

NEWINGTON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

Regular Meeting

January 5, 2021

Chairman Theresa Avey called the regular meeting of the Newington Economic Development Commission to order at 7:05 p.m.

I. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

II. ROLL CALL

Commissioners Present

Commissioner Ancona  
Chairman Avey  
Commissioner Havens  
Commissioner Nagel  
Commissioner Pane  
Commissioner Stamm (7:08)

Commissioners Absent

Commissioner Marsden

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Havens moved to approve the minutes of the December 1, 2021 regular meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Ancona. The minutes passed unanimously with six voting YEA.

IV. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None

V. CHAMBER OF COMMERCE REPORT

Leslie Civitallo reported that this coming year the Chamber meetings will remain on Zoom going forward. The Chamber is looking at doing the "State of the Town" but that won't be scheduled until about March.

VI. TOWN PLANNER REPORT

Renata Bertotti offered to share the brochure that she had with the Commission to see if that was the same information that they had, and wanted to share all of the information with the Commission. Renata indicated that when she started in Newington the Town Manager had tasked her with reaching out to local businesses, especially restaurants and places that were of concern because of the impact of Covid. This brochure had existed previously and she amended it with new names, new links, new numbers and all Covid related information. This information is available on line as well.

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NEWINGTON, CT  
2022 JAN 24 PM 12:45  
*Adrian D. [Signature]*  
Town Clerk

The second topic for discussion was the reports of what was issued in the way of building permits and also planning permits. The building department supplied the report and it was included in the packet, the report of the most recent permits, electrical permits, renovations, normal requests. Information from the Planning office was as of September, so everything as far as projects were concerned was included along with a number of regulation changes. There were some buildings on Costello Road that received site plan approval, an existing building on New Britain Avenue where the applicant would like to have apartments in a B Zone, free standing signs, an existing landscaper would like to have up to ten days to have crushing on their property.

Commissioner Havens explained that the brochure that Renata supplied was not the last brochure that was made up. The graphics were different but the content was fairly similar except for the outdoor dining information.

Renata indicated that she took the information from that brochure and amended it to include the outdoor dining and the impact of Covid and if the Commission wants it modified further, she will see what adjustments can be made. She will e-mail a copy of the brochure to the Commission members.

Chairman Avey asked if the Town Manager, Keith Chapman had any information that he wished to share with the Commission.

Keith Chapman indicated that the staff is working diligently developing opportunities for the Town. He indicated that the grand list needed to be increased along with a reduction in spending. Meetings are scheduled this week with developers for projects that are on-going in the town, through the process of approvals, and all of the projects that have been discussed in the last year or so are still moving forward. Things are looking up for shovels in the ground even with the Covid still around.

Keith indicated that the Planning and Zoning Commission had a meeting last night in conjunction with the Town Council for the first time in many years to talk about the railroad station, that will either hopefully end up on Cedar Street or at Newington Junction and no matter what the discussions are on the location, the Town needs a railroad station. If we miss this opportunity Newington will be one of the few towns without a railroad station; the dialogue was very good last evening and hopefully moving forward with additional research from DOT will give results.

Leslie Civitallo questioned the closing on the Keeney property and wondered if there were any plans that were shared with the Town on what is going to be done with the property.

Keith Chapman reported that the town and the new buyers of the property had met several times at the site and they are scouting out all of the possibilities of how the building can be revitalized. The new owners are meeting with several potential occupants. The appearance of the building will probably remain the same, the only renovations will be to the interior of the building depending on the occupant. The new owners understand how important it is to have employment of local residents and they recognize their prime location in town.

V. **OLD BUSINESS**

A. Beautification

Chairman Avey reported that she did not have a chance to see what the budget was. She will find out how much the Commission has remaining for this year, and her understanding is that the Commission will have a budget for next year.

Commissioner Havens questioned if the balance of this year's budget, if not used, gets rolled over into next year or does the Commission start next year with a new budget?

Chairman Avey reported that for departments, if you don't spend the money, you lose it so she will get a number on the amount that is left for this year.

VII. **NEW BUSINESS**

None

VIII. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Bill DeMaio reported that the Recreation Department was totally aware of the condition of the benches located at the waterfall costing \$2,000.00 each. They are looking to standardize the benches at Mill Pond Park and throughout the entire park system but it is a matter of securing the funding.

Gail Budrejko questioned if there was a listing of the number of commercial vacancies in town since there are buildings that seem to be vacant for two or three years. One of the things that should be encouraged is reuse and redevelopment rather than new construction.

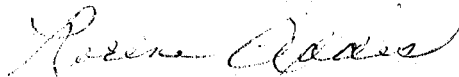
Renata Bertotti stated that she did not believe that there was a list of vacant commercial properties. She will look into that, checking with probably the Tax Assessors office. Keith Chapman stated that the larger commercial empty buildings were definitely known by the town, but the smaller ones probably were not as well recognized. He stated that was a good idea and the team will work on that, it would be helpful information.

IX. **COMMISSIONER COMMENTS**

Commissioner Havens asked if sponsorship of the benches had been considered by the town, putting a plaque in memory of people could offset the cost of the benches. Bill DeMaio said that the Parks and Recreation Commission has a policy on how to memorialize a bench. It's \$2,000.00 per bench and they sold maybe half a dozen to a dozen within the parking system along with naming the trees, it's the same thing.

X. **ADJOURN**

Commissioner Pane moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Commissioner Havens. The meeting was adjourned at 7:35 p.m.



Respectfully submitted, Norine Addis, Recording Secretary