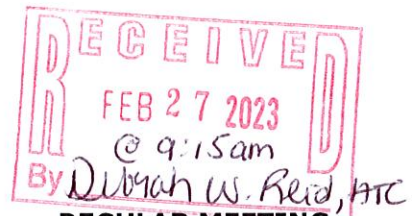


MINUTES

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

**REGULAR MEETING
WEDNESDAY, February 22, 2023
TIME: 7:00 P.M.**



PRESENT: Chairperson David Marsh, Vice Chairperson Paul Burnham, Linda Jeski, Joseph Kennedy, James Murray, Alternate Victor Dorobantu (sat for Commissioner Neary), Susan Burnham, Bill Jodice, Alternate Mindy Lewis (sat for Commissioner Kelley), Alternate James Mitchell (arr. at 7:05pm, sat for Commissioner Kane)

ABSENT: Louise Neary, Scott Kelley, Daniel Kane, Alternate Michael Buganski

ALSO PRESENT: Asst Town Manager Scott Roberts, Council Liaison Andrew Paterna

1. **Call Meeting to Order:** Chairperson Marsh called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.
2. **Roll Call:** The above-mentioned members were introduced.
3. **Public Participation:** None
4. **Special Presentation**
 - (a) Hartford Truck/Design Professionals LLC: Peter DeMallie, from Design Professionals, representing Blake and Derrick Brannon, described the project at 95 John Fitch Blvd. The project will increase the number of employees from 45 to 55. The project is to expand the current building, enabling them to do truck upfitting which is the last phase of production and customization of light duty construction vehicles. They don't deliver to customers, which must be done by a dealer, but they buy Ford and Dodge trucks and do the upfitting. They've acquired 11 acres and have temporary permission to store vehicles. They are located in a general commercial zone and have learned by talking to the surrounding neighbors that they've kept their promises to protect the area between the properties. They've agreed to build a berm with fencing and landscaping, to create permanent landscape protection and deeded to the South Windsor Land Trust, which was finished in the fall at a cost of \$550,000. The building they want to construct is 45,000 sq ft, located at the back of the property, and will be used for indoor storage. Vehicles will also be stored outside between the front and back buildings and an additional 57 parking spaces have been added to the lot. A general contractor has already been selected and they hope to start construction in April 2023. They will be asking for a tax abatement. The neighbors have been very supportive and they have received support from state representatives. Chairperson Marsh asked if copies of the abatement request have been generated and Mr. Roberts explained that they are able to be printed until the entire abatement process is finished. Mr. Roberts spoke with the Town Manager and they would like to offer a 7 year abatement with the first 3 at 70% and the remaining years would be at 50%. A resolution could be proposed at the next EDC meeting and town staff is open to moving the percentages. The amount of abatement would depend on the mill rate. Commissioner Jeski asked if the 70% abatement would be to help with construction and Mr. DeMaillie confirmed this and highlighted that there have been several local businesses hired to complete work on the property and

project. Total construction costs are in the \$8-\$9 million dollar range. Commissioner Jeski asked if there are any plans for trucks to be located out front and Mr. DeMaillie replied that there is not and that the project is located in the back. They will be redoing the paved surface behind the current building, including regrading, also located behind the pub and former wellness center. Commissioner Kennedy asked for more information on the expansion and Mr. DeMaillie explained that Hartford Truck acquired some old potato warehouses and they were able to negotiate an easement with the ten pin bowling center owner to reduce traffic through a residential neighborhood. Vice Chairperson P. Burnham asked about the parking located on the eastern side of the pub and Mr. DeMaillie explained that it was intended to accommodate the wellness center but it will no longer be constructed because they are moving. Vice Chairperson P. Burnham asked if they have any plans for further additions and Mr. DeMaillie replied that this addition will be for future growth. The building will be located 30' to 100' from the berm and the top of the building will not be visible from King Street. 150 evergreen trees/shrubs will be planted to ensure that at its peak, 28', it should not be visible from the street. Commissioner Dorobantu asked how many houses are behind or around the property and Mr. DeMaillie confirmed that there are 3 or 4 houses with Carvana adjacent to the property. Commissioner Kennedy agreed that the family has proven a commitment to South Windsor and when it's time, the commission should approve the abatement as requested. Mr. DeMaillie stated that Hartford Truck has received lots of support from neighbors and customers for the project.

5. Approval of Minutes

- (a) Minutes from Regular Meeting on 01/25/23: A **motion** was made by Commissioner Jeski and **seconded** by Commissioner Murray with the following corrections:
Item 8. New Business (a) should read: "...stated that a Town Hall Admin sent him..."
Motion approved by majority. Chairperson Marsh, Commissioner S. Burnham, and Commissioner Jodice abstain. **Motion passed.**

6. Old Business: None.

7. Committee Report(s)

- (a) Strategic Planning Committee: Commissioner Lewis had no updates to share since the last EDC meeting. The committee will be meeting next week. Commissioner Lewis encouraged commission members to go online and complete the survey.
(b) Quad Board Sub-Committee: The next meeting will be in April.

8. New Business

- (a) EDC Minutes: No quorum of voting members in attendance at November meeting.
(b) EDC Appointments, Nominations and Membership: Chairperson Marsh believes that the Mayor's comments pertain to clerical errors for the year of terms for members both permanent and alternate. Commissioner Jeski stated that the EDC commission follows state statutes and that somehow a few terms didn't match up with the rest of the commission. Vice Chairperson P. Burnham believes that the commission needs to approve the changes tonight and send them to the Mayor who will bring them before the Town Council for a vote. Chairperson Marsh believes that the terms need to be corrected within each political party's committee. Commissioner Neary's term would change to an end date of 2025 and Commissioner Buganski's term as alternate would change to 2023. Commissioner Jeski believes that the State statute wasn't

being followed and that's why the errors occurred. Mr. Paterna agrees that it needs to go through the party committee first before being approved by the Town Council.

A **motion** was made by Vice Chairperson S. Burnham and **seconded** by Commissioner P. Burnham with the following updates:

3. should read: "...then the person who is chairman will continue for another two-year term."

4. should read: "...view of the by-laws must be done every two years after the election of the new officers."

14. should read: "...the South Windsor Charter (Sec.2-231, 2-322, 2-323, 2-324 and 2-325),... and State Statutes (CGS.7-136),..."

Date of revision will be added.

Motion was unanimously approved. Motion passed.

9. **Economic Development Opportunities/Updates:**

Mr. Roberts gave the following updates:

- Shake Shack is now open and the management team is a very nice and energetic group. South Windsor is the 2nd location in CT with the other one in W. Hartford, and a few in RI. They are excited to be in town and they bill their food as a 'healthier' option than traditional fast food. They have gluten free buns and offer other options such as veggie burgers, etc..., Customers use an app for ordering/pick up and there is no outdoor drive-thru order board. The Town Manager received an invite to the opening the day prior. Commissioner Dorobantu commented that the Chamber didn't get an invite either. Mr. Roberts explained that the invite came from TX.
- Charter Realty is anticipating that Whole Foods will be opening in the first quarter of 2024. Commissioner Dorobantu hopes that the EDC gets an invite to the opening. Mr. Roberts will do what he can to encourage invites for the commission.

Vice Chairperson P. Burnham gave the following updates:

- Prime Wellness leaving town. They've purchased a former gym on Rte 83.
- A local business is in the process of purchasing land behind McDonalds to expand his own business and a neighbor is interested in expanding theirs. The land is owned by Dalene Flooring. They plan to come before the commission to explain the project and ask for an abatement.
- A project on Rye Street and Sullivan Ave has broken ground. The foundation for the 1st building is part of phase 1. Traffic will exit onto Sullivan Avenue. Buildings will be constructed as interest is expressed and some businesses, that currently occupy his other spaces in town, will be moving into the new space.

10. General Discussion: Gladys Ortiz, of the South Windsor Chamber of Commerce, introduced herself. Vice Chairperson P. Burnham had reached out to the Chamber president to gauge interest in bringing back the businesses expo and including the EDC, as well as any business in South Windsor that wanted to participate. Businesses have expressed interest in an event to Vice Chairperson P. Burnham and the Chamber seem interested in putting an event together. A location needs to be determined that is large enough to accommodate as many businesses as possible. Commissioner Dorobantu stated that it was held at Maneeley's in the past. Vice Chairperson P. Burnham would like to form a subcommittee to brainstorm with Chamber members. Mr. Roberts suggested working with an event planner to ensure all rules and regulations are followed. Commissioner Dorobantu stated that the planning has been done by the Chamber in the past. Ms. Ortiz shared that the Chamber would like to partner with the EDC and asked if it could be held at South Windsor High School since the location is

critical. Commissioner Dorobantu thought it could be held at the lodge since there is plenty of parking. Mr. Paterna suggested reaching out to the owner of Maneeley's to offer upscale food at the event. Vice Chairperson P. Burnham mentioned to the Town Manager that the Town Council had an executive session to discuss an item but the EDC was not given permission to do the same.

11. Executive Session: None.

12. Adjournment: Next meeting is scheduled for 03/22/23

A **motion** was made by Commissioner Jeski and **seconded** by Commissioner Murray to adjourn at 8:05pm and was ***unanimously approved. Motion passed.***

**Respectfully submitted,
Catherine Potter
Commission Clerk**