

SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
CHESHIRE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
Wednesday, April 19, 2017
7:30 a.m. – Room 207/209 – Town Hall

Commissioners Present:

David Pelletier, Derek Gromko, William Stanley, Don Dobbs and Peter Nichols

Commissioner Absent:

Dan O'Connell and Steve Sidoruk

Staff Present:

Jerry Sitko, Economic Development Coordinator

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Pelletier called the meeting to order at 7:30 a.m.

II. ROLL CALL

The roll was called.

III. DETERMINATION OF QUORUM

A quorum was present.

IV. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

All present recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

V. Welcome New Commissioner Peter Nichols

Mr. Pelletier welcomed Peter Nichols as the newest member to the commission.

VI. Election of Officers

Officers proposed for the new term are:

David Pelletier – Chairman
William Stanley – Vice-Chairman
Derek Gromko – Secretary

MOTION by Mr. Dobbs that the names presented be accepted as officers for the new term.

SECONDED by Mr. Stanley.

The motion passed unanimously.

VII. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – REGULAR MEETING – March 21, 2017

MOTION by Mr. Stanley that the minutes from the March 21, 2017 Regular Meeting of the Economic Development Commission be accepted.

SECONDED by Mr. Pelletier.

The motion passed unanimously.

VIII. Communications

There were no communications to report.

IX. Business

a) Discussion with Gerry Amodio of the New Britain Downtown District

Mr. Amodio discussed the Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District Master Plan for the City of New Britain. Camoin Associates Economic Development and Michael J. Andreana, Esq. from Pullman & Comley, LLC, assisted with the development of the master plan. Mr. Amodio said that TIF is a financing method used to enhance economic development. It allows some or all of future property tax revenues from development to be dedicated to support projects. Property tax benefits from projects can be used to support public and private development costs.

TIF revenue in Connecticut has been used for infrastructure, land acquisition, construction, demolition, remodeling, streetscape improvements, capital costs, and professional services, to name a few.

In New Britain TIF revenue will help revitalize the City's downtown and support employment, housing and economic growth. Credit Enhancement Agreements (CEAs), can provide a reimbursement of up to 100% of the incremental real property tax revenue produced from only the captured assessed value on a particular property from 1 year and up to the full term of the district. TIF benefits cannot be taken with other City benefits on the same value of property.

Mr. Amodio gave some examples of how TIF revenue would be applied for development in New Britain. The former police department building has been demolished and will be newly developed for business and CT fastrak which is adjacent to the site. In addition, the mayor wanted the vacant Stanley Works site to be included in the Downtown District so that it could benefit from TIF revenue. It is close Little Poland and other enterprising areas in the city.

Mr. Amodio stressed that municipal department heads should all be on board with this concept. A TIF committee (Development Authority) should be appointed to oversee decisions. The committee should be comprised of property owners in town, municipal department heads and government officials.

Developers are attracted by money in TIF zones that stays in areas that are proposed for development. Development can be mixed use, i.e., a combination of retail and residential.

The TIF process for Connecticut follows these steps:

1. Legislative body affirms that TIF will benefit the municipality.
2. Master plan must be submitted to the Planning and Zoning Commission 90 days prior to approval.
3. Public hearings must be held on the proposed master plan.
4. Eligibility and assessed value require confirmation.
5. Master plan is submitted to municipal legislative body.

6. Municipal legislative body approves master plan and establishes tax increment district.

Once a TIF is in place, the next one will be easier to develop. The first TIF is the template for those that follow.

b) Speakers for Future Meetings

Michael Goman of Goman & York will be the speaker at the EDC meeting in May to discuss trends in commercial real estate development. Mr. Goman has more than 30 years of experience in the real estate industry and has been involved with acquisition or disposition of over \$3 billion of commercial real estate.

c) Incentive Policy

The Incentive subcommittee met on March 31 and reviewed information about enterprise zones and incentive programs from 21 surrounding communities and municipalities comparable to Cheshire. Two modifications are being considered to the current policy which expires on June 30:

1. A partial waiver of building permit fees for commercial and industrial development.
2. Increasing from 45 to 50 percent the assessed value of new construction that would not be taxable for either a 3 or 7-year period.

A recommendation about the policy will be developed and discussed at the EDC meeting in May and forwarded to the town council for review.

d) 2017 Work Plan

Mr. Sitko has updated the work plan on April 11, 2017 to reflect recent activity and distributed updates to the commission members.

e) Liaison Reports

There was nothing to report.

f) Coordinator's Report

Plans for an office building are progressing on the former Cheshire Cinema/Huxley Motors site.

Consignment Originals is moving to Maplecroft Plaza in July 2017.

An application for a \$500,000 STEAP Grant has been submitted for Additional parking near West Main Street.

Mr. Sitko will be meeting with the deputy commissioner of DECD today to request that the \$750,000 brownfields grant be used for phase I of the Ball & Socket Arts project.

Newspaper articles were included in today's meeting materials:

Cheshire Herald – April 13, 2017 Re: Arnett Muldrow Report

NY Times - April 9, 2017 Re: Main Street

Hartford Business Journal – April 3, 2017 Re: CT Budget

Wall Street Journal – April 12, 2017 Re: Cities & Companies

VIII. Adjournment

Mr. Pelletier adjourned the meeting at 8:30 a.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Dawn Guite
Recording Secretary
Economic Development Commission