

MINUTES

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

**REGULAR MEETING
WEDNESDAY, January 27, 2016
TIME: 7:30 P.M.**

PRESENT: Chairperson Paul Burnham, Joseph Kennedy, James Murray, Alternate Dave Marsh (sat for Louise Neary), Susan Burnham, Wayne Kilburn, Bill Jodice, Alternate John Mitchell (sat for Linda Jeski), Dwight Johnson, Edwina Futtner

ABSENT: Louise Neary, Linda Jeski, Alternate Cindy Beaulieu

- 1. Call Meeting to Order:** Chairman P. Burnham called the meeting to order at 7:30pm.
- 2. Roll Call:** The above-mentioned members were introduced.
- 3. New Business**

Presentation by Anthony Mamontoff re: Staybridge Suites: not in attendance-hopefully will be here in February

Presentation by Shawn Jacobaccio re: John Fitch Distilling Co.: Mr. Jacobaccio introduced himself and informed the commission that he bought property at 51 Glendale Road (near Nardi's). He will be constructing a building for manufacture and distribution which will include a tasting room for craft gin. Mr. Jacobaccio plans to build a 9,000 sq. ft. building for distilling and a smaller tasting room. The site is to remain wooded to provide a 'cabin in the woods feel'. He is working towards securing Federal permits but needs to obtain site plan approval before submitting the federal permit application. He has already secured permits for labeling. It is expected to take 6-8 months for Federal permit process to be completed once the application is submitted. Mr. Jacobaccio would like to break ground in March/April 2016 and is hoping to open in October 2016. There are no issues with intellectual property [product name: Steamboat Gin] with an image of a riverboat with oars which was found at the archives of the Library of Congress. Commission members were invited to ask questions at this time.

Commissioner Jodice asked how many jobs would be created. Mr. Jacobaccio envisions the business growing from three initial employees to about eleven by the third year (more if NY and Boston markets open up).

Commissioner S. Burnham asked if there is anything the commission can do to help? Mr. Jacobaccio plans to apply for tax abatement which would help for initial cash flow and stated that there is an issue with the driveway catch basin. The catch basin is currently positioned in the middle of the road where the proposed driveway would come out onto Glendale. He is unsure of costs to relocate the catch basin (currently the catch basin has a grate that would need to be moved or have a solid cover installed). Commissioner S. Burnham recommends joining the Chamber of Commerce to take advantage of marketing opportunities, Lions Club and advertising through www.DiscoverSouthWindsor.com.

Chairperson P. Burnham asked Mr. Jacobaccio to keep in touch and stated that hopefully the abatement application will come before the commission for approval. The commission may need to send a letter of support of a tax abatement.

Regional Bus Study: Chairperson P. Burnham reported that Michele Lipe (town planner) may have attended the meetings and that hopefully she'll be able to update the commission at the February meeting. Chairperson P. Burnham commented that he would like to see improvements on Sullivan Ave and Rye Street. Commissioner Kennedy commented that a bus shelter has been approved for the corner of Rye Street and Commerce Street.

Chairperson P. Burnham will bring information to the next meeting on the charge of the commission members and how the commission can assist businesses to grow.

Commissioner Jodice commented that he thought maybe Mr. Jacobaccio was interested in information about what the commission can do for businesses. Commissioner S. Burnham agreed that it would be beneficial for the commission to understand what can be offered.

4. Other Business

Scott Roberts and Drew Guild to Discuss EDC Website Upgrade at the February Meeting: Chairperson P. Burnham informed the commission that the IT department will be here to discuss ideas and improvements to upgrade the EDC website. Commissioners should look at sites in other towns. Commissioners would like links to real estate websites that have brokers & commercial listings. Chairperson P. Burnham informed the commission that Town Manager Matthew Galligan would like the commission to take on this project in order to help current businesses expand and grow while attracting new businesses to town.

5. Public Participation: None.

6. Approval of Minutes

Minutes from Regular Meeting on 11/18/2015: A **motion** to approve the minutes of November 18, 2015 was made by Commissioner S. Burnham and **seconded** by Commissioner Futtner with the following corrections:

Item #9 1st bullet should read: '...Pola house', the 2nd bullet should read '...expanded their building from 6,500 sq. ft....' and the 7th bullet should read 'Van's R&V'. *Motion was unanimously approved.*

7. Old Business: Commissioner S. Burnham inquired about commission term letters and Chairperson P. Burnham replied that only commissioners whose terms were/are expiring received letters and he also received copies. Commissioner Futtner expressed disappointment in missing the ground breaking for the apartments. Commissioner Mitchell attended said it was well attended. A new restaurant at Evergreen Walk has opened: NIXS.

8. Committee Report

Discover South Windsor: Commissioner S. Burnham attended the last meeting where the group reviewed the 2015 regional visitors guide. The guide will include updates for South Windsor. The guide highlights restaurants & entertainment venues of Connecticut towns. Peter DeMallie is interested in attending an EDC meeting in the future to provide an update. Chairperson P. Burnham will contact him. Commissioner S. Burnham explained the purpose of the site, www.discoversouthwindsor.com, which is updated by Annalise Fox. Commissioners agreed that it would be beneficial to add a link to the EDC site from the Discover South Windsor site.

9. Communications and Remarks

Report from Paul Burnham, Chairperson:

- Chairperson P. Burnham reported that the Town Council held a strategic planning meeting and it was decided that they would like to hire a full time economic development coordinator. The majority of the council is in favor of this proposal.
- Chairperson P. Burnham shared information with commissioners that is handed out to businesses interested in seeking abatement and a questionnaire that the Chamber used when conducting visits on behalf of the town. Commissioner Futtner suggested asking Ms. Fiveash or the Chamber for the names of businesses she had contacted and their responses.
- Chairperson P. Burnham went out in December & January and visited 19 businesses. He has been visiting the town's website for information of applications to be considered and that's how he found out about business activity. He suggested that the commission work on developing questions for an updated survey and then submit them to the Town Manager for approval. It would be beneficial to gather data, identify areas of need & present the information to the council via liaison.
- Chairperson P. Burnham has received feedback that businesses are having a hard time finding qualified employees.
- ALDI's is already at $\frac{3}{4}$ capacity and has an area in the back of the building that could support an expansion but that would be a corporate decision.
- Town Fair Tire is interested in building a distribution center in the area.
- Chairperson P. Burnham asked for plans for the technology park near 291 but hasn't gotten any information.
- The brewery located near Battiston's cleaners will be having a groundbreaking soon. Commissioner Mitchell commented on the well documented fact that there is an increase in the number of craft breweries.
- Commissioner S. Burnham asked if there has been any news about the regionalization of the Chamber. Chairperson P. Burnham reported that South Windsor declined to join the combined Chamber because the majority of chamber members did not want to be absorbed by the larger group and lose events focused on South Windsor businesses. For the time being, the Chamber will remain independent.

10. General Discussion

Next Meeting is scheduled for February 24, 2016 at 7:30 p.m. in the Madden Room.

11. Adjournment

A motion was made by Commissioner S. Burnham and seconded by Commissioner Futtner to adjourn at 9:00pm and was unanimously approved. Motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,

Catherine Potter

Clerk

Approved: February 24, 2016