

MINUTES
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
MARCH 18, 2010
TOWN HALL ANNEX
12:15 P.M. - COMMUNITY ROOM 3

I. ROLL CALL

Present: Peter Pappas, Lian Obrey and George Mathanool
Staff: Barbara Strother

It was noted that Susan Dowling and Bruce Fafard were not able to attend today's meeting. In Susan Dowling's absence, Lian Obrey will act as Secretary.

II. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF JANUARY 21, 2010

MOTION: To approve the January 21, 2010 minutes as written.

Motion made by Pappas, seconded by Mathanool and so voted unanimously.

III. ITEMS OF BUSINESS

1. Update on Zoning Commission Referral - Zoning Regulation Proposed Sign Amendments, (Eastern Connecticut Association of Realtors, Applicant)

Staff reported that the Zoning Commission closed the Public Hearing on this item at the February 3rd meeting, and then took action to add new text to the existing section 7.3.-6A Temporary Event Signs, and the Table of Permitted Uses.

Copies of these changes are available to Commission members who want to review the new text.

2. Discussion of Potential Upcoming Sites to Visit and Speakers (follow-up from Strategic Planning Session)

Staff provided an overview of the major work items she will be working on during the coming year, including the Mystic Streetscape/Utility Relocation project, and noted that during the next few months the budget process will be critically important.

Discussion followed on other items for the Commission to get involved in. Staff recommended that the Commission review the notes/minutes from the Strategic Planning Session that was held in January to assist with identification of future projects and speakers.

Staff is trying to set up a tour of the UCONN incubator space, and a listing of the companies in the incubator was distributed. Chairman Pappas noted that he would like to be involved in the CEDS project support to get the Avery Point TIP included in the CEDS update. Staff will forward information on the Avery Point project and CEDS process to Chairman Pappas.

Staff provided a brief update on Economic Development projects in the Capital Improvement Program and will provide more detailed information at the next meeting.

3. Staff/Commission Member Reports

Staff distributed an invitation the April 15th GBA Business Update Breakfast, an invitation to the March 27th ribbon cutting at the Senior Center, the Community Builders Institute schedule, and notice of an Ethics Training session on April 29th.

Lian Obrey noted concerns about Electric Boat's future office space needs and Groton options. She believes they were considering some options on-site in one of the underutilized parking areas. Lian will follow up with City Planner Barbara Goodrich regarding the status of any on-site plans.

4. Other

A. Army Corps of Engineers Permit Comment Period – Groton-New London Airport Project

Staff noted that a public notice has been received from the US Army Corps of Engineers regarding an application for a permit by the Connecticut Department of Transportation for activity in a wetlands area which is being requested to facilitate construction of runway safety areas (RSAs) for Runway 5 and Runway 23 at Groton-New London Airport. The Commission will need a motion to add this item to the agenda:

MOTION: To add Army Corps of Engineers Permit Groton-New London Airport Project to the EDC March 18, 2010 agenda.

Motion made by Pappas, seconded by Mathanool and so voted unanimously.

Staff noted that this is a project which Airport Manager Catherine Young provided an overview of for the Commission several months ago. Following discussion, the Commission requested the following comments be forwarded regarding this project:

MOTION: A letter be provided to the US Army Corps of Engineers in support of this project by the Economic Development Commission noting the following:

The Groton Economic Development Commission and the Town's Economic Development Strategic Plan identify the Groton-New London Airport as a critical asset to our community as it serves the corporate passenger travel needs of major local corporations such as Electric Boat and Pfizer, as well as the Naval Submarine Base and the casinos located in Southeastern Connecticut. The airport also supports a small cluster of aviation-related businesses. Keeping the Airport infrastructure up to date is crucial to assuring its future.

Given the extensive review that this application will receive from various agencies, the Economic Development Commission believes that this will assure that the environmental issues associated with this activity will be adequately addressed as part of this process, and the Commission further supports the expeditious completion of this project.

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

IV. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 1:10 p.m.

Lian Obrey, Acting Secretary
Economic Development Commission

Prepared by Barbara Strother
Economic Development Specialist