

REGULAR Meeting Agenda

JOINT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION AND TOWN CENTER REVITALIZATION COMMITTEE

Monday, June 22, 2015
Mulvey Municipal Center – 7:00 p.m.
North Conference Room

PRESENT: TCRC: Darlene Briggs, James Crawford, Lisbeth Waldron, Mindy Gordon
EDC: James Crawford, Darlene Briggs, John Leake, Mark Lynskey, Mike Morrissey

ALSO PRESENT: Meg Parulis, Town Planner; Erica Evans, Recording Secretary

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION:

1. Call to Order

Mr. Crawford called the meeting to order at 7:03 PM.

2. Update on New Development Applications – Town Planner

Ms. Parulis shared updates on new development in the town:

The Chapman Mill Pond parking lot will go before the Zoning Commission in August. A grant was received to construct the parking lot to provide better access to the Open Space. The Conservation Commission has been working on improving trails and removing dead hemlock trees that pose a hazard to hikers.

As of the June meeting, there is still no agreement between the developers of the Vista project and the appellants from Chapman Beach.

Improvements are being made at Dick's Marina to raise the building.

Lee Company is breaking ground for building 5 and potentially adding more buildings on Pequot Park Road. The ribbon cutting for Building 9 was on June 5th.

A proposal for 3 flex-space buildings on Pequot Park Road behind the medical building is currently before the Inland Wetlands Commission.

A comprehensive update of the Zoning Regulations will begin in the Fall. The project will likely take two years to complete. Part of the project will include aligning the regulations with recommendations in the Town Center Concept Plan.

The draft Blight Ordinance will be shared with the committee members via email.

3. Minutes: Regular Meeting, May 18, 2015

Mr. Lynskey made a motion to approve the Meeting Minutes of May 18, 2015 as presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. Leake and unanimously approved.

4. Bills: Recording Secretary.....\$94.91

Mr. Leake made a motion to pay the bills as presented. The motion was seconded by Ms. Briggs and unanimously approved.

5. Turnpike Autowreckers – EPA Brownfields Assessment Grant

Ms. Parulis was disappointed to report that she had received notification that EPA grant submitted in January was not awarded. She has requested a debriefing to find out why the grant was not awarded. Despite the consultant's belief that Westbrook was a strong contender for the EPA grant, they were awarded to the bigger cities based on need, and perhaps other towns have a higher need. Ms. Parulis plans to apply for the state brownfields grant in September, pending availability of funding. Mr. Crawford

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asked about the turn around time for the debriefing to occur. Ms. Parulis anticipates the debriefing will occur in July or August. The committee discussed the possibility of looking at a change in zoning regulations to allow additional uses and re-visiting the tax abatement issue.

Additional items – Striper Festival

There has been discussion amongst community members to create a striper festival based on the largest striper on record being caught in Westbrook. Mr. Crawford would like to have one committee member sit in on a meeting regarding the striper catch and release that would be similar to the bluefish festival held in Clinton. Striper Town USA is one name being thrown around for the event. The individual who caught the record breaking fish keeps his boat in Westbrook, has won tournaments, and has received a lot of notoriety. It is the hope of the potential event organizers that he may be interested in being involved, but he would not want to be in charge of it. Mr. Morrissey of Pier 76 said the event may be held on his property, but not if it gets too big. Potential dates for the event include the end of July or beginning of August due to schedule of availability of fisherman. Ms. Gordon stated that the two signs announcing Westbrook as where the largest striper on record has been caught are nice and would recommend placing a similar sign on the jetty at the entry to the harbor.

6. Adjournment

Mr. Lynskey made a motion to adjourn at 7:27 PM. The motion was seconded by Mr. Leake and unanimously approved.

JOINT MEETING:

1. Call to Order

Mr. Crawford called the meeting to order at 7:28 PM.

2. UCONN Study – Project Update

Ms. Parulis shared that the project is still ongoing and she is attempting to finish up and finalize the project with Mr. Minutti from UConn, but he has been on vacation.

3. Town Center Wastewater Study - Phase III – Project Update

Ms. Parulis shared that the draft for phase III of the wastewater study was received today. It is being reviewed to make sure all is in order. Ms. Parulis will invite the consultant to review the information with the committee. Ms. Waldron asked if the goal is to be able to connect all properties surrounding the green that want to be connected. Ms. Parulis stated that all properties in that area are included in the plan, but there may have to be tough decisions made about who will be included as capacity may be limited. Once Phase III is completed, the next step will be to conduct soil testing to get a better estimate of capacity.

4. Town Center Parking Project/STEAP – Project Update

Ms. Parulis still has not received a formal response from First Niagara Bank. She did receive some feedback that they were open to selling the portion of the property needed to construct the parking lot but they have concerns about the shared access through their parking lot and possible interference with the drive through. The project must be completed by December 2016, so the committee discussed the possibility of buying the property needed and forgoing the shared access for now. This would allow a parking lot to be built up to the edge of the bank property. This component of the project could be started and then the shared access can be further developed in a later phase.

5. Minutes: Regular Meeting, May 18, 2015

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Mr. Lynskey made a motion to approve the Meeting Minutes of May 18, 2015 as presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. Leake and unanimously approved.

6. Adjournment

Mr. Lynskey made a motion to adjourn at 7:38 PM. The motion was seconded by Mr. Leake and unanimously approved.

TOWN CENTER REVITALIZATION COMMITTEE:

1. Call to Order

Mr. Crawford called the meeting to order at 7:39 PM.

2. Minutes: Regular Meeting, May 18, 2015

Ms. Waldron made a motion to approve the Meeting Minutes of May 18, 2015 as presented. The motion was seconded by Ms. Briggs and unanimously approved.

3. Bills: Recording Secretary.....\$94.90

Woodard & Curran, Special Funds..... \$1520.00 (Phase III Wastewater Study)

Ms. Waldron made a motion to pay the bills as presented. The motion was seconded by Ms. Briggs and unanimously approved.

4. “Quick Hits” Project

Ms. Gordon stated that the subcommittee completed a sub project involving a parking sign at The Daily Grind. The sign was placed in a whiskey barrel with some flowers and the owner, Kate Daily, has agreed to maintain it. Someone from Adopt-A-Spot will plant and maintain a garden in the area, which the owner will water. Ms. Gordon spoke to Mr. Riggio about having a mason put a low stone wall around the island and he estimates the cost to be \$2300. This amount would include the majority of the overall budget so the committee would like to try to bring down the cost and get more information on alternative materials to be used. In the meantime, the asphalt curbing could be painted a different color and the committee can substitute it later.

Ms. Gordon stated that the bench in front of the insurance company in the center of town is in poor condition. There is a concern that the bench could break if sat upon. It was suggested that the bench in the garden across from railroad station that can't be reached due to shrubbery, could be used to replace it. Mr. Crawford further suggested that students from the high school could build a new bench for the train station area.

Ms. Gordon stated that the light in front of the insurance company is still not working. The owner has not been able to fix it and would be willing to let the town fix it. There was question as to whether the light was on private property or within the state right-of-way. Ms. Gordon requested that the town fix the light. Ms. Parulis stated that the work cannot be done by public works if it is on private property. Ms. Waldron stated that an electrician needs to be the one to remove or fix the light. Ms. Gordon and Ms. Waldron will speak to the insurance company owner together to let him know the town cannot be responsible for fixing the light and to ask that he remove the light post.

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Ms. Gordon stated that there is a safety concern at the Papercraft building as the wood around a plate glass window is rotted and there is a concern that the window will fall out. The stairs into the building are also of concern. Ms. Parulis will report to the Building Official to see if there is a safety hazard.

5. Proposed Town Center Historic District Nomination – Project Update

Ms. Parulis shared that the Board of Finance and Board of Selectman have agreed to pay the full cost of hiring a consultant to prepare the nomination. State funding is still on hold due to budget deliberations. The historical society has indicated a willingness to partner on this project. A public information session is planned for August 11th. Property owners within the proposed district will be notified by mail. As part of the process of establishing a National Historic District, the State Office of Historic Preservation does an initial screening. Ms. Parulis reported that she is compiling information from the Historic and Architectural Resource Survey of properties within the proposed district for this purpose. Once the SHPO gives the go ahead, the RFQ for a consultant will go out.

Ms. Gordon inquired about the Veterans Memorial project. Ms. Parulis stated that Veteran's group had plans for the same spot as the Historical Society but that Cathie Doane and Fraser Brimley have come to an agreement about where each project will be located. Timing of these projects is based on funding. Mr. Crawford stated that a request was made to The Westbrook Foundation for the Historical Society project, but the deadline was missed so they will need to reapply in October. Ms. Gordon inquired as to whether the Historical Society was now a non-profit organization. Ms. Waldron stated that they were in the process of becoming such.

6. Adjournment

Ms. Briggs made a motion to adjourn at 8:01 PM PM. The motion was seconded by Ms. Waldron and unanimously approved.

Respectfully Submitted,

Erica Evans, Recoding Secretary