

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
TOLLAND, CONNECTICUT
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES OF June 6, 2007

MEMBERS PRESENT: Bob Stewart, Chair
Kevin Bouley, Regular at 7:55
George Mantak, Regular
Eb Musiol, Regular
Gary Elwell, Regular
Robert Bowser, Alternate Seated as Regular until 7:55

MEMBERS ABSENT: Jack Scavone, Alternate

OTHERS PRESENT: Steven R. Werbner, Town Manager
Linda Farmer, Director of Planning at 7:40
Jeff Vose, Metro Hartford Alliance at 7:40

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Bob Stewart called the meeting to order at 7:35 a.m. in the Hicks Memorial Municipal Center Council Chambers, 21 Tolland Green, Tolland, Connecticut. Alternate Robert Bowser was seated as a Regular Member until Mr. Bouley arrived.

1. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

Motion: Mantak/Elwell to accept the Minutes of the May 2, 2007 Regular meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

2. ACTIVITIES REPORT

1. State Route 195 Widening Project – Mr. Mantak reported that he and Mr. Bouley were at the public hearing last Thursday, May 31st along with Mr. Werbner. They had a handout including a narrative description and aerial photograph of the project as well as a landscape plan. There were approximately 40 people from the public with the only negative comment from the attorney representing Ray Crossen and Robert Arute who own 174 Merrow Road. The attorney stated that as long as the median stays in place causing their property to have only a right turn in/out, the owners will be opposed to the project. The State noted that the median and the landscape were the Town's idea, that the plans presented are not yet finalized, and they may not be what is actually built. Mr. Mantak will contact both Mr. Crossen and Mr. Arute in an attempt to find a good solution for all. Mr. Stewart reported that the Planning & Zoning Commission has stated they will increase the impervious coverage ratio on the site in return for the median in Route 195. Mr. Stewart also reported that Mark Peterson had been to Planning & Zoning Commission on behalf of Crossen/Arute asking for a specific impervious coverage amount they are willing to offer and the Commission stated they would need to see a specific proposal rather than give a specific percentage.
2. Route 195 Corridor Study Update – Mr. Werbner reported the Steering Committee had their initial meeting and the contract is signed. The Committee asked CROCG if they could segment the project to start with the Green and they will talk to the contractor.
3. Sewer Facilities Plan Status – The Sewer Facilities Plan is still in the capital budget although the budget has not yet passed referendum, having failed three times. The next vote is next Tuesday, June 12th.
4. Planning & Zoning Commission – Activity Report – Mr. Stewart reported that Mike Smida of Star Hill will be at the meeting later to discuss their project. Ms. Farmer reported

- that she has worked with Len Jacobs on the site plan of the former Dari Farms, property of David Ruth.
5. STEAP Grant – Gerber Drive extension report – Mr. Smith had provided a memo stating the contractors are on schedule on building the road and the binder coat of pavement should be done on or around July 13th. Grading and drainage is over 50% complete and the work to relocate the water, gas, and sewer lines commenced this week. This should take approximately two weeks, after which they will start the formation and construction of the road base and sub-base.
 6. Metro Hartford Alliance Report – Mr. Vose updated the Commission on several items. They have just completed their planning session setting an agenda for the next four years. They will be starting a Development Corporation that will work with Towns on difficult sites, making them more appealing and hopefully spurring development. They will also be creating a Brokerage Firm as well as an Investment Capital Fund. They are holding an Economic Development for Public Officials class tonight in East Hartford and Mr. Vose offered to hold the class in Tolland in the future. Mr. Vose highly recommended this to the key commissions and council before the PZC starts the updated Plan of Conservation & Development. The Regional Small Business Conference will be held in East Hartford in two weeks and the national conference will be in Hartford in 2008. The Traveler’s Championship Golf Tournament is coming up and the Alliance is encouraging businesses to support the project. The Alliance is busy with the International Program and the upcoming flight at the beginning of July with the stay recently lengthened due to the number of contacts in Europe that have been successfully scheduled. Two additional EPA grants have been obtained and are available. The Alliance is working with the Urban Land Institute to increase the education and activity in the area. The ULI will analyze specific sites before completing a potential use analysis. The Alliance worked with Star Hill helping with some 504 Financing.
 7. Mr. Mantak reported on the Farmland Presentation joint meeting and program held last night, which he, Mr. Bowser, and Mr. Bouley attended. Jim Gibbons was the speaker who was excellent and stressed the importance of all the commissions working together on projects. Mr. Mantank reported on the “Crash Course in Economic Development” that he, Mr. Bowser, and Ms. Farmer attended. He also reported on the upcoming “Friendly Processes for Quality Community Development” on June 20th and other classes to be held at Northeast Utilities in Berlin.
3. NEW BUSINESS - none
 4. OLD BUSINESS
 1. Economic Development Website Design – Digiwize Inc. – Mr. Stewart reported that Digiwize has done an excellent job on their website and Kate Whittaker is able to update and make changes at any time. Mr. Stewart has reviewed a few of the narratives and given her changes, which were done immediately. It is much more easy to move around than the old Tolland.org site.
 2. Star Hill Family Athletic Center Update – Mr. Smida came forward and presented a copy of the latest site plan and thanked the commissioners for all of their efforts and attendance at various meetings. Mr. Smida feels that the project has gone very well to date although timing is still an issue due to the critical need to open on November 2nd. He reported that the Inland Wetlands public hearing started on May 30th and is continued to June 13th. The Design Advisory board is scheduled to continue on June 14th and the Planning & Zoning Commission is scheduled to start on June 11th and hopefully continue to a Special Meeting

on July 18th. Concerns that he has are that the height regulation is being appealed by the abutter and the Inland Wetlands appeal has not been dropped although discussions with the attorneys and engineers are all positive. Star Hill has their full financing commitment in place for both the borrowing and equity investment. The Commissioners discussed concerns about parking and how it best be presented to the Planning & Zoning Commission outlining worse case scenarios if venues change and the soccer field to be available for parking in that situation. Mr. Werbner noted that the lot size has changed from 15.9 acres to 17.3 acres so the sewer assessment amount will go up slightly, meaning the split of the purchase price will be slightly different. The additional acreage came out of Lot 9, whose assessment will go done.

3. Discuss the Charge and Mission of Economic Development and the Operating Flow Chart – tabled due to the lack of time.

5. GENERAL BUSINESS

1. Tolland Monthly Magazine – Mr. Stewart reported that he was unable to get an article completed in time for the last issue and will attempt to do the same article about the concerns from the town survey for the next issue.
2. Correspondence – items covered earlier in the meeting.
3. Local Business Activity –
 - a. Mr. Stewart reported that Harry's Discount Liquor has contracted the Peace Lutheran Church.
 - b. Pete Anderson would like to meet with Mr. Stewart and Ms. Farmer to discuss possibilities for his site.
 - c. Mr. Musiol reported that Radio Shack will have a quiet opening within the next week.
4. Other Commission Business – none
5. Adjournment -

Motion: Mantak/Elwell passed to adjourn the meeting at 9:15 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Bob Stewart, Chair & Acting Clerk