



TOWN OF OLD SAYBROOK
Economic Development Commission

Carol Conklin, Chair
Elizabeth Swenson, Vice Chair
John DeCristoforo, Secretary/Treasurer

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David Cole
James Keating
Dr. David Shearer
Bruce Greenfield, Alternate

SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

May 14, 2015

Economic Development Office, Old Saybrook Town Hall

7:00 pm

CALL TO ORDER

Vice Chair called the meeting to order at 7:34 pm

ROLL CALL

Members Present: Elizabeth Swenson, John DeCristoforo, James Keating, David Cole

Members Absent: Carol Conklin, Bruce Greenfield, David Shearer

Staff Present:

Susan W. Beckman, Economic Development Director

Chris Costa, Zoning Enforcement Officer

Attorney Eliza Heins

PUBLIC

Attorney David Royston

Penny Parker

Susan Voigt

Parker Heinemann

PUBLIC QUESTION & COMMENT

REGULAR BUSINESS

A. Approval of Minutes: April 30, 2015 and May 7, 2015 Special Meetings

MOTION: To approve the minutes of the April 30, 2015 and May 7, 2015 EDC Special Meetings. **MADE:** by D. Cole. **SECONDED:** by J. Keating. **VOTED IN FAVOR:** D. Cole, J. DeCristoforo, J. Keating, E. Swenson **OPPOSED:** None; **ABSTAINED:** None; **APPROVED** 4-0-0

B. Correspondence and Announcements – The Old Saybrook Chamber of Commerce requested \$100 in support for the Arts & Crafts Festival in July.

MOTION: To support the Old Saybrook Chamber of Commerce Arts & Crafts Festival with a \$100 contribution. **MADE:** by J. Keating. **SECONDED:** by J. DeCristoforo. **VOTED IN FAVOR:** D. Cole, J. DeCristoforo, J. Keating, E. Swenson **OPPOSED:** None; **ABSTAINED:** None; **APPROVED** 4-0-0

OLD BUSINESS

A. Mariner's Way Zoning

D Royston introduced himself and explained his request to address the EDC is due to the interest of his clients and as a resident. He only expresses his views as a paid attorney for his clients potentially affected by zoning changes along Mariner's Way.

D Royston met with C. Costa to understand what had been discussed to this point regarding zoning on the EDC. D Royston stated that the process is important and his clients are interested in ensuring their rights to develop their property as it is currently zoned. His clients are not affected by proposed changes to the B-3 zone. They are, however, potentially affected by changes to the Industrial Zone areas. Houses currently non-conforming in the Industrial Zone may not benefit from a change in zone to B-3 because in the future those properties may be more useful as Industrial. Pedestrian Node regulations and some changes to the zones are desirable. Parking off the street to the rear of buildings is a device to allow more flexible use. He suggested the EDC ought not to be looking at Planned Residential Developments (PRD) among the uses in the Mariner's Way Plan. PRD's are residential zones. D Royston believes PRD would only be appropriate in an overlay district. His clients don't have a problem with PRD as an overlay. He suggested getting the commercial areas into Mariner's Way and move forward with others later.

Bruce Greenfield joined the meeting at 7:50pm and was seated for David Shearer.

D Royston commented on other aspects being considered for Mariner's Way zoning:

- limiting size of buildings within a 350 ft setback from the Boston Post Rd– D Royston would like to see what is drafted and reserved comments until then to see how it's worded. J Keating asked what the concern would be. D Royston stated that building size limitations in this setback area would affect his clients if it prevents a use of the property to the rear by being too narrowly defined.
- D Royston requests that when the EDC gets to the point of writing of regulations that he be allowed opportunity to comment to provide his clients' and developer's perspectives. Where conflicts arise, the Town will have the final decision on how zoning is written. He hopes that nothing is set as of yet because he wants an opportunity to work with the zoning attorney and the EDC to ensure there is as much agreement as possible to the new zoning regulations.
- D Royston thinks there should be caps on the building sizes. A design district is desirable that includes retail possibilities. B-4 allows 85,000sf per building but also allows multiple buildings on a lot with appropriate space for the specified separation and setbacks from the lot lines. Seeing a developer's prospective design is a better way to determine the use for the land and this can be accomplished using the Design District. The single building size, the number of buildings in relation to each other, the height of the buildings, should all be considered. Zoning restrictions should not preclude reasonable development given the character of the area and of the Town of Old Saybrook.
- D Royston would like to assist the process by providing drafts of language to the EDC for consideration.
- D Royston said time is crucial. A letter of intent has not come to fruition because of the absence of the new zoning regulations. At the same time there is a potential short-term lease of the property for a business that is not in line with the new plan for Mariner's Way.

L Swenson thanked D Royston for his time and the perspective of his clients. The EDC intends to create value to the land and make the area more attractive to potential developers and businesses.

C Costa added that it may be more efficient for the staff to work with D Royston and E Heins to draft text and then present a draft to the EDC. J DeCristoforo commented that E Heins and C Costa should draft text based on EDC discussion and review D Royston's draft for similarities and

differences. L Swenson would like to see a draft by E Heins and D Royston side-by-side. D Royston wants to provide a draft that takes into account what he understands as the desires of the EDC and his clients. He drafted regulations as a suggestion using the existing overlay district regulation as a framework. D Royston can provide a draft next week. J Keating thinks it's in EDC and Town's interest to allow staff and D Royston work together to ensure efficiency.

S. Voigt owns The Herbery in Old Saybrook and commented that she is interested in maintaining the appearance of the Town and it is possible to make larger-sized stores look good with good planning and architecture. The way the structures are designed should be more important to the Town than the amount of space under the roof. The size of structures is not as important as the design and architecture of the building. Anything we can do to bring more people, better appearances and more tax income to the Town is desirable.

L Swenson asked the size of Max's Place buildings. D Royston said each of the larger buildings is approx. 50,000sf.

D Royston commented that the Stop'N'Shop building in its entirety is a very large building. L Swenson mentioned Old Mystic Village as a good example of what would be desirable in Mariner's Way. L Swenson asked D Royston his opinion on why the Industrial Zone had not been developed. He said that the lack of sewer is a factor and the idea of holding onto the Industrial Zone for future industrial development doesn't make sense because there is not demand for manufacturing sites. L Swenson said any development should also be considered for its contribution to potential jobs that provide a living wage. J Keating asked D Royston his opinion on what types of businesses would consider Mariner's Way. D Royston responded saying retail and other non-industrial uses.

D Royston talked about Gladeview. It was built where it is after the developer applied to change the regulations in the Industrial Zone to allow convalescent homes. For the bulk of Mariner's Way he said retail should be allowed in an overlay zone. J Keating asked if hotel is considered retail. D Royston said yes and it should be allowed in the overlay.

L Swenson asked E Heins to draft text and have D Royston make comments. The EDC will have a Special Meeting on Tuesday, May 19 at 7pm to review the draft by E. Heins and C Costa.

B. Spirit of Old Saybrook Award – No Update

NEW BUSINESS

A. Zoning Commission Referral

“Main Street Connection Park – Phase 1” Application for Site Plan Review for park and municipal parking lot. Business B-1 District, CAM Zone, Pedestrian Node

225 Main Street, Assessor's Map 30, Lot 58

Applicant: Town of Old Saybrook Agent: Geoffrey Jacobson, P.E.

Jeff Jacobson presented the proposed plan for the Main Street Connection Park – Phase I on behalf of the Town of Old Saybrook. The parking lot and park is a 2-phase project. Phase I has a parking lot and sidewalk with an extension for a potential transit stop. The Planning Commission has requested that a crosswalk to be added across the street to the Kate and the State DOT will be contacted with that request. A walkway leads toward Lynde Street and what will be a park in Phase II. The Phase I parking lot includes handicapped parking and an electric vehicle charging station. Bocce Courts are planned for the area to the west of the tower. L Swenson asked about options to ensure the color of the sidewalk is maintained. Jeff said brick sidewalks such as those in Deep River are put on a concrete base and have held up well. Full depth coloring is also a

possibility. L Swenson asked about maintenance. Jeff said the bricks in Deep River have held up very well for five years but would be more costly than stamped concrete. D Cole asked about the walkway to Lynde Street. Jeff explained the walkway and the easement that has been granted by Frontier. B Greenfield asked how many parking spaces. Jeff responded there are 31. D Cole asked about lighting. Lighting is expected to match the lighting at the Kate but will be LED. There is a seating area and planting beds along Main Street and around the parking lot. B Greenfield asked about public facilities. They are planned for Phase II. L Swenson requested that the EDC have an opportunity to comment on the design sooner in the process so that changes can be made. Jeff said that was a common request among commissions. Staff from Park & Rec, the First Selectman, Economic Development and Land Use were involved in the planning.

L Swenson asked why the park was not on Main Street. Jeff responded that it was not possible to get a driveway past the communications tower enclosure to the area that will be developed during Phase II. There are no firm plans for Phase II. Jeff said based on his presentations, commissions would like more input on Phase II. Jeff's estimates bring the cost to approximately \$600,000 with a contingency. Benches and trees may be donated to help keep costs down. The Bocce Courts will be oyster flour. Water from the parking lot will drain into the state basin.

L Swenson would prefer to have real bricks on the sidewalk or colored cement. There should be a place to sit along Main Street south of the driveway and to the north near the Frontier property.

Parking will help alleviate parking issues when there are events at the Kate. There is a bike rack at the rear of the parking lot. There was a suggestion at a different commission meeting to have a covered bike parking area.

MOTION: To recommend to the Zoning Commission approval of the Main Street Connection Park – Phase I with the following modifications: use brick sidewalks constructed with a concrete base to ensure they remain even and free of vegetation or with full-depth colored cement; additional benches on Main Street; and additional bike racks; **MADE:** by B. Greenfield. **SECONDED:** by D. Cole. **VOTED IN FAVOR:** D. Cole, J. DeCristoforo, B. Greenfield, J. Keating, E. Swenson. **OPPOSED:** None; **ABSTAINED:** None; **APPROVED** 5-0-0

PUBLIC QUESTION & COMMENT – none

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: To adjourn the meeting at 9:25p.m. until the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Economic Development Commission on June 11, 2015 at 7:00 p.m. at 302 Main Street, Town Hall, EDC Office, First Floor; **MADE:** by D. Cole. **SECONDED:** by J. DeCristoforo. **VOTED IN FAVOR:** D. Cole, J. DeCristoforo, B. Greenfield, J. Keating, E. Swenson. **OPPOSED:** None; **ABSTAINED:** None; **APPROVED** 5-0-0

Respectfully,
Susan W. Beckman
Economic Development Director
Acting Recording Clerk