

Town of Stonington  
Economic Development Commission  
Regular Meeting  
September 16, 2010

**Members Present:** Blunt White, Wendy Bury, Ed Planeta, Ed Hart, Paul Burgess, Robynne Madison, Dan Oliverio, Alternates: Pete Glankoff  
**Members Absent:** John Delmhorst, Dan Barber  
Alternates: Nat Arata

The meeting was called to order by Chairman White at 7:03 PM. The minutes of the June 24, 2010 meeting were accepted as read.

**Old Business:** Wendy Bury reported that the website traffic has not been significant, and that the earlier high traffic from a NY company was only due to checking out the site for design features (using same website creator/vendor).

Chairman White introduced new member Robynne Madison, and new alternate member Peter Glankoff and asked them to give a brief biography for the Commission and public.

Chairman White reported that the P&Z Signage Regulation changes are proceeding toward a public hearing by the end of the year, and that EDC will need to be active during the public hearing process.

Wendy Bury and Ed Planeta reported on progress of their sub groups for Solutions for Stonington, Non-profits and Manufacturing groups respectively. Twenty six people attended the Non-profits meeting in July. Efforts are being directed toward improving communications with the First Selectman's office, and developing and continuing an organizational support group. The Manufacturing group has had good responses, and is developing outreach efforts for networking efforts aimed at providing value to the town. At their July meeting a Westerly based business expressed interest in finding a building in town (30-50K square foot). EDC has established a working dialogue with them.

**New Business: Real Estate**

Chairman White introduced the brokers representing the three featured sites, and the meeting continued in a round table format with members of the Commission, and the public present, expressing opinions asking questions of the brokers regarding each property. Planning Director Bill Hasse presented copies of data regarding lot descriptions, assessed values, Zoning Regulations, and assisted in answering questions.

1.) **Pfizer Property** (Lot 70-14 GBR-130 & LI-130) – 82 +/- acres raw land, Taugwonk Road - Agent - Jonathan Putnam; Broker - Cushman and Wakefield

Mr. Putnam stated:

- \* Large lot with good road frontage.
- \* Area is essentially rural residential.
- \* Lack of public water and sewer presents difficulty for commercial development; however

three phase/440v electrical service is available along Taugwonk Road north to Stonington Country Club.

- \* Split zone also presents difficulty for commercial development.
- \* Remedial environmental work is proceeding on the LI-130 portion of the site. Status of work is not known.
- \* Asking price is \$1,600,000 or \$19,000 per acre.
- \* Some property abutters have shown an interest.
- \* There is presently low interest for office space in New London County.

Comments:

- \* The property could be split along the zoning line creating a 50 acre rear residential flag lot and a 30 acre frontage light industrial lot.
- \* If the wetlands were flagged and mapped and percolation and test pits were completed the scale of light industrial and residential development could be determined and would assist in marketing.

2.) **Coogan Property** (Lots 172-2-5, RM-15) 55 +/- acres Route 27 and Clara Drive raw land. Agent - Les Bray, Broker - William Pitt Sotheby's International

Mr. Bray stated:

- \* Small Cape on Route 27 area of lot. Remainder of lot is wooded and undeveloped.
- \* Town POCD recommends maintenance of present zoning status (RM-15), density of 2.9 units per acre.
- \* Given proximity and location could be suitable for development other than residential.
- \* Owned by a trust, beneficiaries are interested in working with the town, but there is limited time with pressure coming from Probate Court to sell.
- \* Asking price is \$7,500,000 or \$136,000 per acre.

Comments :

- \* The Mystic Seaport, Aquarium and Pequot Sepos Nature Center support retaining as much of the pastoral nature of the site as possible in any future development plan.
- \* The next update to the POCD is scheduled for 2014.
- \* Could some form of public use be possible? Would require significant political action and support.
- \* Given current business conditions a purchaser could view as a land banking opportunity.

3.) **Aquarium Property** (Lots 150-1, 28,28A & 28B, M-1) 26 +/- acres Maritime Drive raw land. Agent John Jensen; Broker Pequot Properties. Sites consist of 3 separate lots (2 contiguous).

Mr. Jensen Stated:

- \* Owner is interested in having the town involved in defining ideas for development.
- \* Presently zoned M1 for manufacturing which limits marketability.
- \* EDC should play a role in defining potential uses and recommending zone change. TC-80 would be a better designation for these lots.
- \* Asking price is \$2,900,000 or \$112,000 per acre.

Comments:

- \* No expansion by the Aquarium onto these lots is planned.
- \* Planning Director Hasse stated that several years ago the Aquarium applied for new special

zone that would have allowed commercial development (non manufacturing) but the application was withdrawn.

- \* There are a significant amount of wetlands (have been flagged and mapped).
- \* EDC can advocate for business if we know what the owners want. In August two EDC representatives met with an Aquarium board member and their legal counsel to discuss development ideas. EDC recommended that to assist in marketability they engage their engineer to determine the possible sizes and probable locations of buildings on each of the 3 lots.

### Other

Ed Planeta reported attending a joint meeting with First Selectman Haberek and other town commission representatives relative to Affordable Housing and urged fellow EDC members to become familiar with the Town's affordable housing plan document. At this time affordable senior housing on the land obtained in the recent land swap behind the Mystic Middle School does not appear likely.

Les Bray distributed a handout analyzing Stonington real estate activity. Bray has a consulting business which compiles and analyzes real estate activity.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:34 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

  
Ed Hart  
Acting Secretary

JOHN A. DELMONTE  
FOR