

MINUTES

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
MADDEN ROOM
SOUTH WINDSOR TOWN HALL**

**REGULAR MEETING
WEDNESDAY, March 28, 2018
TIME: 7:30 P.M.**

PRESENT: Chairperson David Marsh, Linda Jeski, Susan Burnham, Joseph Kennedy, James Murray, Shailesh Verma, Paul Burnham, and Alternate Victor Dorobantu (sat for Commissioner Futtner)

ABSENT: Wayne Kilburn, Alternate John Mitchell, Edwina Futtner, Louise Neary, William Jodice, and Alternate David Starr

1. Call Meeting to Order: Chairperson David Marsh called the meeting to order at 7:30pm.

2. Roll Call: The above-mentioned members were introduced.

A **motion** was made by Commission Murray and **seconded** by Commissioner Kennedy to move item 7a to the top of the agenda and was *unanimously approved. Motion passed.*

3. Public Participation: None.

4. Approval of Minutes:

Minutes from Regular Meeting on 2/28/2018: A **motion** was made by Commissioner P. Burnham and **seconded** by Commissioner S. Burnham to approve the minutes from February 28, 2018 with the following corrections:

Page 3 Item 9.a. should read "...access to property information..."

Page 4 Item 9.a. should read "...Commissioner P. Burnham suggested that there could be..."

Page 4 Item 9.a. should read "...these to the commission."

Page 1 Attendance: Correction of the spelling of Shailesh Verma and removing 'Alternate', including Alternate Wayne Kilburn and Louise Neary as absent

Page 2 Item 8 should read "...Town Manager is supporting the drafting of..."

Page 2 Item 8 should read "...the town could earn a Certified Bronze or Silver certification..."

Motion passed unanimously. Motion approved.

5. Old Business:

(a) Mayor.tv: Chairperson Marsh shared the videos that have been created by mayor.tv that show; a message from the Town Manager, Economic Development, Healthy Living and Quality of Life and Voices in the Community. Commissioners commented that the videos show both large and small companies-no mid-sized companies, small and large homes-no condos or senior living options, and that restaurants need to be included. Chairperson Marsh asked commissioners to send their comments and suggestions to him so that he can share them with the Town Manager. Commissioner P. Burnham believes that changes can be made in the future to include more diversity in the footage. Commissioner Jeski asked if there will be a link for the video on the Chamber website.

(b) Business Community Updates: Commissioner P. Burnham informed the commission that the Chamber is currently being run by Co-Presidents Stacy Camiros, a manager at Webster Bank, and Elaine Fenster, a Coldwell Banker Realtor. The Chamber is being supported by 2 part-time people that are working 30 hours per week. The board meetings are held at the Chamber office on the 3rd Monday of the month. The EDC is invited to attend the meetings to act as a liaison. Commissioner

P. Burnham reached out to the Chamber to find out about ribbon cutting events. Commissioner S. Burnham commented that she is still getting this information. Veteran Chamber members are being brought in to revitalize the Chamber. Commissioner S. Burnham remembered that there was an offer to join the Glastonbury Chamber a few years ago. Chairperson Marsh suggested to Commissioner P. Burnham that he talk with the Town Manager to discuss his plans for any relationship with the Chamber. Commissioners Dorobantu and Verma expressed interest in attending Chamber board meetings.

In communications from the town manager, Vice Chairperson Burnham reported that [Doosen Fuel Cell America, Inc.](#) has an opportunity to apply to DEEP but they need a memorandum of understanding with the town. This would establish a payment schedule over the next 20 years in which the town would receive \$3.5 million. Commissioners will have an opportunity to ask the town manager about the project at the April meeting. This is a new project and is not connected to previous fuel cell projects.

Commissioner Kennedy asked about [Quantum Biopower](#). Chairperson Marsh replied that there will be a meeting in April to discuss and obtain agreements from businesses both within and outside South Windsor that will agree to use the services. Currently Quantum Biopower is focused on commercial use, but a residential pilot project is underway in West Hartford.

6. Committee Report:

(a) Bylaw Review Committee: Commissioner P. Burnham stated that the subcommittee will be meeting after tonight's meeting to discuss items they feel should be changed. Chairperson Marsh asked for a draft of the proposed changes be sent to him prior to the April meeting to be shared with commission members.

7. New Business:

(a) Tax Abatement Proposal for Phoenix All Stars: Commissioner P. Burnham read the town manager's notes regarding his thoughts on the abatement application. Phoenix All Stars are asking for tax abatement of 5-year, 50% abatement. The town manager would like the commission to approve the request. The commission previously supported the request for a zone change in the Route 5 overlay and send a letter of recommendation. The proposed investment includes improvements of \$2million dollars in real property and additional investments in fixtures, etc.... \$55,742 will be collected after the abatement expires. They are ready to break ground in mid/late summer and all other applications have been approved. They complied with requests to make changes to the front façade, added color to the front of the building, included additional plantings, lowered the roof line, and moved some equipment to the rear of the building. The side of the building sits along Route 5 and a signal light will be utilized for entry to the lot. The building will be 18,000 sq. ft. on the first floor with additional space in the mezzanine. Employees will include 3 full time and 12 part-time employees. The business will become a cheer facility that will train athletes on the Olympic team and host regional competitions. Owner William Tellier informed the commission that there is room to expand on the site towards the east. The site could

accommodate an expansion to double in size. Mr. Tellier stated that this is a \$2.1 million-dollar project and that there will be a left turn lane and additional signals at the light.

A **motion** was made by Commissioner Kennedy and **seconded** by Commissioner Murray to approve the abatement application and was ***unanimously approved. Motion passed.***

Commissioner P. Burnham suggested that Chairperson Marsh draft a letter of support to be sent to the town council and encouraged commissioners to attend the town council's meeting to express their support.

(b) Economic Development Strategy: Chairperson Marsh had a meeting with the town manager to discuss a strategy for economic development and they agreed that a more formal process needs to be put in place. The intent is to have an external, 3rd party person to meet with relevant boards and commissions to decide what the strategy should be. Commissioner Jeski stated that she would like to see better communication between the boards and commissions. She stated that information about businesses requesting an appeal after being given a tax abatement should be shared so that more informed decisions could be made by each commission/board. Chairperson Marsh agreed that he would also like to have a better way to communicate between boards and commissions. Commissioner Jeski commented that on the town's website, there is a way to request the agendas and minutes to be read at a person's leisure, but it is a lot of information to digest. Commissioner Verma isn't sure that anyone would be able to understand the different processes just by reading minutes. Chairperson Marsh shared that there is a Developer's Guide available on the town's EDC website and that it could be used to gain an understanding of the process businesses need to follow to obtain approvals from various boards and commissions. However, some changes may have been made to the process since this document was created.

(c) Economic Development Commission Brand, Identity, Administration Refresh: Charter: Chairperson Marsh reported that the town manager is having the intern look at the charters of other towns to see what they are including as part of the EDC's role. CT statutes give authority to the EDC to do more than what the commission is currently doing. To improve intra/inter-communications, Chairperson Marsh will be issued a town email and commission members may be issued one in the future. In the meantime, communications will continue to be distributed by Donna Thompson. Chairperson Marsh wants to revisit changing the EDC website since there is limited functionality in its current state. Exploring opportunities to promote the EDC both within and outside of South Windsor will be explored. Utilizing sites such as Patch to publish content is one example. Commissioner Dorobantu shared that he had attended a Tolland Chamber event and spoke with attendees about South Windsor. He is also in contact with the Hartford based attorney who is the US/Romanian consulate representative. These interactions prompted him to create a document which highlights data about South Windsor. Commissioner Dorobantu is interested in obtaining feedback on the document and hopes that it could be used in tandem with other information for commissioners to share with business contacts.

(d) South Windsor Citizen Survey: The town manager pushed the survey out to May 2018. It will be distributed to every South Windsor resident via the mail. The town manager also wants to create one for businesses. Commissioner S. Burnham commented that the survey in its current

form is too long and Commissioner Murray believes that residents may be reluctant to give out information. Chairperson Marsh responded that most likely 2 types of people will respond-those that are very happy and those that are very unhappy. He is not sure if the survey format has been finalized but the current survey focuses on Evergreen Walk. A survey of this type last went out in 2006. Commissioner Jeski asked about response from the 2006 survey and how the data be input and analyzed. Commissioner S. Burnham asked if it will be sent out with postage paid return envelope. Commissioner Jeski believes that some questions are too detailed. Commissioners comments focused on the following areas: the length of the survey, more questions about the EDC (such as what types business and where they should be located), the responses of the 2006 survey, who will be compiling the data, and the total cost to conduct the survey.

(e) Business Community Engagement (Ambassador Program) / Committee: Chairperson Marsh would like to revive engagement with South Windsor businesses and proposes creating an EDC sub-committee with Commissioner P. Burnham in the lead, and 2 additional members. The sub-committee members would attend Chamber meetings and events to actively engage with businesses. Commissioners Kennedy and Dorobantu expressed interest.

(f) Town Ordinance Economic Impact Analysis: Chairperson Marsh shared that one of the town's interns is reviewing the town's ordinances their impacts to economic development. The ordinances are being compared with those in surrounding or similarly sized municipalities in CT. There will be a presentation of any new, modified or proposed repeals of ordinances to the EDC before action is taken.

(g) Commissioner Contact Information Update: Chairperson Marsh requested that commissioners fill out a contact information sheet on a yearly basis.

8. Communications and Remarks:

(a) Report from David Marsh, Chairperson: Chairperson Marsh attended a [Sustainable Connecticut](#) meeting and has been made a member of the advisory committee. Once obtained, the seal of certification can be added to marketing materials and will provide opportunities to apply for grants from the private organization. Grants are privately funded and managed Eastern Connecticut State University.

The town planner shared the One Town, One Future document she created and is stored on an external hard drive. This document needs to be updated with more current photos than what is in the document currently. The town planner is seeking feedback on the document and Chairperson Marsh is working to find a way to share the document electronically with the commission.

9. General Discussion:

Next Meeting is scheduled for April 25, 2018 at 7:30 p.m. in the Madden Room.

Commissioner P. Burnham informed the commission that a few new buildings are proposed to be constructed near Admiral on Ellington Road. The I-291 Logistics Center East and I-291 Logistics Center West will be constructed on 21 acres. One building will have 30 dock doors and the other

46 dock doors. The site is owned by the Higgins family and CBRE New England is proposing the project to gauge interest.

10. Adjournment:

A **motion** was made by Commissioner S. Burnham and **seconded** by Commissioner Jeski to adjourn at 9:33pm and was ***unanimously approved. Motion passed.***

Respectfully submitted,

Catherine Potter
Clerk

Approved: April 25, 2018