



Town of Groton, Connecticut

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Town Manager
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Meeting Minutes

Town Council

Mayor Bruce Flax, Councilors Dean G. Antipas, Diane Barber, Joe de la Cruz, Greg Grim, Karen F. Morton, Bonnie Nault, Deb Peruzzotti, and Harry A. Watson

Tuesday, May 17, 2016

7:30 PM

Town Hall Annex - Community Room 1

REGULAR MEETING

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. by Mayor Flax.

I. ROLL CALL

Members Present: Mayor Flax, Councilor Antipas, Councilor de la Cruz, Councilor Grim, Councilor Morton, Councilor Nault, Councilor Peruzzotti and Councilor Watson
Members Absent: Councilor Barber

Also present were Town Manager Mark Oefinger, Town Clerk Betsy Moukawsher, and Office Assistant II Nathan Caron.

II. SALUTE TO THE FLAG

The Salute to the Flag was led by Mick O'Beirne.

III. RECOGNITION, AWARDS & MEMORIALS

None.

Recess for Public Hearing on:

Mayor Flax called a recess for the Public Hearing at 7:31 p.m.

2016-0088 Neighborhood Assistance Act Program Application (2016)

Town Clerk Betsy Moukawsher read the call for the Public Hearing that was advertised in the New London Day on May 12, 2016.

Tricia Cunningham, 70 Miller Road, North Stonington, representative for the Odd Fellows Home of Connecticut, thanked the Town Council for its support for last year's Neighborhood Assistance Act. She stated that this year's grant would be used for energy-efficiency projects.

Betty Anne Reiter, 32 West Mystic Ave., representative of the Groton Public Library, stated that this year's Neighborhood Assistance Act money would be spent on energy-efficiency projects.

Town Manager Mark Oefinger announced that the City of Groton would like to submit an application for the Neighborhood Assistance Act Program. He noted that there would need to be another Public Hearing for the City of Groton's application.

Mayor Flax closed the Public Hearing at 7:35 p.m.

IV. RECEIPT OF CITIZENS' PETITIONS, COMMENTS AND CONCERNS

Brian Shinvell, 290 High Street, stated that he is concerned that sufficient research has not been completed for the proposed signage project regarding Exit 89 Allyn Street. He noted that an increase in traffic on Allyn Street would require additional traffic lights. He requested that a traffic study be completed before there are changes to the signage at Exit 89 on Interstate 95 (I-95).

Rosanne Kotowski, 24 Ann Avenue, reviewed Mystic tourist attractions. She noted the traffic issues related to tourism in downtown Mystic. She read comments that appeared in the New

London Day article regarding possible changes to signage at Exit 89 on I-95. She stated that she is against the proposal. She concluded her statements by urging the Town Council to vote against the related affordable developer's request for Town tax abatements.

Niel Spillane, 147 High Street, reviewed historical information regarding the Allyn Street connector. He noted that there was opposition to the Allyn Street connector when it was originally proposed.

David Scott, 191 Pequot Avenue, stated that he is opposed to changing the signage at Exit 89 on I-95. He noted that he found it incredulous that the needs of a few downtown business owners would be placed above the needs of residents of the Allyn Street area. He stated that he does not see a need to add more people to downtown Mystic.

Sandie Scott, 191 Pequot Avenue, stated that she is afraid traffic will be worse on Allyn Street if the signs at Exit 89 are changed. She noted that traffic makes the Allyn Street area congested.

Mick O'Beirne, 32 New London Road, stated that traffic is a daily problem for him and his neighbors. He questioned how more cars on downtown streets contributes to economic development. He noted that emergency services personnel have not been included in the discussion to change the signage at Exit 89. He stated that there is a lack of parking in downtown Mystic, and he reviewed the economic efforts between the towns of Groton and Stonington. He concluded his remarks by urging the Town Council to leave the signs on I-95 alone.

Kathleen P. O'Beirne, 32 New London Road, stated that Mystic is a vibrant community. She noted that she chose to live near a living historic village. She stated that there is a lack of tourist parking in downtown Mystic. She noted that she hopes the Town Council would have the courage to make the correct decision and uphold the trust and quality of life in and around downtown Mystic.

David Brown, 358 River Road, representative of the Mystic Chamber of Commerce, read a letter on behalf of the Chamber of Commerce. He noted that signage at Exit 89 on I-95 should highlight historic downtown Mystic, and the current signage at Exit 90 highlighting the Seaport and Aquarium should remain.

David Evans, 220 High Street, urged the Town Council to hold off on its decision until it can obtain an impact statement addressing how the proposed changes would affect residents and businesses. He noted that there are often traffic issues in downtown Mystic.

Charles Stevens, 12 Stony Hill Drive, stated that he has lived at Exit 89 for approximately twenty-five years. He questioned why the State of Connecticut would spend approximately nine million dollars on this project in the midst of a budget deficit year. He noted that the current signage on I-95 at Exit 89 represents approximately forty years of trust between the Town of Groton and the residents of the Allyn Street Exit 89 area. He noted that Allyn Street was not intended to handle commercial traffic.

David Cote, 78 Colony Road, stated that he is a business owner and a member of the Economic Development Commission, and he supports the Resolution that is before the Town Council.

Honorable Cathy Cook, 43 Pequot Avenue, noted that her family has historical ties to Mystic. She stated that the Town Council should listen to the people that appear before it to speak. She noted that parking in downtown Mystic is an issue and needs to be addressed. She asked if the Traffic Commission of the State of Connecticut had been approached regarding changing the signage at Exit 89 because it may have valuable insight into the project. She concluded her statements by noting that people are often confused between historic Mystic and the tourist attractions at Exit

90.

Patrick White, 94 Sandy Hollow Road, noted that he supports the downtown businesses, but he does not support changing the signage at Exit 89. He noted that he is a life-long resident of Groton, and he urges the Town Council to uphold the Resolution that was adopted in 1989.

Courtney Reardon, 617 Westchester Road, Colchester, noted that she operates a Haunted Tours business in downtown Mystic. She stated that many tourists do not know that historic downtown Mystic exists because they get lost in the Aquarium/Seaport area. She noted that residents are passionate about the community, and she hopes to share historic downtown Mystic with tourists.

Peter Stuart, 26 New London Road, stated that construction for the Street Scape has impacted traffic on New London Road and West Main Street. He noted that the Mystic Bridge causes traffic problems. He stated that Allyn Street is a two-lane road, and there is a lack of police presence around Library Street to monitor an illegal left-hand turn. He noted that the First Selectman in Stonington is against re-routing traffic on to Allyn Street. He concluded his statements by urging the Town Council to not rescind the Resolution.

Linda Roderick, 289 Sandy Hollow Road, noted that there are frequent accidents at the end of the Exit 89 ramp. She stated that she has trouble exiting Sandy Hollow Road because of traffic, and something must be done to address the traffic on Allyn Street.

Marlene Estabrooks, 3 Allyn Street, stated that there would be an increase in traffic on Allyn Street if the signage at Exit 89 changes. She emphasized that historically the First Selectmen in Stonington have been opposed to changes to the Allyn Street signs. She stated that the Town of Groton protects its residents with appropriate traffic signs. She noted that there is a lot of out-of-town traffic that uses Exit 89.

Mark Schere, 11 Allyn Street, stated that he is a proud Mystic resident. He noted that parking issues, aesthetic concerns, and safety should be addressed in downtown Mystic if the signage at Exit 89 changes. He stated that downtown Mystic businesses may need to stay open later if traffic increases. He concluded his statements by noting that the Mystic Aquarium and Seaport area have thousands of more parking spaces than downtown Mystic, and a trolley may be used to shuttle people from one area to another.

Les Laumeier, 108 Ledgeland Drive, stated that he supports the comments of previous speakers.

Westerly A. Donohue, 39 Williams Avenue, stated that there are different economic factors for the Groton and Stonington sides of Mystic. She noted that she does not support something because it has always been done a certain way. She stated that residents on the Stonington side of Mystic are concerned about an increase in air pollution as it relates to an increase in traffic. She noted that an environmental justice study should be completed before changes are made to signs at Exit 89. She concluded her statements by noting that she was submitting a petition urging the Town Council to have signage changed for downtown Mystic at Exit 89.

Susan Phillips, 25 Allyn Street, stated that she does not support changing the signage at Exit 89 because an increase in traffic would be dangerous.

Al Valente, 60 Haley Road, stated that he loves Mystic and that he represents businesses in Groton. After reviewing historical information relating to road construction, he noted that roads should be open to all. He stated that promoting economic development for the Town of Groton could grow the Grand List of the Town. He noted that people often use GPS in lieu of signage, and he was in favor of changing the signage at Exit 89.

Todd Brady, 17 Water Street, stated that residents are concerned about traffic, and business owners would like more people visiting their shops. He noted that sixty percent of Connecticut tourist inquiries include Mystic. He stated that there is a need to grow the Grand List and many business owners are fighting to stay in business. He stated that the current signage on I-95 funnels traffic to Stonington, and he encourages the Town Council to vote yes.

Ron Minarik, 375 Allyn Street, stated that he respects opinions on both sides of the issue. He noted that he is against the repeal of the current Resolution. He stated that traffic on Allyn Street is often difficult to deal with. He reviewed traffic patterns around the Exit 89 Allyn Street area.

Ted Tofil, 375 Allyn Street, noted that his wife was in an accident in the Sandy Hollow Road/Exit 89 area. He noted that traffic is bad and more cars exiting I-95 at Exit 89 would be dangerous. He stated that cars traveling on Allyn Street often exceed the speed limits. He stated that he was against changing the signage at Exit 89.

Matt Fallon, 5 Allyn Street, noted that the intersection of Allyn Street and Library Street is dangerous. He stated that he and his family have nearly been hit while in a crosswalk on Allyn Street. He noted that he is concerned about safety if more traffic is added to the area.

Jack Komorowski, 18 Allyn Street, stated that he has lived around Exit 89 before the connector was created. He noted that the speed of traffic on Allyn Street is a concern, and adding traffic to the area would not be good. He stated that walking to downtown Mystic is the best way to get there because of traffic and a lack of parking. He concluded his statements by noting that he supports downtown businesses.

Carol Reinhart, 95 Capstan Avenue, stated that there is a lot of traffic around Sandy Hollow Road. She noted that additional street lights would not help the area if more traffic was added to the area. She stated that traffic issues would become worse if more traffic was added to the Allyn Street exit. She stated that changing the infrastructure of the roads does not support changing the signage at Exit 89 on I-95.

Natalie Billing, 15 Ashby Street, stated that people who live on the Groton side of Mystic would be impacted by the increase in traffic. She noted that she sees value in promoting economic development in the Town of Groton. She stated that the Mystic Bridge causes over a 30-minute traffic delay when it opens during tourism season. She emphasized that economic development and quality of life are important, and Exit 89 is a residential area and not intended for commercial traffic, unlike Exit 90.

Phil Rogers, 131 Payer Lane, stated that changing the signage at Exit 89 is short-sighted without analyzing the changes in traffic that would result from such changes. He noted that the Sandy Hollow/Allyn Street area would be negatively impacted by an increase in traffic. He stated that he is against changing the signage at Exit 89, and he wondered if rescinding this Resolution would lead to additional measures that would need to be voted on by the Town Council.

Robert Bruno, 33 Stony Hill Drive, noted that he has seen an increase in traffic on the surrounding streets over the approximately 34 years that he has lived on Stony Hill Drive. He noted that an increase in traffic on Allyn Street would lead to significant safety issues.

Susan Dowling, 22 Leeward Lane, noted that she is a member of the Economic Development Commission. She stated that she has lived on busy roads, and she appreciates that people enjoy the community. She stated that she supports rescinding the Resolution, and she noted that she supports a thriving, growing community.

Marie Cox, 11 Ashby Street, stated that she does not support changing the signage at Exit 89. She

noted that she loves downtown Mystic, and adding traffic to the area would be a safety concern.

Chris Cox, 11 Ashby Street, stated that he is concerned about an increase in traffic and does not support changing the signage. He noted that the unique experience of visiting or living in/around historic downtown Mystic does not need to change.

Tom Blum, 92 Library Street, stated that parking in downtown Mystic includes safety issues. He noted that downtown Mystic is charming and enjoyable, and there is a congestion issue when there is an event in downtown Mystic. He noted that signage changes, which may result in changes in downtown Mystic, would not be in everyone's best interests.

Ken Peters, 1170 River Road, stated that he is against the proposal. He noted that business in downtown Mystic continues to grow. He stated that the problem with economic development is not the businesses in downtown Mystic. He noted that the word Mystic'on a sign at Exit 89 may attract people who intend to travel to Mystic Seaport and/or Aquarium. He concluded his statements by stating that an increase in traffic on residential streets would not be supported by the current infrastructure.

Rich Greider, 7 Whitehall Lane, noted that his wife drafted an e-mail to the Town Council. He stated that his wife and daughter were attacked on Allyn Street, and it took three police officers to restrain the attacker. He stated that he supports downtown businesses, but the hours they are open are limited. He noted that increasing the traffic on Allyn Street would be a safety issue, and his wife and daughter are still affected by the attack they endured.

Daniel Sims, 30 Burrows Street, stated that the problem in downtown Mystic is a lack of parking and too many cars. He stated that it may be possible to use a shuttle system to take tourists from Mystic Aquarium and the Seaport and to transport them to downtown Mystic. He noted that cars travel too quickly on Allyn Street and break the speed limit. He urged the Town Council to support rebuilding the residential section of Allyn Street to slow cars and to widen the sidewalk.

V. RESPONSES TO CITIZENS' PETITIONS, COMMENTS AND CONCERNS

Councilor Grim thanked everyone for attending the meeting. He noted that he will take the speakers' comments into consideration when he makes his decision.

Councilor Antipas thanked everyone for attending the meeting and speaking. He noted that he was impressed by the amount of people who attended the meeting.

Councilor Morton thanked everyone for attending the meeting. She noted that she attended the meeting thinking that she knew how she was going to vote. She stated that she was stunned by the passion of the speakers. She noted that she was going to take everything that had been said to heart, and there is a lot to think about.

Councilor de la Cruz stated that he had an opinion on the issue and he needed to hear both sides. He noted that he has thought about traffic on Allyn Street. He stated that a weekend trolley may help with the parking situation in downtown Mystic.

Councilor Nault stated that she is the liaison on the Economic Development Commission. She noted that she supports changing the signage at Allyn Street. She stated that the deadline for this decision was unexpected. She noted that there could have been something done to create more public awareness on the topic for citizens in the local area. She noted that if signs are changed, then the speed limit should be changed along with other safety measures on Allyn Street. She stated that all of the issues raised by citizens at the meeting are true.

Councilor Watson noted that the attendance at this Town Council meeting was the most he had ever seen. He noted that if he had been on the Town Council when this issue was raised in the

past, he would have voted against changing the signage at Exit 89. He stated that maintaining integrity and public trust is important.

Mayor Flax thanked everyone for attending. He noted that there was a perception that this was a hidden agenda item, but it was posted and put on the Government Community Groton Facebook page. He noted that this item was time-sensitive. He stated that he asked Jonathan Reiner and Town Manager Oefinger questions about the project. He stated that the Committee of the Whole discussed the topic, and opinions can change when the item goes before the Town Council.

Jonathan Reiner, Director of Development and Planning, stated that this project is a part of a large Department of Transportation project that includes approximately twenty-miles of highway roads from the Gold Star Bridge to the Rhode Island border, including I-95 and State Routes 184 and 349. This nine-million dollar project is being paid for from State Transportation funds and includes about 234 signs. The project's goal is to upgrade signage along the twenty-mile route to conform to new Federal signage standards. He noted that the State Department of Transportation required comments be submitted by May 20, 2016. He stated that the Groton Town Council was involved because of the 1989 Resolution, and the State is asking if the word Mystic should appear on the Exit 89 signs. He noted that the signs that direct traffic towards the Seaport and the Aquarium will remain. The following Connecticut Department of Transportation responses to questions posed by Mr. Reiner were included in his comments: the project is proceeding with the understanding that the Resolution restrictions remain; there is additional time to potentially revise, or rescind, the Resolution; the State should receive a final decision from the Town prior to the start of construction around April 1, 2017; in this case, Allyn Street is being considered an exception due to the existing Town Resolution; Federal regulations are working to eliminate road names from highway attraction signs; CT Department of Transportation is willing to attend a public informational meeting; a traffic light warrant study of the Allyn Street area is an open, current project; and the Town Manager could send a request to Connecticut DOT for crosswalks and a reduction in the speed limit on Allyn Street at any time.

In response to Councilor de la Cruz's question, Jonathan Reiner stated that Connecticut DOT needs a final decision by the start of construction which, is slated for April, 2017. He noted that there are notorious traffic issues along I-95 that affect the surrounding communities.

In response to Councilor Nault's question, Jonathan Reiner stated that a request was made to the Department of Transportation and that led to the Mystic Museum of Art sign on I-95.

VI. CONSENT CALENDAR

a. Approval of Minutes

2016-0138 Approval of Minutes (Town Council)

RESOLUTION ACCEPTING TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES

RESOLVED, that the minutes of the Town Council meeting of May 3, 2016 are hereby accepted and approved.

In response to Mayor Flax's question, Town Clerk Betsy Moukawsher stated that a section of the minutes were revised for clarity.

A motion was made by Councilor Antipas, seconded by Councilor Watson, to amend approving the Consent Calendar without the minutes from the May 3, 2016 Town Council meeting. Mayor Flax stated the amendment carried unanimously.

b. Deletions from the Town Council Referral List

2016-0111 Historic Documents Preservation Grant (2017)

This Matter was Deleted from Referral List - No further action on the Consent Calendar.

2016-0114 Port Security Grant

- This Matter was Deleted from Referral List - Action to be taken on the Consent Calendar.
- 2016-0116 Ledge Light Health District Community Health Assessment
- This Matter was Deleted from Referral List - No further action on the Consent Calendar.
- 2016-0122 Vergennes Court - Update
- This Matter was Deleted from Referral List - No further action on the Consent Calendar.
- 2016-0123 Appointment to Noank School Public Gardens Task Force
- This Matter was Deleted from Referral List - Action to be taken on the Consent Calendar.
- 2016-0124 Reappointment of Sarah Moriarty to Historic District Commission
- 2016-0125 Reappointment of Stephen Hudecek to Zoning Commission
- 2016-0126 Reappointment of Barbara Williams to Inland Wetlands Agency
- 2016-0127 Reappointment of Christine Grady to Zoning Board of Appeals
- 2016-0128 Appointment of Douglas Smith as a Regular Member of the Zoning Commission
- 2016-0129 Appointment of James Furlong to the Zoning Commission
- 2016-0130 Reappointment of Robin Moulding to Retirement Board
- This Matter was Deleted from Referral List - Action to be taken on the Consent Calendar.
- 2016-0131 Reappointment of John Parfitt, Jr. to Board of Assessment Appeals
- This Matter was Deleted from Referral List - Action to be taken on the Consent Calendar.
- 2016-0132 Reappointment of Jackie Massett to Ledge Light Health District Board of Directors
- This Matter was Deleted from Referral List - Action to be taken on the Consent Calendar.
- 2016-0133 Reappointment of Denis O'Brien to Retirement Board
- This Matter was Deleted from Referral List - Action to be taken on the Consent Calendar.
- 2016-0134 State Department of Transportation I-95 Signage Initiative
- This Matter was Deleted from Referral List - Action to be taken on the Consent Calendar.
- 2016-0135 Resolution Appointing Members of the Charter Revision Commission
- This Matter was Deleted from Referral List - Action to be taken on the Consent Calendar.
- 2016-0136 Resolution Setting the Organizational Meeting Date for the Charter Revision Commission
- This Matter was Deleted from Referral List - Action to be taken on the Consent Calendar.
- 2016-0137 FYE 2017 Contingency Transfer for Support of the Charter Revision Commission
- This Matter was Deleted from Referral List - Action to be taken on the Consent Calendar.

Passed The Consent Calendar

A motion was made by Councilor Peruzzotti, seconded by Councilor de la Cruz, to adopt the Consent Calendar, including all the preceding items marked as having been adopted on the Consent Calendar.

The motion carried unanimously

VII. COMMUNICATIONS & REPORTS (Other than Committee Reports)

a. Town Councilors

Councilor de la Cruz stated that there will be a Community Speaks Out and a joint Board of Education and Town Council Committee of the Whole meeting on Wednesday, May 18, 2016.

Nault stated that she would submit her communications for record.

Councilor Watson stated that he attended the BRAC panel discussion at Avery point on May 4, 2016. He submitted communications for the record that included that he attended the Town Council/City Council/RTM/Board of Education Liaison meeting on May 4, 2016 and a retirement

event for Steve Jones on May 5, 2016 at Avery Point.

Councilor Morton stated that she received the e-mails that the Town Councilors received. She noted that she forwarded the e-mails to the Town Clerk for the permanent record.

Mayor Flax stated that he attended the Hyde Park Dam Removal and a Southeastern Connecticut Council of Governments meeting.

b. Clerk of the Representative Town Meeting

Town Clerk Betsy Moukawsher stated that the budget sessions for the RTM continue and must be completed no later than midnight on Wednesday, May 25, 2016.

c. Clerk of the Council

Town Clerk Betsy Moukawsher stated that she received citizens' communications for tonight's meeting, and she stated that there is a joint Town Council Committee of the Whole and Groton Board of Education meeting on Wednesday, May 18, 2016.

d. Town Manager

Town Manager Oefinger stated that the third Connecticut Submarine Lecture will be held on Wednesday, May 18, 2016 at 7:00 p.m. at the Academic Building on the Avery Point campus. He noted that he hopes the RTM will complete its budget review by Thursday, May 19, 2016, and if it completes its deliberations, there will be three resolutions determining the tax rates on next week's Committee of the Whole agenda. He noted that Jonathan Reiner will review the draft 2016 Plan of Conservation and Development with the Town Council Committee of the Whole. He re-stated that in addition to the two Neighborhood Assistance Act applications from tonight's public hearing, a third application is anticipated.

VIII. COMMITTEE REPORTS

a. Community Relations -

No meeting, no report.

b. Finance -

No meeting, no report.

c. Personnel & Appointments - Chairman Watson

Chairman Watson stated that the Personnel and Appointments Committee met on May 3, 2016 and discussed the appointments on tonight's agenda. He noted that the balances of the Land Use Commissions need to be discussed, and there will be no action on the Land Use Commissions this evening.

d. Rules -

No meeting, no report.

e. Public Safety -

No meeting, no report.

f. Committee of the Whole - Mayor Flax

Mayor Flax announced that the Committee of the Whole met and discussed the items on tonight's agenda.

IX. NEW BUSINESS

2016-0111 Historic Documents Preservation Grant (2017)

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE TOWN MANAGER TO EXECUTE AND DELIVER A CONTRACT FOR AN HISTORIC DOCUMENTS PRESERVATION GRANT

WHEREAS, the Town of Groton will benefit by the continuance of the Historic Documents Preservation Program which will be enabled and enhanced by grant funding, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that Mark R. Oefinger, Town Manager of the Town of Groton, is empowered to execute and deliver in the name and on behalf of this municipality a contract with the Connecticut State Library for an Historic Documents Preservation Grant.

A motion was made by Councilor Antipas, seconded by Councilor Watson, that this matter be Adopted.

The motion carried unanimously

2016-0114

Port Security Grant

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING APPLICATION FOR A PORT SECURITY GRANT FOR MARINE PATROL VESSEL MAINTENANCE

WHEREAS, the Port Security Grant Program (PSGP) makes grant funding available to law enforcement agencies to support enforcement/homeland security operations, and

WHEREAS, a grant would be used to fund the proper maintenance of the Group II, Port of New London Marine Group patrol vessels and provide ongoing training through the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA), which is a FEMA approved training organization, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Town Manager or his designated agent may apply for the Port Security Grant of \$25,000 for maintenance of the Group II, Port of New London Marine Group patrol vessels and training through NASBLA.

A motion was made by Councilor Morton, seconded by Councilor Nault, that this matter be Adopted.

The motion carried unanimously

2016-0123

Appointment to Noank School Public Gardens Task Force

APPOINTMENT OF HEATHER SOMERS TO NOANK SCHOOL PUBLIC GARDENS TASK FORCE

RESOLVED, that Heather Somers, 67 Ramsdell Street, is hereby appointed to the Noank School Public Gardens Task Force.

A motion was made by Councilor Watson, seconded by Councilor Peruzzotti, that this matter be Adopted.

The motion carried unanimously

2016-0124

Reappointment of Sarah Moriarty to Historic District Commission

RESOLUTION REAPPOINTING SARAH MORIARTY TO THE HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

RESOLVED, that Sarah D. Moriarty, 30 Fishers View Drive, is hereby reappointed to the Historic District Commission for a term ending 12/31/19.

Not acted upon

2016-0125

Reappointment of Stephen Hudecek to Zoning Commission

RESOLUTION REAPPOINTING STEPHEN HUDECEK TO THE ZONING COMMISSION

RESOLVED, that Stephen Hudecek, 33 Leeward Lane, is hereby reappointed to the Zoning Commission for a term expiring 12/31/20.

Not acted upon

2016-0126

Reappointment of Barbara Williams to Inland Wetlands Agency

RESOLUTION REAPPOINTING BARBARA WILLIAMS TO THE INLAND WETLANDS AGENCY

RESOLVED, that Barbara Williams, 129 Elm Street, is hereby reappointed to the Inland Wetlands

Agency for a term expiring 12/31/17.

Not acted upon

2016-0127 Reappointment of Christine Grady to Zoning Board of Appeals

RESOLUTION REAPPOINTING CHRISTINE GRADY TO THE ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

RESOLVED, that Christine Grady, 17 Palmers Cove Drive, is hereby reappointed to the Zoning Board of Appeals for a term expiring 12/31/2020.

Not acted upon

2016-0128 Appointment of Douglas Smith as a Regular Member of the Zoning Commission

RESOLUTION APPOINTING DOUGLAS SMITH AS A REGULAR MEMBER (FROM AN ALTERNATE MEMBER) TO THE ZONING COMMISSION

RESOLVED, that Douglas A. Smith, 37 Island Circle South, is hereby appointed as a regular member (from an alternate member) to the Zoning Commission for a term ending 12/31/18.

Not acted upon

2016-0129 Appointment of James Furlong to the Zoning Commission

RESOLUTION APPOINTING JAMES FURLONG AS AN ALTERNATE MEMBER OF THE ZONING COMMISSION

RESOLVED, that James C. Furlong, 57 Fishtown Lane, Mystic is hereby appointed as an alternate member to the Zoning Commission for a term ending 9/30/16.

Not acted upon

2016-0130 Reappointment of Robin Moulding to Retirement Board

RESOLUTION REAPPOINTING ROBIN MOULDING TO THE RETIREMENT BOARD

RESOLVED, that the Town Council hereby reappoints Robin Moulding, 107 Haley Road, Mystic as a participant member to the Retirement Board for a term expiring 12/31/18.

A motion was made by Councilor Watson, seconded by Councilor Peruzzotti, that this matter be Adopted.

The motion carried unanimously

2016-0131 Reappointment of John Parfitt, Jr. to Board of Assessment Appeals

RESOLUTION REAPPOINTING JOHN PARFITT, JR. TO THE BOARD OF ASSESSMENT APPEALS

RESOLVED, that John W. Parfitt, Jr., 32 St. Paul Court, is hereby reappointed to the Board of Assessment Appeals for a term expiring 12/31/18.

A motion was made by Councilor Watson, seconded by Councilor Peruzzotti, that this matter be Adopted.

The motion carried unanimously

2016-0132 Reappointment of Jackie Massett to Ledge Light Health District Board of Directors

RESOLUTION REAPPOINTING JACKIE MASSETT TO THE LEDGE LIGHT HEALTH DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS

RESOLVED, that Jackie Massett, 78 Brandegee Avenue, is hereby reappointed to the Ledge Light Health District Board of Directors for a term expiring 11/10/18.

A motion was made by Councilor Watson, seconded by Councilor Peruzzotti, that this matter be Adopted.

The motion carried unanimously

2016-0133 Reappointment of Denis O'Brien to Retirement Board

RESOLUTION REAPPOINTING DENIS O'BRIEN TO THE RETIREMENT BOARD

RESOLVED that the Town Council hereby reappoints Denis M. O'Brien, 23 Payer Lane, Mystic, to the Retirement Board for a term ending 12/31/18.

A motion was made by Councilor Watson, seconded by Councilor Peruzzotti, that this matter be Adopted.

The motion carried unanimously

2016-0134 State Department of Transportation I-95 Signage Initiative

RESOLUTION RESCINDING PAST RESOLUTIONS OPPOSING SIGNAGE FOR THE ALLYN STREET EXIT ON INTERSTATE 95

WHEREAS, the Department of Transportation is proposing to replace highway signage including tourist attraction signs on Interstate 95, and

WHEREAS, the Groton Town Council by resolutions dated March 1, 1976, August 16, 1983, March 15, 1988, and May 16, 1989 expressed its opposition to designation of this exit as a route to downtown Mystic, and

WHEREAS, staff from the Office of Planning and Development Services, the Economic Development Commission, downtown Mystic merchants, and others recommend the addition of a specific reference to "Mystic" and/or "Downtown Mystic" to Exit 89 (Allyn Street) signage for both northbound and southbound lanes of I-95 because the action would be invaluable to the marketing and promotion of downtown Mystic, and

WHEREAS, the Town Council is mindful of residents' concerns, but feels there may be alternatives that will lessen any impacts of the new signage, such as adding directional signs to parking areas, adding signage for the Exit 90 attractions before Exit 89 on I-95 North, and adding crosswalks at the Allyn Street/Route 1 intersection, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Town Council rescinds the resolutions dated March 1, 1976, August 16, 1983, March 15, 1988, and May 16, 1989 and withdraws its opposition to designation of Exit 89 (Allyn Street) as a route to downtown Mystic.

A motion was made by Councilor Morton, seconded by Councilor Watson, that this matter be Adopted.

In response to Mayor Flax's question, Councilor Nault stated that she would like to postpone voting on the issue.

Councilors Grim and de la Cruz stated that they agreed with postponement.

Mayor Flax stated that he would like to move the motion and vote it down. He noted that a lot of people care about the matter as evidenced by the showing at tonight's meeting.

Councilor de la Cruz stated that the Council has until April, 2017, and it would be good to hear additional information from the Connecticut Department of Transportation.

Councilor Antipas stated that he is opposed to rescinding the Resolution. He noted that he spoke with representatives from the Department of Transportation, and he confirmed that there is additional time to make a decision on the issue.

Councilor Nault stated that there may be alternative options to what has been proposed.

Councilor Nault moved to postpone the vote, seconded by Councilor de la Cruz.

*The vote to postpone was 3 in favor (Councilors de la Cruz, Nault, Grim)
5 Opposed (Councilors Watson, Flax, Peruzzotti, Morton, Antipas)
Mayor Flax announced that the vote to postpone failed.*

Councilor Peruzzotti stated that the emergency vehicle situation could be made worse with more traffic. She noted that parking is an issue in downtown Mystic, but that issue is separate from the sign issue. She stated that she agreed with the concept that roads are open to all people, and she noted that a signage change may not convince people to drive to another part of town. She stated that there may be the possibility to change the number of times, or frequency, that the Mystic Bridge opens daily. She stated that the economic development growth problem in Groton is not in downtown Mystic, and she noted that she is disappointed by the fact that shops in downtown Mystic are not open beyond traditional business hours, and it has influenced her vote this evening.

Councilor Grim stated that he is not convinced changing the signage would create an economic development opportunity. He noted that merchants staying open later and trolley service are great ideas.

Councilor de la Cruz stated that he supports waiting to vote on the issue. He noted that a presentation by various professionals on the issue and hearing additional comments from business owners could be beneficial. He stated that a decision on the issue could last for thirty years, and this decision could affect the budget gap and economic development. He noted that there is limited information upon which this decision is being made.

Councilor Antipas stated that one perception that exists is that economic development and more traffic equals more money being spent in downtown Mystic. He noted that more traffic does not necessarily mean businesses are doing well. He stated that he is upset by the time constraints of this issue. He stated that more time on the issue does not mean studies or analysis will be completed. He noted that there may be additional traffic and business as a result of the signage changes, and if traffic increases, then the residents of the area will pay. He stated that the residents have spoken and said they do not want more traffic on Allyn Street. He noted that if signage changes, then there will be a need for a traffic light at the exit ramp. He concluded by stating that he does not support changes of the signage at Exit 89.

Councilor Nault stated that the Town Council represents all people. She noted that there is wording in the Resolution that includes adding crosswalks to the area. She stated that Councilor Barber should be included in the vote.

Mayor Flax stated that he was looking forward to what the DOT's response was to questions. He noted that this issue affects the residents on and around Allyn Street, and the commitment that was made to those residents should be upheld. He noted that this is not an anti-business decision, it is a community decision. He stated that there are things the Council can do to support businesses, such as a trolley or water taxi.

The motion failed by the following vote:

Votes: In Favor: 1 - Councilor Nault
Opposed: 6 - Mayor Flax, Councilor Antipas, Councilor Grim, Councilor Morton, Councilor Peruzzotti and Councilor Watson
Abstain: 1 - Councilor de la Cruz

2016-0135

Resolution Appointing Members of the Charter Revision Commission

RESOLUTION APPOINTING MEMBERS OF THE CHARTER REVISION COMMISSION

WHEREAS, the Groton Town Council by resolution on May 3, 2016, provided for the appointment of a Charter Revision Commission of 11 electors of the Town, said commission to make its report to the Town Council not later than September 2, 2017, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the following persons are appointed, effective immediately, to the Charter Revision Commission:

Scott Aument
Kathy Chase
Jane Dauphinais
Robert Frink
Patrice Granatosky
Dee Hauber
Rosanne Kotowski
Brandon Marley
Daniel Mello
Darcy Peruzzotti
Jennifer Lobrin White

A motion was made by Councilor Nault, seconded by Councilor Peruzzotti, that this matter be Adopted.

The motion carried unanimously

2016-0136 Resolution Setting the Organizational Meeting Date for the Charter Revision Commission

RESOLUTION SETTING THE ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING DATE FOR THE CHARTER REVISION COMMISSION

RESOLVED, that the Mayor shall open the organizational meeting of the Charter Revision Commission on May 23, 2016 at 6:00 p.m. at the Town Hall Annex, Community Room 1.

A motion was made by Councilor Watson, seconded by Councilor de la Cruz, that this matter be Adopted.

The motion carried unanimously

2016-0137 FYE 2017 Contingency Transfer for Support of the Charter Revision Commission

RESOLUTION FOR FYE 2017 GENERAL CONTINGENCY TRANSFER

WHEREAS, the Town Charter provides for General Contingency transfers, and

WHEREAS, no funds have been appropriated in FYE 2016 or FYE 2017 for the support of the Charter Revision Commission established by the Town Council on May 3, 2016, and

WHEREAS, it is expected that the Town Clerk's office will provide research and clerical assistance to the Charter Revision Commission at some cost, including overtime and the publication of public hearing notices and legal ads in accordance with statutory requirements, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that \$7,000 be transferred from the FYE 2017 General Fund Contingency function (#1074) to the Town Clerk function (#1005) for the Charter revision effort.

A motion was made by Councilor Grim, seconded by Councilor Peruzzotti, that this matter be Adopted.

The motion carried unanimously

X. OTHER BUSINESS

None.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Councilor Watson, seconded by Councilor Peruzzotti. Mayor Flax adjourned the meeting at 10:35 p.m.

Attest:

*Betsy Moukawsher
Clerk of the Town Council*

*Nathan Caron
Office Assistant II*