

**THESE MINUTES ARE SUBJECT TO BOARD APPROVAL AT THE NEXT  
ESSEX ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION  
ESSEX TOWN HALL  
January 8, 2014 - 4:00pm**

The Essex Economic Development Commission was held on Wednesday, January 8, 2014 at 4:00pm. In attendance were Lon Seidman, John Beveridge, Betsy D’Amico Ed Cook, Robert Laundry and David Sousa. Also in attendance was Norm Needleman, First Selectman and Kelley Frazier, Secretary to the Board. Absent: David Winstead

**CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Seidman at 4:05pm.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Upon a motion made by John Beveridge and seconded by Betsy D’Amico the Commission unanimously **VOTED** to approve the minutes from the December 2013 Essex Economic Development Commission meeting.

**Visitors:**

Judie Heiser from the Essex Board of Trade.

Susan Malan EDC Consultant.

Joe Budrow from the Zoning Office.

**Commissioners:**

None

**REPORT FROM TOWN HALL**

Ms. Malan noted that there will be two empty spaces in Essex Village. Hammered Edge will be coming to Ivoryton soon. The Commission discussed available spaces in our villages.

Mr. Seidman asked to have the Home Offices item moved up in the agenda to accommodate the attendees of the meeting.

**Home Offices**

Mr. Budrow stated that the Town is not addressing home offices at this time, but we should consider doing this in the future. He noted that Canton’s regulations might be a helpful example. Canton considers home offices as either major or minor. A major home office use would include regular truck/trailer deliveries and over two non-resident employees. A minor home office would include no regular major deliveries and two or under non-resident employees.

He estimates that this will be focused on in the next three months. Mr. Budrow noted that if there is a disruption to adjacent properties, it should be addressed by zoning.

Commission members discussed including the name and phone number of the economic development consultant who will be available to help residents find available space in town when zoning feels a home office is no longer able to continue operating out of the home.

Mr. Budrow presented two documents outlining changes to zoning regulations. These changes are in development and will be finalized by February. The language changes address issues related to dining establishments and drive throughs. Mr. Budrow noted that future revisions will address signage regulations by district. Mr. Needleman thanked Mr. Budrow for coming to the EDC meeting today.

Upon a motion made by Ed Cook and seconded by Lon Seidman the Economic Development Commission unanimously **VOTED** to support the proposed changes to the Zoning regulations for matters related to dining establishments, and to ask the Zoning Commission reconsider the proposed blanket prohibition on drive through windows and instead consider restrictions based on specific uses in specific districts.

Ms. Malan will write a letter to zoning regarding the discussion.

**COMMUNICATIONS/PUBLIC COMMENT**

None

**ACTION ITEMS**

**2014-2015 Budget**

Mr. Needleman verified that the funding for the EDC Consultant should be placed in the EDC budget. This was briefly discussed by the Commission. It was noted that the position will be reviewed at six months. This position’s funding is \$1,000 per month.

The advertising budget could include the cost to redesign of the Welcome to Essex brochure which is given to new businesses.

Upon a motion made by John Beveridge and seconded by Betsy D’Amico the Economic Development Commission unanimously **VOTED** to accept the proposed Economic Development budget of \$14,100 for Fiscal Year 2014-15.

Mr. Beveridge feels that the demolition ordinance should be worded differently. He noted that we have significant contemporary architectural structures which should be considered. The cost to request this sort of demolition should be increased. The language should be stronger and come from a “body” of the Town. Mr. Cook agrees. He would like to document old property as historical.

**DISCUSSION ITEMS**

None

**STEAP & Ivoryton Grants**

The Ivoryton Grant was awarded.

**Farmer’s Market Grant**

No Update

**Centerbrook Grant**

The Centerbrook Grant was awarded.

**Signage**

Mr. Seidman heard back from the Town of West Hartford regarding their downtown signage. The Town formed a design committee and purchased the signs from a street sign vendor. He will ask Mr. Needleman to discuss this at the next meeting. Mr. Laundry noted that there is some recommendation in the traffic study that should be considered.

**NEW BUSINESS**

None

**ADJOURNMENT**

Upon a motion made and duly seconded, the Economic Development Commission unanimously **VOTED** to adjourn at 5:15.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kelley S. Frazier, Essex Economic Development Commission Clerk