

TOWN OF OLD SAYBROOK

Economic Development Commission

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EDC Minutes Thursday, July 12, 2012

Present: John DeCristoforo, David Cole, Bruce Greenfield, Jim Keating, Liz Swenson, Maura Richards, Todd Roberts and Wilma Asch.


Absent: Lauren Ashe, Charles Polka

Guests: First Selectman Carl Fortuna, Selectman Scott Giegerich

- Chairman Roberts called the meeting to order at 7:07PM in the EDC Office in Town Hall.
- Welcome Maura Richards our new Alternate Commissioner
- Discussion with the Selectmen
 - First Selectman Fortuna began with a discussion of appointments, the role the Town Charter assigns to the Selectmen and the traditions of the EDC and other commissions. The EDC traditions will be considered in future appointments.
 - A report about the EDC which was prepared by Executive Director Asch and Commissioner DeCristoforo was reviewed. Among other things Commissioner Greenfield pointed out that when he was Chairman he made a point of visiting with existing businesses ... the retention part of our responsibility. Commissioner Keating pointed out that the Mullin Report, done about a decade ago determined that the town had about 70% of its grand list in residential property, an appropriate level for Old Saybrook. With changes in taxes on business equipment and the loss of some businesses we are now at about 86% residential. We have work to do.
 - Much of the time the EDC spent with the Selectmen was focused on opportunities. The First Selectman has been active in seeking business development for Old Saybrook. He has been focused on returning the Police Station to the town center and development of community spaces in the area. He has been working with the owner of the large property on North Main Street. He has chartered the Route 1 Task Force for the area we designated as the Marina District. There was discussion of retail spaces, of a full Interstate 95 Exit 67 Interchange and of a Home Based Business initiative.
 - The meeting was positive and upbeat, we look forward to working together to the benefit of Old Saybrook.
- On a motion (DeCristoforo/Cole) the Minutes of June 14, 2012 were accepted.

- Old Business
 - Entrance Signs update, Commissioner DeCristoforo
 - We are on the agenda of the Architectural Review Board on July 23, 2012; we hope to complete the project before the ground freezes. The signs are being manufactured.
 - Rack Cards, Commissioner Swenson
 - The new cards will be available for the August meeting.
 - New Business
 - STEAP Grants
 - Commissioner Swenson reported that she had successfully obtained one of these grants in a previous role. We should consider this source of funds as we consider future projects. Selectman Giegerich reported the current deadline is September 28, 2012. Old Saybrook has used these grants in the past.
 - Nominating Committee Report
 - Jim Keating presented the Nominating Committee' s proposed slate of officers for the coming year. They are:
 - Todd Roberts – Chairman
 - Liz Swenson – Vice Chairman
 - Jim Keating – Secretary
 - Election of Officers
 - A motion was made and seconded (Keating/Cole) to cast one unanimous ballot for the proposed slate of officers. The motion passed.
- Comments from Chairman Roberts made in the course of the meeting. He also reported that he would attempt to clarify Commissioner Polka's future role in the EDC.
- Executive Directors Report Wilma distributed her report and mentioned several business movements. She also reported on a Regional Home Based Business group and suggested having them attend our August 9th meeting, the Commission agreed.
- Chairman Roberts adjourned the meeting at 8:35PM.

Respectfully submitted,



James D. Keating – Secretary