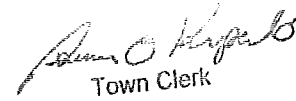


NEWINGTON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
NEWINGTON TOWN HALL
131 CEDAR STREET
NEWINGTON, CONNECTICUT
CONFERENCE ROOM L-101
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 3, 2018

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Town Clerk

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:02 pm.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

III. ROLL CALL

PRESENT:

Vice-Chairman Maria Pane
Commissioner David Marsden
Commissioner Dana Havens
Commissioner Scott Greczkowski
Commissioner Gary Turco

Town Council Liaison Carol Anest
Town Council Liaison Gail Budrejko

Economic Development Director Andrew Brecher

Absent:

Chairman Theresa Avey (excused)

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Greczkowski made a motion to accept the September 5, 2018 minutes. Commissioner Turco seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

V. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None.

VI. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Director Brecher reported on the following items:

- National Welding Site: Town staff identified approximately thirty items for inclusion in an Operations and Maintenance Agreement with the Connecticut Department of Transportation to be negotiated in conjunction with transferring ownership of Myra Cohen Way from the State to the Town of Newington. A meeting is being scheduled with DOT to further discuss the O&M items.
- 3333 Berlin Turnpike: Eversource's designated developer has prepared a preliminary site plan that includes approximately 80,000 square feet of retail, including two to four restaurants, plus eighty-two

townhouse style residential units. Due diligence activities are underway, including soil borings and a traffic study.

--550 Cedar Street: Affordable housing developer Dakota Partners received its Wetlands Permit from the Conservation Commission on 10/02/18. The hearing on Dakota's applications is still open at the Town Plan and Zoning Commission. Dakota has made some modest façade improvements, including the paint scheme and roof gables, but not a lot of other changes that would improve the quality of the project—except that elevators will be added to serve all floors in each building, as demanded by the Connecticut Housing Finance Authority. Police Chief Stephen Clark has raised concerns about service calls at other properties owned by Dakota Partners and managed by Hallkeen, and has requested that the developer explain the discrepancy between level of service calls typical in Newington and Dakota properties in Tyngsboro, MA, Brookfield, CT and Barnstable, MA. Financing has not been locked in for the Cedar Pointe project. Therefore, even if TPZ approval is granted shortly, construction is unlikely to commence for 12-18 months. Dakota's Columbus Commons project in New Britain was announced several years ago but building construction has yet to commence because the site is still being remediated. Dakota has to remediate the 550 Cedar Street property as well. Progress could also be delayed if Dakota is seeking Brownfield funds administered by the Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development to pay for costs of remediation.

--Train Station: A public information meeting has been scheduled for Thursday, 10/18/18 at 7:00 pm at the Library Community Room. DOT representatives will repeat the presentation made to the Town Council, but there will be more opportunity for the public to ask questions and comment. The next step would be for the Town Council to endorse seeking new zoning regulations from TPZ that would encourage substantial mixed-use development around the proposed \$55 million station, tentatively named the "Transit Village Design District".

--Governor Malloy announced \$12.4 million was being distributed to forty towns for projects to improve pedestrian and bicycle safety. Newington requested and was awarded \$78,367 which will be used for the "Mill Pond Park Connectivity Project" consisting of improvements to sidewalks and crosswalks, reducing lane widths, and adding bike racks.

--Hartford Healthcare received TPZ approval for a modified site plan to build 131 parking spaces to serve staff being transferred from Hartford to HHC's campus on Patricia Genova Drive. Approximately thirty of those spaces will be reserved for Jefferson House staff across the street on John Stewart Drive. Jefferson House has experienced a parking shortage for several years due to an increase in staff and visitors.

--A Town Council ribbon-cutting for the Constance Leigh Drive Streetscape Project will be held Thursday, 10/04/18 at 5:00 pm.

--In a sign of the times, Garrett's Barber Shop at 139 Lowrey Place announced they were moving to an "all appointment" model, no longer accepting walk-in's. All appointments are to be made online using Garrett's website.

--The new owner of the undeveloped parcel at 324 Alumni Road is moving forward with plans to build two flex buildings totaling 4,500 square feet for rental to small businesses. The new buildings will be similar to one he completed a couple of years ago on Summit Street.

--Reno Machine and Reno Properties have begun construction of a 5,400 square foot two-story addition to the front of their building at 170 Pane Road. The addition was approved by TPZ a number of years ago and will feature an elevator.

--Elecnor Hawkeye has leased 181 Pane Road for their utility infrastructure construction business. That site is advantageously placed near Eversource's engineering headquarters on the Berlin Turnpike.

--2395 Berlin Turnpike: Construction continues to expand the Sculptures Plaza and replace the former Sal D's building. TPZ is questioning whether their site plan approval included a two story

building as being constructed. The Public Hearing sign posted on the property is related to Artichoke Basile's application for a liquor license. However, awarding of that license could be complicated by the presence of Puerto Villarta Mexican restaurant next door. Newington's current zoning regulations require 500' separation between liquor-serving establishments.

--2594-2600 Berlin Turnpike: Two buildings comprising Mauro Plaza were sold for a combined \$1 million. Shortly after, Old Towne Coin closed their retail location in that plaza. Old Towne started its business in Newington Center some 43 years ago and although they closed their store, they are still in business serving a nationwide client base by telephone and internet. Clippers Barbershop has moved into the space vacated by Old Towne Coin.

--3206 Berlin Turnpike: Arby's announced their intention to buy Sonic. That might reopen plans to replace the Newington Arby's with a Sonic Drive-In.

--3240 Berlin Turnpike: The Zoning Board of Appeals approved Chick-fil-A's application to construct a small sidewalk to connect the restaurant with a walk signal, as requested by OSTA. Construction of the new restaurant continues with an impressive amount of equipment and people working in a relatively small space.

--3384-3386 Berlin Turnpike: Buildings housing Town Fair Tire and the new Batteries + Bulbs store are for sale for a total price of \$2.5 million.

VII. OLD BUSINESS

None.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

Commissioner Havens noted that some people were asking on Facebook whether there would be Trick or Treat in the Town Center this year. With the demise of the Downtown Council, there has been no one to organize it. Last year, Travel by Fara initiated a last minute effort to stage the event. Commissioner Havens suggested the EDC take on the project.

Commissioner Havens made a motion that the EDC become involved with the 2018 Trick or Treat in the Town Center, seconded by Commissioner Pane. The motion passed unanimously.

Director Brecher said he would talk to the Town Manager about leading the undertaking this year, and potentially making funds available for a clown or face painting or similar attractions as had been done in previous years. Commissioner Havens volunteered to assist with making a flier and/or promoting the event on social media.

IX. CHAMBER OF COMMERCE REPORT

Deanna Reney reminded Commissioners that the Chamber's annual Auction and Chocolate Challenge will be held on November 3, 2018. The Business Showcase and Taste of Newington will be held in April, 2019 with an added emphasis on health and wellness.

The search to replace Gail Whitney, long time Executive Director, is underway. Gail's last day is 11/15/18.

X. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None.

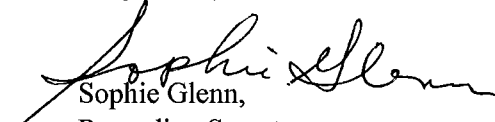
XI. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Director Brecher indicated he would be unable to attend the scheduled meeting on 11/07/18. Commissioners considered alternate dates and tentatively selected Tuesday, 10/30/18 for the next meeting. Director Brecher was directed to review that change with Chairman Avey and confirm with the Commissioners whether there will be a meeting on 10/30/18 or whether the next meeting will be on 12/05/18.

XII. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Greczkowski made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Commissioner Marsden seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 7:56 pm.

Respectfully Submitted:


Sophie Glenn,
Recording Secretary