

NEWINGTON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

Regular Meeting

March 2, 2022

Chairman Theresa Avey called the regular Zoom meeting of the Newington Economic Development Commission to order at 7:00 p.m.

I. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

II. **ROLL CALL**

Commissioners Present

Commissioner Jennifer Ancona (7:25)
Chairman Theresa Avey
Commissioner Mary Beatrice
Commissioner Dana Havens
Commissioner David Marsden
Commissioner Jerilyn Nagel
Commissioner Maria Pane

Commissioners Absent

Commissioner Clifford Stamm

I. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Commissioner Marsden moved to approve the minutes of the February 2, 2022 meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Nagel. The vote was unanimously in favor of the motion with 7 voting YEA

II. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

None

III. **CHAMBER OF COMMERCE REPORT**

Leslie Civitillo reported that the Chamber had scheduled the State of the Town Meeting for March 30th at the Indian Hill Country Club. It will be a breakfast meeting, in about the \$25.00 range for tickets. The Chamber is also going to do the annual dinner on May 18th, also at the country club, an evening event. The Waterfall Festival is moving forward this year, looking to do that on September 24th on Market Square. These events, along with the car show are the scheduled events, along with some ribbon cutting events, Toasted Oat, the Doggy Day Care, so a few new businesses that are in town that gave reached out to the Chamber.

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IN NEWINGTON, CT
2022 MAR 15 PM 12:05
Robert O. [Signature]
Town Clerk

IV. OLD BUSINESS

Beautification Committee

Bill DeMaio couldn't make this meeting because of prior commitments. Commissioner Pane suggested that the Commission might want to pick areas where the pots might be placed. Core on Market Square, Little Cakes and Rooster were the beneficiaries of the pots distributed by the EDC. The Commission could survey the areas, and reach out to any business in those areas that might be interested in having a planter. New Britain Avenue, Pane Road, and the shopping center on Stoddard Avenue were suggested locations for the pots.

Commissioner Havens questioned if hanging baskets would be placed in the center of town and if so would that be done through Bill DeMaio and his staff. Maintenance of the baskets might be a problem for the staff. It was suggested that two to four baskets be the start, and after evaluation that could increase, or be discontinued. Chairman Avey stated that there is an employee of the town that was hired just to water, so a budget transfer could be done to cover that expense.

The ordering of the baskets would be done by Bill DeMaio since he has the resources to do so, and the Commission does not.

Commissioner Marsden suggested that when this was discussed with Superintendent DeMaio it should be his decision as to whether the hanging baskets or the ground pots should be used, depending on the time and expense involved.

Gail Budrejko suggested that if there were other towns that utilized the hanging baskets that the Commission contact those towns and research what exactly is involved with the maintenance of the plants. Locations would have to be chosen for visibility and for the safety of the people maintaining them.

There are at least five or seven pots that are still available and not assigned to any business now. The center of town was suggested, and then going down Market Square. Market Square would be a good choice for the hanging baskets, utilizing the lamp post that are already there.

Commissioner Beatrice suggested that every area of town be considered, not just the center, so that every area of town gets some representation. If this was done in the areas, maybe some of the businesses would be looking to share, or create a block share of the pots. It was suggested that the plaza at the end of Stoddard Avenue would be a good location for one of the pots. Elm Hill Pizza was also suggested as a location. It was suggested that the new establishment at Hartford Avenue and Main might be interested in coordinating their opening with the establishment of one of the pots.

Leslie Civitallo agreed to reach out to the Chamber members to see if there was interest in purchasing a pot, and suggested the locations of New Britain Avenue and Stoddard/Main Street area as likely candidates as well.

V. NEW BUSINESS

Renata Bertotti shared the building permits that were issued since the last meeting, so you can see the new businesses located in town. Toasted Oat café, a doggy day care, and then several

other items. Some of the permits are still under construction, the gas station at 4 Hartford Road, the property on Costello Road, the Jersey Mike's on Fenn Road which is new construction. The future agenda report shows that there are a couple of items coming up for the planning commission. The regulation amendment proposed by a town resident, and a proposal for a Kitts Lane, a restaurant that is going to be also an adult day care center. People with disabilities will be learning skills in making foods, and serving in the establishment, which is located in the old VFW building. There is an application for a 23 lot subdivision pending before the Conservation Commission and an application for Pane Road for a school and a gym, a new building. A proposal for the residential development at Culver Street and Deming Street intersection, and a sign at 3333 Berlin Turnpike.

Renata spoke about the Planner's role in the Economic Development Commission to clarify her role in the Economic Development of the town. She indicated that she is not an Economic Development Director, and she explained her role as a member of the Economic Development Team for the town and a number of people are on the team. Her role is to ensure that once a business, or development comes to occupy a site or a building, they make sure that the permitting and processing of the application goes as efficiently, smoothly and quickly as possible, through all of the agencies involved without undue delay for the applicant.

Renata does not solicit, does not go looking for developers or new business and that is not appropriate for her position since she has to process developments through the permitting process. It is necessary for her position to be impartial, not soliciting, not looking for one type of business versus another business.

An e-mail was received regarding the property formerly Best Market, and she has no personal knowledge of what is going on there, and if something is going there, it may have to go to the Planning Commission.

Chairman Avey indicated that these updates will be done every two months, unless there is something pertinent that needs to be discussed. A company is in strong negotiations talking with Keeney Manufacturing to put a business in there and the talks are going very well.

VI. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Gail Budrejko indicated that the Adult Day Care on Willard Avenue was not longer there, and sometimes businesses just disappear. Did the day care relocate, did it just close, did it move out of town, and it should be helpful to the EDC to find out about not only about new permits, but the businesses that the town is losing, and the vacancies in town.

Chairman Avey indicated that the Economic Development Team from the town does know what buildings are available and if a company comes in, the team looks to see what they are looking for, is something available, and will work with a new tenant.

Renata Bertotti indicated that there were a couple of problems with the reuse of buildings, sometimes they are related to zoning, and other times code compliant, not making it easy to reuse a building if extensive renovations are required of the existing building.

A list of vacant properties might be helpful for the Commission and the Chamber if there were requests from interested parties coming into Newington, The best source of information would be the Assessor's office, and eyes on areas.

VII. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Patti Foley, 51 Crown Ridge advised the Commission that the Knox Foundation might be a good resource for any questions about the plantings that were discussed earlier. They do a one hundred percent service and they are knowledgeable of what to do and how to do it.

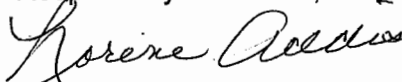
VIII. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

None

IX. ADJOURN

Commissioner Havens moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Pane. The meeting was adjourned at 8:03 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Norine Addis,
Recording Secretary