support of zoning
RTM – nothing to report
Town Council – Status with town manger, recruiter, 4 applicatnts as of yesterday, they are on par to fill position by June. There will be process

Motion to move
Melin, Dowling

Business Outreach- Had a meeting 3/1, purpose of the meeting was to finalize the categorization of the business that we have in town. Eisenbeiser came up with 11 categories 1502 businesses that we have in town. Update the outreach report. Looking at how to select the visits

Complex mix, Bronk reviewed Market Analysis, there were a number of approaches. Cote said that they decided to have each person visit a business in each category. Groups that are less than 2% and groups that are 20% Understanding the demographics of the town. Revised the outreach form Dowling asked if there was somewhere for referral, it is on the form under follow up.

Cote stated this was a place to start. Cote said that logistically stated that each person pick a category

Melin, get going and move in a more deliberate direction, deficit in certain fields, areas we have gaps. Office supplies – looking at what makes it better for consumers to live here in Groton. Look at a sub group, finance and real estate, reach out to real estate ask questions why people aren't choosing to live here or Cote said allowing the commission to pick based on category

Dowling selected recreation/tourism

Legnos would like to go to any business in the WRPD zone

Preka doesn't want to start going on the wrong path for the outreach, we have to start.

Bronk said there is no real wrong path, the wrong path is not doing anything. Speaking to a single owner barber shop could bring valuable info. We do want some sort of strategy but getting out there is best.

Nault stated that the business list is crucial,

Preka is going to pick a professional services

Young agricultral

Melin, finance and real estate

Dowling (6:10)

Legnos – along 184 will look at the list

Mathanool –

Bronk stated it isn't just expansion, redevelopment

Hatcher isn't going to participate in this activity at this time, hatcher thinks that the priority focus should be on the watershed issue as they go forward, businesses that are most impacted so that they may be a force at the may meeting

Mathanool very little time to spare

Preka said that just because they are picking a topic tonight doesn't mean they are leaving the WRPD issue behind.

Bronk said the subcommittee

Melin, what are we using as a safety to ensure the same business isn't visited, send email to Bronk

Bronk stated that the ultimate goal is when we meet businesses will be assigned.

Brooks – Infastructure projects, investments in GU infastruction all of Groton safe high quality drinking water/power 99.97%, proposal for 54 million proposal rebuild redone plus addition, water tank will go away, there will be 2 new water tanks, looking for grant money, low interest state loan (primary

means) water rates. Mathanol asked if there is a reason that this needs to happen, Brooks said the plant 1940, sooner rather than later, putting it off will only make it more expensive.

Combine resources with Norwich, apply for the grant, first come first serve. This would support the whole community, for electric distribution

What is the economic value if it is installed, 2 fold if we get the grant there will be an enhanced distribution everyday, certain strips would be able to be brought back in the event of a hurricane/ catastrophic event. Young stated that If businesses are along that route it makes the business can still operate, make business more valuable

RT1 RT12 and eastern point road

Existing generation, leverage the assets that they have

Mathanol asked if they have solar, as a resident you can have it but

Local schools on next gen science project

Town of Groton- changing out street lights, pretty close to done

GU will be working to have the same light/lumens to have an easy transition so it looks the same wherever you go.

V. OLD BUSINESS

1. General EDC Discussion – WRPD working on the last year, Jones handed out maps to EDC

Showed what the entire watershed is feeds Groton utilities, ledyard doesn't have WRPD has been watching Groton and asked to use as a model, showed the grey area that is 2

Groton Utilities Haley brook, regulations protest current and future water supplies

Most of watershed is zoned residential 49%

42% of all commercial land in town is inside, majority is outside

Industrial, majority outside

Wetlands and

Reservoir is vitally important to the town and the region. ZC imposed additional restriction, potential contaminations

Groton Utilities have been amended a number of times, subject to interpretations goal is to make it easy to read

Auto uses, repair, dealers, gas stations, engine repair, number of uses prohibited

Design standards 20% of the lot has to be standard

50% buffer, source of confusion, where do you measure from? Stormwater discharge

Currently only expand 50% of prohibited use (A LOT of Confusing language from current regulations)

Clear and make sense

Same purpose, hired consultant, Horsely Whitten, poor handling of hazardous materials and storm water

Encourage redevelopment, make it easier

New regs, definitions, clear conditions, standards, expectations for storm and managing of haz materials, appendix

Longer section because so much info is being added

Number of uses that are prohibited that will be allowed, standards for stormwater and hazardous materials but it will be allowed

Will this interfere in growth Preka, Reiner Cardinal Honda can't expand but they will with the new regs.

Will there be a portion of the regs that will state

50 ft non disturbance area to 100 ft non disturbance

Non disturbance area will be defined, criteria that you can modify if you can demonstrate to the commission there are better

Now it is a 50ft

Smaller land owners with barber

Melin what is the logic to it

Jones stated

Reiner staff are the there are a number of other precautions that will be put into the place,

Cote stated that it is amazing how 1 or 2 people can launch a major change but there wasn't visible quantitative testing. Do we have a water quality problem now. Jones said GU concerns of salt and increased sediment

If there is a problem then what are the number, GU will likely say

Cote states we have a boundry that appears to be working. Back handed eminent domain, limit the ability

Legnos stated that his business has never polluted anything, it can be done properly, biggest risk is all residential development that isn't regulated,

Cote said there isn't anyone that can make changes has to go through the commission

Look at specific properties there is no way 50 ft will be adequate.

Very prescriptive now, uses will leave that are now prohibited and it will be redeveloped. Any redevelopment will have to meet new standards.

Cote, steeper driving force to GOSHA, 117/184 strongly

Property owners need to be informed

Jones said that brining people in that will be impacted like Legnos

Cote, how do we do that

Reiner said that brining

May 3rd public hearing

Preka- bigger and bigger and bigger, if they can't expand they will have to move. What other businesses would go in there. Cancer is the highest in New London County. Friendly regulations the better, Legnos stated that the water has been safe, there are other ways air pollution cancer

People will do it, sensible development and sensible regulations

Reiner said that business owners can come in and staff will talk to them about what

Nault asked about residential restrictions, there aren't any and they cant enforce it (jones)

Protocol that they should be following to encourage- create a list of what properties, new priority for business outreach. Jones said encourage the business to come talk to them

Public awareness, Bronk stated that since it is a text amendment not a map amendment, no notification is required. Few days to pull together

Young asked once we get the list what will we do, Direct contact to advise businesses of potential change and they could be impacted.

Had out at GBA, Young would need something as a talking point. Young wanted to understand consultants felt that the 50 ft, with the precautions

Groton is the only town in CT that has an overlay protection for

Reiner stated that not a lot of people across the country don't have any

Legnos asked if it was appropriate to have a stance,
Melin recognize a need to protect the water and giving what we understand
Mathanool, all the limitations. Jones said that
Formal motion from the committee
Staff will work with Bronk to draft a letter
Reiner diving into the rest of the regulatory rewrite, Staff will keep edc
apprised of things
Preka Are there anything about electronic signage, Reiner they haven't gotten
there yet

2. Liaisons for groups, commissioners have already volunteered for meetings,
verbiage was given as suggestion as to what to say.
Write a bullet report and send Post email for inclusion in the report. Young
stated that all vac is closing, Paul's tv closed
Young said we do have a new restaurant operator at the airport cafe 511, same
fare as the mystic spot, large catering business; they were looking for a bigger
kitchen
Are there incentives for people to buy an established business. Preka stated that
most business don't list businesses for sale. Bronk said there are incentives for
economic development, it is normal for some businesses to fail, we aren't
growing if we aren't gaining some and losing others. If they want to start a
business that will add jobs and add to the tax base but not to give to something
that will have no change

Hatcher announced 100 women of color award, service to the community.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

1. Facebook – table
- 2.

V. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn at 6:42pm was made by Legnos, seconded by Cote; so voted
unanimously.

Catherine Young, Vice Chair/Secretary
Economic Development Commission

Prepared by Lauren Post
Office Assistant II