



Town of Madison, CT

Economic Development Commission

Subject to Approval

Minutes of a regular meeting of the Economic Development Commission held on February 9, 2023, 7:00 p.m. at the Madison Town Campus and via zoom

Present: Commissioners Jonathan Stein, Ryan Duques, Tom Hummel, Gregg Wagner, Bruce Wilson, Board of Selectmen; Sheri Cote, Economic Development Coordinator; Erin Mannix Town Planner; Virginia Raff, Shoreline Greenway Committee

Dr. Stein called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

1. Introduction.

Mr. Hummel is the most recent member to be appointed to the Commission. He noted that he has had a career as a Software Developer.

2. Approval of minutes of regular meeting of January 12, 2023.

On motion made by Mr. Duques, and seconded by Mr. Hummel, the Commission voted unanimously to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of January 12, 2023 as submitted.

3. Public Comment.

There were no public comments.

4. Town Planner Update.

Ms. Mannix reported on the following Town Planner items:

- The Land Use Office is currently short staffed with the retirement of the Zoning Enforcement Officer so there has been some shifting of staff duties. They hope to be back to the Department's full staffing level shortly.
- A number of applications have been submitted for multi family developments, some of which include affordable housing
- Discussion continues of the idea of allowing a Planned Development District on two parcels in the area of New Road and Duck Hole Road. The project includes a master plan for a medical office building as well as 45 residential units.
- The former Watrous Nursing Home site has an application pending for a 3-lot subdivision.
- Property at Fort Path and Stony Lane is under consideration utilizing the Planned Development District approach for a single-family development.

- A text amendment for a pending Planned Development for the Winter Club for mixed residential and restaurant use is now before the Planning and Zoning Commission. This tool applies to specific properties that are considered opportunity areas. The Commission must analyze the request based on the regulations and can also consider opportunities for housing diversity.

5. Chamber of Commerce Report. There was no Chamber of Commerce Report.

OLD BUSINESS

6. Waste Water Study Update.

Ms. Cote noted that Weston & Samson Engineers had agreed to provide the additional information requested by the Economic Development Commission including the age of the downtown area property's septic system as well as the size and capacity. The Town does not have good records on property pump out dates so this information will not be able to be provided. Ms. Cote noted, however, that it has been determined that, because the Town will be using ARPA funds for the Waste Water Study, the Town needs to put out an RFP and go out to bid for this study.

Ms. Cote noted that Weston & Sampson will be providing a presentation to the Board of Selectmen on February 14th on another larger project from a different grant source.

7. Grant Program Update.

Ms. Cote noted that the Grant Program providing grants up to \$2,500 to businesses for property improvements such as parking lot improvements, signage or ADA compliance has been launched. The program has been advertised through Patch, an article in the Courier and through the Town website. She has fielded some calls from interested businesses with questions. The first deadline for applications is March 1st and the second deadline is April 1st. She expects to have some applications for the Commission's review at the March EDC meeting and will forward the applications before the meeting to give members an opportunity to review them in advance.

8. Academy Advisory Committee Update.

Mr. Wagner noted that there has been quite a bit of interest by community organizations in the use of space at the future Academy School property so this aspect of the project is on-going.

Ms. Cote noted that the Academy Advisory Committee continues to meet 5:50 – 7:00 p.m. every Thursday evening. Much of the focus to date has been on data gathering primarily with the use of the survey. They have made an effort to include all demographics in the survey to insure balance.

Mr. Wagner suggested that the next important area for Committee focus on is the financial aspects and how many of the proposed ideas for the project can be realistically accomplished with the available funds, while meeting the needs of the community.

Ms. Cote noted that the Advisory Committee will be meeting jointly with the Building Committee to report on and discuss the results of the survey. She explained that while the Advisory and Building Committee are working parallel, the Advisory Committee is only advisory and it will be the Building Committee that makes final decisions.

9 POCD Update.

Dr. Stein noted that he had attended a portion of the Planning and Zoning Commission meeting that was dedicated to the Plan of Conservation and Development. There was discussion on the mission statement and how the POCD ties in with the strategic plan. It is agreed that it is important that the mission statements be aligned.

10.. Business Retention.

Ms. Cote noted that she has set up meetings on Monday and Wednesday, with businesses and interested EDC members can sign up to also attend through Sign-Up Genius. She noted that she had reached out to 15 businesses but at this point has only heard back from two. She asked the EDC members to provide her with contact information they might have on any of the larger businesses in Town so she can work to set up a meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

11. Shoreline Greenway Trail Request.

Ms Raff was present to provide an update on the Shoreline Greenway Trail at Hammonasset State Park and to ask for EDC support for a project. She noted that the Committee has received approval to develop a half mile long trail through an undeveloped section of Hammonasset State Park. She noted that the location will be south out of the parking lot, across the service road, through the woods heading toward the water. This part of the project will be considered Phase 1 with Phase II to include going through Salt Meadow Park and into Clinton. The Project has received funding from the ARPA Committee to obtain a design to map out the location and to do some preliminary work. They will be submitting a formal application to DEP and are requesting that the EDC submit a letter of support for this project to submit with the application. She noted that she will need the letter before March 1st, which is the application deadline.

On motion made by Mr. Duques, and seconded by Mr. Bloom, the Committee voted to authorize the Commission Chairman to submit a letter of support from the Economic Development Committee to the Connecticut DEP, for the development of a half mile long trail through Hammonasset State Park as an extension of the Shoreline Greenway Trail.

Ms. Raff agreed to forward a draft letter to Ms. Cote to send to Dr. Stein's signature as Economic Development Commission Chairman.

12. EDC Business Breakfast.

Ms. Cote suggested that the Commission members begin a conversation on the idea of holding an EDC Business Breakfast similar to the one held last year, which was done in conjunction with the

Chamber of Commerce. Dr. Stein agreed that this was a successful event last year and provided an important opportunity for businesses and Town staff and officials to meet. He agreed it was helpful to collaborate with the Chamber of Commerce on this event. It was noted that the cost for the breakfast last year was \$1,300 which came from the EDC budget. The Commission members agreed that planning should begin to hold an EDC Business Breakfast for May, 2023.

Other New Business – Board of Selectmen Update.

There was discussion on the status of the Tax Abatement program and whether the Board of Selectmen had taken formal action to incorporate the changes recommended by the EDC and if it appropriate for the Town to actively promote this program as an economic development tool. Selectman Wilson agreed to clarify the status of this program and report back to the Commission.

Selectman Wilson reported that the Marijuana Legalization Committee had voted to provide two recommendations to the Board of Selectmen. The first recommendation is to prohibit all commercial sales of marijuana in Madison and the second recommendation is to include a question on commercial sales of marijuana in Madison on the budget referendum to give the public an opportunity to vote on this item. The Board of Selectmen will be considering these recommendations and then determine whether to send this to referendum for a decision by the voters.

Selectman Wilson noted that the topic of the regulation of Airbnb facilities in Madison continues to be discussed. There is a working group with the First Selectman and staff to continue to debate possible regulations through an ordinance on this topic. They will be looking at how Airbnb use in residences is being handled in other communities to gather some ideas that might be appropriate for Madison. Selectman Wilson agreed to invite Dr. Stein to attend their next meeting as an observer.

Selectman Wilson reported that staff is also looking at the 2019 Flood Plain Ordinance to develop ideas to present to the Board of Selectmen for consideration.

13. Adjournment.

On motion made by Mr. Duques, and seconded by Mr. Bloom, the Commission voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 8:17 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Terry Holland-Buckley