

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
CHESHIRE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
Tuesday, March 20, 2018
7:30 a.m. – Room 207/209 – Town Hall

Commissioners Present:

David Pelletier, Derek Gromko, Don Dobbs, Peter Nichols, Steve Sidoruk

Commissioners Absent:

Dan O'Connell, William Stanley

Staff Present:

Jerry Sitko, Economic Development Coordinator

Guests:

Patti Flynn-Harris, Council Liaison, Mark Thomas, Cheshire Chamber of Commerce

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.

V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – Regular Meeting – February 20, 2018

MOTION by Mr. Stanley that the minutes from the February 20, 2018 Regular Meeting of the Economic Development Commission be accepted.

SECONDED by Mr. Nichols

The motion passed unanimously.

VI. Communications

VII. Business

a) Speakers for Future Meetings

Mr. Pelletier will invite Jim Redeker, State Commissioner of the Department of Transportation, to the EDC meeting in April. Also suggested was inviting Brian Bedard and Bill Voelker to future meetings.

b) Tax Increment Financing

The town attorney has made comments to the draft contract from Camoin Associates. Mr. Sitko is working through the recommended changes with Camoin. Camoin suggested that an advisory committee be established to oversee the project. Mr. Pelletier would like the EDC to oversee the project with representation from the town council, chamber of commerce, planning and zoning commission and the assessor's and planning offices.

c) Draft Modifications to Planning & Zoning Regulations

Modifications are being considered by the planning and zoning commission. Mr. Sitko included a draft of the proposed amendments.

A proposal to reduce the frontage and setbacks in the I-2 zone will be the subject of a public hearing in May.

d) Election of Officers

According to the bylaws, election of officers is to take place at the April EDC meeting. Current officers are: Mr. Pelletier (chairman), Mr. Stanley (vice chairman), and Mr. Gromko (secretary). Mr. Pelletier expressed interest to continue as chairman.

e) Liaison Reports

Patti-Flynn Harris said that focus of the town council is on finalizing the town budget.

Mark Thomas said that the Home and Garden Show will take place on Saturday, March 24.

f) Coordinator's Report

- Sky Management Services (acquisition of 611-617 West Johnson Avenue)

Sky Management Services is the new owner and intends to improve the property. The area comprises four buildings with 210,000 square feet on about 20 acres. About 70,000 square feet is available.

- Medical office building proposed for former location of Cheshire Cinema/Huxley Motors

Construction is expected to begin next month.

- Ball & Socket Arts

A final contract should be coming from the state for the \$750,000 brownfields remediation grant. Fuss & O'Neil will be working with the town on remediation of phase one of the project.

- State-owned land in NE quadrant of Interchange Zone

Mr. Milone submitted testimony for the public hearing on March 19, 2018 before the Government Administration and Elections Committee regarding state-owned land in the northeast quadrant of the Interchange Zone. He presented examples of what Cheshire is doing to expand economic growth: enhanced incentive policy, possibility of developing a Tax Increment Financing District (TIF), discussing the possibility of cost sharing for engineering and permitting for construction of a water main extension. Planning and zoning is considering modifications to its regulations so that the town can entertain new development activity. The town is doing its best to continue to grow its Grand List given the loss of state aid over the past few years. Cheshire would market the property to bring development and new jobs to the town and state.

- Defense/ Enterprise Zone

A concern is that the Office of Policy and Management will cut reimbursements to cities and towns; withholding 40%. The five year tax abatement breakdown for real and personal property is 40% (state), 40% (town), 20% (company/business owner).

- Economic development activity

Mr. Sitko reported that there is interest in the interchange zone and former Alexion property. John Ricci has received interest in the former Colorama site. A bank is interested in a property on South Main Street for a 2,900 SF branch.

- Housing data profile for Cheshire

Mr. Sitko included 2018 housing data profile information as part of the meeting package. Information is provided by Partnership for Strong Communities.

- Wall Street Journal article of March 5, 2018 Re: trade school was provided by Mr. Stanley for information to the Commission.

- Infosys

Infosys is planning to develop a technology and innovation hub in Hartford - a \$20.6 million project creating 1,000 jobs by 2020. Infosys President Ravi Kumar said that he is excited about the expansion in Connecticut. It will strengthen the company's ability to help clients compete in the insurance, healthcare and manufacturing sectors.

VIII. Adjournment

Mr. Pelletier adjourned the meeting at 8:00 a.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Dawn Guite, Recording Secretary, EDC