

**REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**  
**CHESHIRE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION**  
**Tuesday, May 16, 2017**  
**7:30 a.m. – Room 207/209 – Town Hall**

Commissioners Present:

David Pelletier, Derek Gromko, Steve Sidoruk, William Stanley, Don Dobbs,  
Peter Nichols.

Commissioner Absent:

Dan O'Connell

Staff Present:

Jerry Sitko, Economic Development Coordinator  
Bill Voelker, Town Planner  
Jeff Natale, Planning and Zoning Commission  
Jim Jinx, Planning and Zoning Commission

Also Present:

Michael Goman, Goman & York Property Advisors, LLC

**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**

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

**VII. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – Special Meeting – April 19, 2017**

**MOTION** by Mr. Stanley that the minutes from the April 19, 2017 Special Meeting of the Economic Development Commission be accepted.

SECONDED by Mr. Nichols.

The motion passed unanimously.

## **VIII. Communications**

There was nothing to report.

## **IX. Business**

- a) Discussion with Michael Goman of Goman & York Property Advisors, LLC

Michael Goman of Goman & York discussed trends in commercial real estate development. His company deals with three areas of commercial real estate development; brokerage which is managed by his partner, Tom York, service development; covering institutional groups, colleges and universities, and hospitals in the Hartford region, and economic development where the Town of Bloomfield has been a client for 3 years. A market research approach is taken to determine where demand will come from.

Current trends show that the recovery of commercial real estate in Connecticut is uneven. It is a challenging market where job creation, business formation, and significant vacancies are factors. Retail stores are closing with online shopping being a contributor (Amazon may buy BJ's). Rural Connecticut is feeling the impact on marginal properties; no new development, teardowns and conversion, and reductions. Smaller businesses are emerging based on local and regional environments and demographic/socio-economic factors. Based on these factors, entertainment, leisure, and healthcare are key areas of business focus. These businesses are looking for immediate availability of property and are refurbishing older buildings.

The regulatory environment also presents challenges. The ideal approach is to be swift, simple and certain. Swift encompasses time; concurrent reviews, special meetings, timetables. Simple means minimizing the number of boards and commissions, and certain defines eliminating discretionary language. Businesses do not want to invest money and time to be turned down.

Keys to success include defining priorities in detail, choosing top 5, and identifying resources and businesses that can be successful in your town.

b) Speakers for Future Meetings

Carter or Adam Winstanley, who own the former “Alexion” building, were mentioned as future speakers at an EDC meeting.

c) Incentive Policy

The Incentive subcommittee met twice to review the current policy which expires on June 30. Enterprise zones and incentive programs from 21 surrounding communities and municipalities comparable to Cheshire were discussed. Several changes to the policy are being proposed:

1. 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.
2. Adding language to provide for personal property tax assistance, at the discretion of the town council, provided the value of new business personal property to the Grand List exceeds \$500,000.
3. Also, the committee proposes modifications to the ordinance regarding building permit fees to provide for partial exemptions for fees associated with commercial/industrial projects.

Mr. Sitko included a copy of the revised draft policy with the meeting package.

**MOTION** by Mr. Pelletier to approve that the Incentive Policy recommendations be presented at the Town Council meeting on June 13<sup>th</sup>. The EDC recommends that the revised incentive policy be approved for an additional 3 years.

SECONDED by Mr. Gromko.

The motion passed unanimously.

d) 2017 Work Plan

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

e) Liaison Reports

Mr. Sitko thanked the subcommittee members who spent time and effort on the Incentive Policy. The changes to the policy will be discussed at the Town Council meeting on June 13<sup>th</sup>.

The internal working group continues to develop the website and will do so through the summer months.

Mr. Sitko will be attending a meeting on Thursday, May 18<sup>th</sup> with the Naugatuck Valley Economic Development Corporation where he has submitted two projects: 1) \$500,000 funding for parking off of West Main Street at the trail, 2) \$3.5M funding for infrastructure at the Interchange Zone. CEDS is important when being considered for federal funding. A request for infrastructure funding has been sent to Representative Liz Linehan for consideration for bonding.

Mr. Sitko will request funding in the Capital Budget for the parking on West Main Street and possibly infrastructure for the Interchange Zone and will also look at a TIF district for infrastructure funding.

The STEAP grant application for \$500,000 is with the Office of Policy and Management.

f) Coordinator's Report

A text change to revise parking requirements is before the Planning and Zoning Commission. The public hearing process has commenced. Once approved, a medical office building developer is expected to submit plans.

The former "Alexion" property is drawing a lot of interest. Mr. Sitko will inform the commission of progress, i.e., whether it goes under contract.

The former CITGO site in the south end will be occupied by John Ricci, who is moving his office there.

Domino's Pizza is coming to the plaza and will be located near the laundromat.

A meeting was held in April for the Ball & Socket Arts project. Mr. Sitko, the town engineer, and the deputy commissioner of CECD attended the meeting. The deputy commissioner agreed to release the brownfields remediation grant for \$750,000 for phase 1. The contract is currently being drafted by the town attorney.

The PZC approved a change to industrial zone regulations to increase lot coverage in I-2 Zone from 25 percent to 35 percent. Also approved is reduction of the required minimum lot size for I-2 Zones from 120,000 square feet to 40,000 square feet, provided access management is approved.

Mr. Sitko met and spoke before the Cheshire Village Improvement Alliance this month to bring them up to speed on business activity in town.

An anti-bligh ordinance is being developed.

#### **VIII. Adjournment**

Mr. Pelletier adjourned the meeting at 9:05 a.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Dawn Guite  
Recording Secretary  
Economic Development Commission