



**TOWN OF MADISON  
CONNECTICUT 06443  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION**

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DRAFT

Minutes of a regular meeting of the Madison Economic Development Commission held on Thursday, September 10, 2009, 7:30 p.m. at the Madison Town Campus.

Present: Commissioners Peter Thomas, Jim Ball, Edwin Moore, Hank Yaggi

Also present: Bill Gladstone, Selectman

Peter Thomas called the meeting to order at 7:40 p.m.

1. Public comment. Mr. Gladstone agreed to follow through on filling of the vacancies on the Economic Development Commission.
2. Approval of minutes. On motion made by Mr. Moore, and seconded by Mr. Yaggi, the Commission voted to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of June 11, 2009 as submitted. Mr. Thomas, Mr. Ball and Mr. Yaggi voted in favor of the motion and Mr. Moore abstained.
3. Discussion on EDC budget balance and recommendation re: project funding. Mr. Thomas noted that the EDC budget was approved at the same level as last year's budget. He thanked Mr. Gladstone, as the Board of Selectmen's liaison to the Board of Selectmen, for conveying the details of the budget request. Mr. Thomas noted that the first major project for the current fiscal year is the 3-D lot design footprint visual project from Milone and MacBroom for the downtown Super Block to include the east side of Wall Street. The funds for this project were rolled over from the prior fiscal year. The new budget funds are earmarked for the plan and design of the East Gate project to include enhancements to encourage certain types of development.
4. Update report on Bradley Road Vision Study Project. Mr. Thomas noted that the report had been passed around and he recommended that an electronic copy be provided to the Planning and Zoning Commission as the Economic Development Commission's contribution to the Plan of Conservation and Development. The report recommends certain types of development that will enhance the access to while preserving Tuxis. The report acknowledges there would be some changes in the wetlands area but recommends that consideration be given to incorporate some of the ideas in the report to utilize this area without damage to the environment.

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On motion made by Mr. Thomas, and seconded by Mr. Yaggi, the Commission voted unanimously to present the Update Report on the Bradley Road Vision Study Project to the Board of Selectmen and request their guidance in putting together a forum of interest groups to move the project forward for appropriate action that includes provisions for appropriate development while preserving the wetlands.

Mr. Thomas agreed to write a follow-up letter to the Board of Selectmen on this action and Mr. Yaggi agreed to assist with the coordination of the forum with the Board of Selectmen.

5. Update on Economic Summit. Mr. Thomas recommended that the Commission begin now with putting together a larger summit for March or April of 2010. While the attendance at the 2009 summit was good he believes more individuals could have been reached and encouraged to attend. He believes the 2010 summit should include presentation topics including economic stimulus, COG and business groups.

Mr. Thomas also noted that he would like the Commission to move forward with the update of the web site to include additional web design and possibly more interaction options.

Mr. Thomas noted that at the State there is current talk about making money available for economic development activities. Small Business Administration funding is not being distributed very much under the current economic environment. Other funding sources include the Mid-Loan program, Connecticut County Investment Corp and some private funds. He would like to see these groups involved in the forum this year in addition to getting more people to attend to obtain information and receive support. Mr. Moore commented that the State has provided funds for the Connecticut Innovations program and they have done little over the last year.

Mr. Yaggi commented that the summit should have some focus on creating an environment that will encourage people to grow their businesses in Madison. Mr. Moore commented that a successful downtown will need to include draws for people to want to go downtown. Mr. Thomas commented that the concept of downtown development must also include discussion on waste water treatment issues and the promotion by all involved groups for a sewage system that will allow development.

Mr. Gladstone commented that there is a need for a philosophical discussion on the role of government in the short and long term stimulation of the economy. Mr. Gladstone commented that another topic that should be included for forum discussion is public rest rooms, especially during the period when the Library is closed.

Mr. Thomas noted that the forum will be helpful in getting all those involved in the downtown area together in the same room to prioritize and determine critical factors in the development of this area. There will be further discussion at future meetings on how to move forward.

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6. Update by Marilyn Ozols. Mr. Thomas noted that Ms. Ozols is at another meeting and will attend the EDC meeting if possible.
7. Review Milone and MacBroom work on Tuxis Pond. Mr. Thomas noted that he will forward the Milone and MacBroom work on Tuxis Pond to Mr. Yaggi to review and consider for action at the next regular meeting.
8. Discussion on Main Street membership. Mr. Thomas questioned the benefits that could be received as a result of the Main Street membership now that Madison is an official member. Mr. Moore noted that member towns can receive assistance with development issues and downtown projects. Main Street has staff available to come down and talk to appropriate Town groups. Mr. Thomas requested that Mr. Moore contact Main Street to obtain a list from them of the contacts they need and to request that they come to Madison to discuss a plan to incorporate the needs of a smaller Town like Madison.

Mr. Moore agreed to contact Main Street and obtain a list to start as a focal point and will get this information to Mr. Thomas.

Mr. Thomas noted that with the completion of the survey to businesses, the next step will be to develop a survey for Towns people to complete as a follow-up. Some initial information was received from the involvement of the UConn group that participated in the initial survey. Mr. Moore was asked to have all appropriate information available for the next regular meeting.

9. Discussion on EDC intern. Mr. Thomas noted that logistics were unable to be worked out this year for the Commission to have an intern work in Town during the summer. An arrangement has been worked out with the Chamber of Commerce if the Commission has this opportunity next year. He commented that when the Town is looking at the reallocation of offices, providing space for temporary assistance should be considered.
10. Discussion on list of 10 items prepared by Commission members for consideration for future EDC projects. Mr. Thomas reviewed the 9 items that the Commission agreed upon for consideration for future EDC projects.

1. It was agreed that the priority is to stabilize downtown through continuation, development and implementation of strategies and objectives set forth in the Bradley Road Vision Study.

2. The second item is to hire an Economic Development Director. Mr. Gladstone agreed it would be beneficial to have an ongoing economic development contact and investment into an individual who can pursue and follow-up on economic development activities would be worthwhile. The Commission should begin the process and documentation to show a case for the need for this staff person. Mr. Gladstone noted that the downtown area is going to change and the Town has an opportunity to shape the direction of change rather than let it happen. It

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was agreed that a discussion on funding for an Economic Development Director should be included in the discussion during the budget process for the FY 2010-2011 budget.

Mr. Thomas noted that the Commission has been very fiscally responsible and returned funds in last year's budget.

Mr. Ball noted that there has been discussion about putting together a job description which will give greater validity to this position if funding can be included in the budget after the development of a salary range. The staff person would be able to absorb some of the activities that a volunteer Committee cannot complete. It would be helpful to obtain input from local businesses and the Chamber and information on the salary range for this type of position in other towns to give the Commission some direction. Mr. Yaggi noted that it would also be helpful to discuss successes of economic development personnel in other towns to help validate the need.

Mr. Gladstone commented that the idea of a shared position with a neighboring town or towns might be an option, however, the ideal would be to have an individual focusing on just Madison.

3. Item three is to expand the commercial districts along Route One (east and west) and create a third gateway into town along Route 79 in the north.

4. Item 4 is to create and coordinate, with local and regional realtors, a comprehensive list of available properties for sale and lease, and make them available on the website.

Mr. Gladstone suggested that this might be a Chamber of Commerce rather than a town responsibility.

Mr. Thomas noted that this information could be provided through the web site design with web site links. There is a need for a focus point for calls that come into the Town with economic development questions or issues.

5. Item 5 is to coordinate with state, regional and federal agencies to create synergy. It was suggested that the Main Street expertise can help with this item.

6. Item 6 is to create a resource guide for existing and new businesses, a "who to call" for help or information. Mr. Thomas commented that this will be a part of the web site redesign which will include information on who to call for assistance or information.

7. Item 7 is to bring developers, business owners, community residents, realtors and town boards together in a summit. Mr. Thomas suggested that the Commission consider a spring economic development summit. It would be helpful to get influential people and Town boards and staff together in December to plan for next year. Mr. Gladstone recommended that the Commission contact Mr. McDougald who is working with the Land use Board to try to get appropriate groups together to meet.

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8. Item 8 is to incorporate, as part of the future development of the town, an understanding of existing services and those needed in the future such as affordable housing. Mr. Thomas noted that there have been efforts by Mr. Donogue in the past few years toward affordable housing projects. Some businesses have looked at options to incorporate affordable housing into commercial development as allowed by regulations.

Mr. Gladstone noted that there has been some discussion on land that might be available for affordable housing projects.

Mr. Thomas noted that there should be some discussion and consideration in the Plan of Conservation and Development on possible affordable housing options when public land is purchased.

9. Item nine is to define and refine the types of industries and businesses to be sought. Mr. Thomas suggested that work on item 9 could be accomplished by a summer intern.

11. Plan of Conservation and Development. Mr. Thomas commented that he would like to see Economic Development Commission representation on the Plan of Conservation and Development planning activities. Mr. Ball has been serving as an EDC representative and it was suggested that either Ms. Foley or the new person to be appointed to fill the vacancy would serve in this capacity.

12. Discussion on Commission Mission Statement. Mr. Thomas that he believes the current Mission Statement is too focused on increasing the tax roles. He would like to see the Commission work on developing a broader concept to create a more comprehensive Mission Statement.

13. Old business. Mr. Ball reported on the meeting on the Wall Street Design Standards. The standards are to help ensure that appropriate development and redevelopment occurs in the Town Center. There is a focus on the west side of Wall Street. There has been extensive discussion on the zoning regulations including such items as frontage, parking, shared uses, landscaping, lighting, curbing and pedestrian access. Mr. Ball noted that it was a very productive meeting.

Mr. Thomas commented that it is important for a developer to be able to understand a clear vision so they can understand what they need to do to meet the Town's vision. It is important that this vision is consistent, specific and clear for a specific area so the developer can work toward providing intelligent design.

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Mr. Gladstone commented that the developers need to know what the rules are so they can work toward providing developments that have a chance of being accepted by the Town. It will be very helpful to get groups like ACCA, PZC and Madison Downtown together to be able to provide consistency.

Mr. Thomas noted that once Town staff have gotten together to share ideas it will be important to follow up with businesses and then residents.

14. New business. Mr. Gladstone noted that there is some movement to create a multi-town Summer Shoreline Festival for performing and visual arts to draw tourism to the area. There would be a series of events which would be advertised and marketed by the Towns involved. There have been meetings with the elected officials of the area towns on moving this idea forward. Mr. Thomas asked the Mr. Gladstone provide additional information to the EDC for brainstorming and input as planning for this event moves forward.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:05 p.m.

The next regularly scheduled Madison Economic Development Commission meeting will be held on October 8, 2009, 7:30 p.m. at the Madison Town Campus.

Terry Holland-Buckley  
Clerk

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