

The Newtown Economic Development Commission held a special meeting on Tuesday April 8, 2014, in Meeting Room #3 at the Newtown Municipal Center, 3 Primrose Street, Newtown, CT 06470.

THESE MINUTES ARE SUBJECT TO APPROVAL BY THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

Present: Chairwoman Jean Leonard; Don Sharpe; Joseph Humeston ; Martin Gersten (via phone); James Gulalo Al Roznicki and Matthew Mihalcik.

Absent: Vice Chairman Elana Bertram and Paul Fadus.

Also Present: Elizabeth Stocker, Director Economic and Community Development; Betsy Paynter, Economic Development Coordinator; Wes Thompson.

Jean Leonard called the meeting to order at 1:31 PM.

Public Participation:

None

Meeting Minute Review:

Donald Sharpe motioned to approve the minutes from the March 11 special meeting. **Joe Humeston** seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Reports / Discussion / Action:

Chairwoman, EDC

- **Charter Revision** – No update. An issue exists with the disposition of town owned properties. A letter will be drafted to MaryAnn Jacob (LC) with a voice on the EDC's position.
- **STEAP Business Assistance Grant**- The remaining funds from this grant must be spent by the end of 2014. Discussion took place as to whether the grant was for Sandy Hook only or all of Newtown.

Wes Thompson attended the last SHOP meeting, reporting the following:

- **Mike Burton** has resigned as the head of SHOP. **Joe Hemingway** is now the leader. The rest of the board remains the same;
- CT Main Street has been working on a branding project for SH;
- Monthly events may be planned going forward to drive traffic to SH. A seminar for women owned businesses is being held April 8 at the Villa;
- A wine fest will be held in June;
- SHOP wants to extend the contract of the brand steward to Dec. 2014 for an additional \$7,500. SHOP passed the recommendation at their meeting. **Rob Manna**, LRM, may come to EDC meeting in May regarding SH streetscape alternatives to be paid for by STEAP grant. **Elizabeth Stocker** noted SHOP proposals: 1) \$285K for streetscape project to SHS with granite curbs; 2) \$243K for same project with no granite curbs; 3) \$146K for expansion to Dauti property, with granite curbs, lighting, etc. **Jean Leonard** noted that these projects would spend at least the entire STEAP grant. **Elizabeth Stocker** will check with the State to see if the projects that use STEAP funding need to be brick and mortar projects. **Jean Leonard** stated that she likes

the streetscape, but more of Newtown could be helped with the funds. **Wes Thompson** is helping SHOP get not for profit status. **Elana Bertram** is also working on it. Much discussion ensued as to the possible combination of projects that could be done with remaining STEAP funds (brand steward, streetscape options). Discussion also brought up if grant was for SH or all of Newtown. **Elizabeth Stocker** stated that the EDC had been criticized for the first round of grant awards since they included all Newtown businesses. **Donald Sharpe** suggested spending \$20-\$30K for a consultant to bring development into Newtown. **Mr. Sharpe** asked what process had been used for a company to do the work for the SH streetscape. He did not believe that the bid had been advertised in the papers. **Elizabeth Stocker** disagreed with him and noted that she believed that the project had been competitively bid. **Ms.Stocker** also noted that some grant funds had already been spent on the streetscape project.

Discussion also took place around the balance of the STEAP grant. The current numbers for the grant are:

STEAP Business Assistance Grant		Status 4/1/14
Balance	\$173,373.50	
Committed	\$8,600.00	CT Main Street
	\$6,300.00	SHOP Brand Steward
	<u>\$1,484.50</u>	SHOP advertising
Uncommitted	\$156,989.00	

Joe Humeston motioned to request that staff contact SHOP to request that they bring a proposal forward for the remaining STEAP funds for action at the May meeting. This should include an estimate of the time necessary for permitting and completion of the project. **Al Roznicki** seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Discussion happened as to whether property owners should be asked to help fund future streetscape projects. It was noted that a sidewalk project up to the flagpole was planned. **Al Roznicki** asked if there was a way to get a deadline extension from the State if completion of streetscape is expected to go past Dec. 2014.

- **Operating Budget FY '14-'15**-No discussion

- **BIP – Summit Property Group – 146 S. Main Street** – The application’s last step for approval is to go to the LC tomorrow night.

Director Economic and Community Development

- **Business Visitations / Inquiries /Updates** – **Betsy Paynter** stated that the Buy Local campaign has been going for one year, seminars have been successful, a website upgrade is planned, a sell sheet is being created, a meeting for developers is being held on April 9 and she has been attending various networking meetings.

Elizabeth Stocker discussed the following commercial / industrial inquiries:

- Lexington Village -noting that two local businesses are looking to purchase space in the complex. The remaining space will be leased. A baker who had interest in space at Fairfield Hills may be interested in space in this location.
 - A staffer from Congresswoman Esty's office contacted **Ms. Stocker** regarding a company from Portugal interested in 75-100 acres for a \$114 million project for the manufacture of building materials. The State EDC told the prospect not to go directly to the towns.
 - Hilario has future plans for better storage of their equipment. The project will also include expansion of the convenience store and improvement of traffic flow for the site.
 - NJ behavioral health hospital may be interested in FH. They would require a Certificate of Need from the State of CT.
 - CBRE / Paul Hoffman – is looking for land for a NE distribution facility (350K – 500K sq ft). It would create 150 jobs and 30-40 trucks would leave the facility before morning rush hour each day. Discussion ensued as to whether the inventory of the warehouse would be taxable. It would not, but the equipment in the facility would be.
 - JR's Garage – the property is in the foreclosure process. There has been interest in developing the property.
 - Solar Park-has interest in the Noranda Metals – Prospect Road property.
 - A commercial interest has been received for Woodbury Hall at Fairfield Hills. The first floor would be retail, second floor would be offices, third floor, possibly residential if zoning is put in place.
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- **Bead of Roses** – grand reopening is scheduled for April 26 at 6 PM.
 - **Upcoming seminars** – three are scheduled for this month.
 - **Brownfields Update-**
 - **Batchelder** – a walk through was done for a hazardous building materials assessment;
 - **Glen Road / Watkins** – petroleum assessments have been approved by the EPA;
 - **EPA Cleanup Grant – Fairfield Hills** – an award was made for the single family house abatement. Material disposal is still being discussed for Danbury Hall.
 - **M2A zone amendment** – CBRE proposal will require a zoning amendment. Donald Sharpe motioned to recommend taking to Planning and Zoning an amendment to the M2A, adding distribution center, warehouse and / or wholesale business to the regulation. Joe Humeston seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Al Roznicki asked why the P&Z sent it to the EDC for bringing forward, was there a reason?

Ongoing / Old Business Discussions and Actions:

- **Developer Focus Group** – meeting is planned for April 9. This will bring developers and land owners together.
- **Hawleyville Sewer** – Benefit assessments are being done. Property owners need to decide if they will hook into the sewer as it is being installed. There may be a cost savings to doing it this way for the property owners. Construction could begin in the fall, with the project expected to take six weeks. WSA will discuss the fees at their meeting on Thursday April 10, 2014.

Donald Sharpe stated that he would be resigning as of today, after five years on the EDC. He noted that he has enjoyed the time on the commission.

Donald Sharpe motioned to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by **Joe Humeston** and passed unanimously. The meeting ended at 2:59 PM.

Respectfully submitted by Christal Preszler

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George Benson, Director
Planning and Land Use

TOWN OF NEWTOWN
Land Use Agency

March 3, 2014

Proposed Amendment to the Town Of Newtown Zoning Regulations

Article V, Industrial Zone, Section 3 Industrial Zone M-2A

Add to Permitted Uses:

5.03.250 – Distribution Center, Warehouse and/or *Wholesale Business*.

*to PZC for public hearing:
May 1st, 2014*