

**THESE MINUTES ARE SUBJECT TO BOARD APPROVAL AT THE NEXT
ESSEX ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
ESSEX TOWN HALL
April 13, 2016 - 4:00PM**

Members present: David Sousa, Lon Seidman, George Sexton, Betsy D'amico, David Winstead

Guests:

Norm Needleman, First Selectman

Susan Malan, Economic Developer

Judy Heiser, Board of Trade

Ed Tedeschi, Resident

Members welcomed new member George Sexton representing the planning commission.

Approval of Minutes

Minutes: David Winstead moved to approve the minutes of the February meeting. Seconded David Sousa. Vote unanimous.

Essex Village Vacancy discussion:

Update on downtown retail and vacancies. Members and the First Selectman discussed some of the market challenges related to downtown Essex vacancies.

Village vacancies will be part of the discussion at an upcoming evening public discussion meeting to be announced.

New Residential complex on 153:

Municipalities have very little recourse in regulating structures given the affordable rents being offered as a portion of the overall percentage of available units. Very little the town can do to regulate the development as state law allows developers to circumvent nearly all local zoning restrictions.

Business district amendment

Members discussed the need to allow some retail uses in the business district.

David Winstead MOVED to draft an amendment to the Zoning regulations to allow retail uses of no greater than 3000 square feet in the business district. Motion was seconded by George Sexton, VOTE UNANIMOUS.

Form Based Zoning

Members briefly discussed how form based zoning, which defines certain architectural guidelines for structures, might be put in place to better maintain the character of the community.

Announcements

David Sousa announced that the Farmer's Market will open June 18.

Meeting adjourned at 5:05 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Lon Seidman, Chairman