

**THESE MINUTES ARE SUBJECT TO BOARD APPROVAL AT THE NEXT
ESSEX ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
ESSEX TOWN HALL
August 14, 2013 - 4:00pm**

The Essex Economic Development Commission was held on Wednesday, August 14, 2013 at 4:00pm. In attendance were Lon Seidman, John Beveridge, David Sousa, and David Winstead. Also in attendance was Kelley Frazier, Secretary to the Board. Absent: Robert Laundry, and Ed Cook.

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Seidman at 4:10pm.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Upon a motion made by John Beveridge and seconded by David Winstead the Commission unanimously **VOTED** to approve the minutes from the July 2013 Essex Economic Development Commission meeting.

Visitors:

Betsy D'Amico introduced herself and noted that she is interested in joining the Commission. Judie Heiser was also present representing the Board of Trade

Commissioners:

Ms. Malan was present.

REPORT FROM TOWN HALL

Mr. Needleman gave an update on the STEAP grant. The bidding process is ongoing. The bids are coming in higher than anticipated.

Mr. Needleman noted that the Ivoryton grant was approved. It was noted that improved parking is an important consideration. The sidewalks and septic issues will also be discussed. The shared septic system is a concern. Mr. Beveridge stated that this was a critical issue during a previous study he worked on.

COMMUNICATIONS/PUBLIC COMMENT

None

ACTION ITEMS

Review of Consultant Job Description Measurables

This will be done in Executive Session at the end of the agenda.

Annual Report

Mr. Seidman asked for items to be included in the EDC portion of the town's Annual Report. The Commission decided that details of the new consulting position as well as the work to be completed by the STEAP grant should be included. The news of the Ivoryton Grant should also be included as well as the new working relationship with the Main Street Initiative. Mr. Needleman noted that it should also be mentioned that there are not a lot of commercial properties available in town. Mr. Seidman will send out a draft copy of the information to be submitted for Commission review.

It was noted that the gas station containing Dunkin Donuts is being renovated and expanded. The parking difficulties will be addressed. Mr. Beveridge suggested having the entrance on the South side of the building. This was discussed. The Sunoco station is also under renovation.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

POCD – Adding a List of Critical and Vulnerable Properties

Mr. Beveridge opened the discussion of properties which are considered vulnerable in our villages. The properties he felt most vulnerable were the Doane property, the working farm and open space near Bokum Center. The property on Westbrook Road and Plaines Road was discussed. Mr. Beveridge also feels that the Pratt-Read property is another concern, as well as the Moeller Instrument property. It was noted that it is very important that the parking lot across from the Playhouse remain as a lot for playhouse parking. Mr. Seidman will send the initial list to Mr. Laundry. Mr. Beveridge and Mr. Needleman suggested a joint meeting with EDC, ZBA and Planning to develop a plan.

Blight Property Discussion

Mr. Needleman noted that he has not been in favor of blight ordinances in the past but feels something should be drafted to address properties that need attention. Mr. Needleman discussed what would constitute a blighted property. The Commission members present reviewed a draft copy of a blight ordinance Mr. Needleman provided to the commission.

Storrs Downtown

Mr. Beveridge discussed meeting with an architect who developed a downtown project in Storrs. Storrs has invested \$500,000,000 in restoring their downtown. Mr. Schwab's wife is a landscape architect and could discuss the process Storrs when though and what kinds of ideas might be applied to the updated Plan of Conservation and Development. The Commission would like to Mr. Beveridge to meet with Ms. Schwab to discuss further.

STEAP & Ivoryton Grants

Discussed previously.

Main Street Partnership Discussion

Mr. Seidman does not have any updates.

NEW BUSINESS

None

On motion duly made and seconded, the Essex Economic Development Commission unanimously **VOTED** to move into Executive Session to discuss a contract matter related to the economic development consultant at 4:52pm. Mr. Needleman was invited to join the Commission. The motion passed.

The Commission moved out of Executive Session at 5:15pm.

Upon a motion made by David Winstead and seconded by John Beveridge, the Economic Development Commission unanimously **VOTED** to approve the job description of the EDC Consultant and agrees to review the performance and continuation of the consultant in conjunction with the Board of Selectmen in six months with the consultant present.

ADJOURNMENT

On motion duly made and seconded, the Essex Economic Development Commission unanimously **VOTED** to adjourn at 5:25pm. The motion passed.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kelley S. Frazier
Essex Economic Development Commission Clerk