



TOWN OF ELLINGTON

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**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 13, 2019, 7:00 PM
TOWN HALL ANNEX, 57 MAIN STREET, ELLINGTON, CT**

PRESENT: Chairman Sean Kelly, Vice Chairman Chris Todd, Regular Members Donna Resutek, Danielle Hubley and David Hurley, and Alternate Sulakshana Thanvanthri

ABSENT: Alternate Member Stefanie Cunningham

STAFF

PRESENT: Lisa M. Houlihan, Town Planner and Samantha Getchell, Recording Clerk

I. CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Sean Kelly called the Economic Development Commission meeting to order at 7:02 PM in the Ellington Town Hall Annex, 57 Main Street, Ellington, CT.

II. PUBLIC COMMENTS (on non-agenda items): None

III. ACTIVE BUSINESS:

1. Report: Tolland County Chamber of Commerce

Lisa Houlihan, Town Planner, reported there hasn't been any further action by the Chambers Manufacturer's Council. She reported on the recent Legislative Breakfast, and explained current focus is on annual programs and the upcoming golf tournament.

2. Report: Agricultural Initiatives

Ms. Houlihan reported the Right to Farm Ordinance was presented to Planning and Zoning, the Conservation Commission, and the Board of Selectmen. The draft ordinance is under review by the Town Ordinance Committee and is expected to be up for Town Meeting vote within the next few months.

Ms. Houlihan reported that Oakridge Dairy's Modern Milkman home delivery service recently launched and asked if any commissioners have tried it. Commissioner Thanvanthri wondered if there is a way to purchase product manually instead of signing up for pre-determined shares. Ms. Houlihan confirmed that is not an option yet.

3. Report: Business Directory/Business Surveys and Site Visits

a. GoLocal – Ellington, CT Audience Review – December 2018, January and February 2019

Chairman Kelly reported regular activity shown on the reports with the exception for right after Christmas during the shopping season.

4. Report: Sustainable Ellington
 - a. 1.3 - Inventory and Promote Local Retail Options

Ms. Houlihan referred to the Master Action list. She confirmed the Shop Ellington initiative has already been submitted for credit toward certification. Chairman Kelly wondered if there was a way to list vacant commercial space on the Shop Ellington website. Ms. Houlihan confirmed there is not an option for that. Ms. Houlihan confirmed in order to receive certification 200 points worth of actions and a minimum of one item accomplished per section is needed. Ms. Houlihan reported section 1.3 is accomplished. The commission came to a consensus to take the action off of the agenda.

- b. 1.4 - Provide Resources and Supports to Local Businesses

Ms. Houlihan confirmed the town routinely sponsors events that may meet section 1.4, like the annual Scarecrow Contest, Earth Day, and the Holiday Lighting.

Another item on the Master Action list under section 1.4 is to create and support small business and development centers. The commission came to a consensus to keep the action on the agenda.

- c. 1.5 - Promote Sustainable Workforce Development

There was roundtable discussion on how to complete this action. The commission came to a consensus to keep the action on the agenda till further notice.

5. Report: Tax Incentive/Abatement Programs

Nothing to report

6. Report: Current Economic Activity

Ms. Houlihan reported there is an application expected to be submitted for Planning and Zoning Commission acceptance for a ravioli shop called DiFiore Ravioli Shop for the former United Bank at the corner of Routes 83 & 140. It's expected to be a mix of retail and restaurant. There will be inventory for purchase to eat there or bring home, along with a drive-in window. Chairman Kelly reported there is an Indian restaurant going in the Islamic Center on Route 83 near the Vernon town line.

Commissioner Hurley reported the Hartford Courant does not cover stories about Ellington, especially in the dining out section. Commissioner Hurley wonder what can be done about that and encouraged commissioners to email the Hartford Courant about the lack of coverage in Ellington. Ms. Houlihan reported Cold Creek Brewery was in the Connecticut Magazine recently.

IV. ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS:

1. Approval of the December 12, 2018 regular meeting minutes

MOVED (TODD) SECONDED (HURLEY) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPROVE THE DECEMBER 12, 2018 MEETING MINUTES AS WRITTEN.

2. Election of Officers

a. Chairman Position

MOVED (RESUTEK) SECONDED (TODD) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO NOMINATE COMMISSIONER (KELLY) FOR CHAIRMAN OF THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION FOR THE YEAR OF 2019.

COMMISSIONER (KELLY) ACCEPTED THE NOMINATION.

MOVED (RESUTEK) SECONDED (TODD) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO ELECT COMMISSIONER (KELLY) FOR CHAIRMAN OF THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION FOR THE YEAR OF 2019.

b. Vice-Chairman Position

MOVED (KELLY) SECONDED (HURLEY) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO NOMINATE COMMISSIONER (TODD) FOR VICE-CHAIRMAN OF THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION FOR THE YEAR OF 2019.

COMMISSIONER (TODD) ACCEPTED THE NOMINATION.

MOVED (KELLY) SECONDED (HURLEY) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO ELECT COMMISSIONER (TODD) FOR VICE-CHAIRMAN OF THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION FOR THE YEAR OF 2019.

3. Discuss budget proposal for Fiscal Year 2019/2020 (FY18/19 enclosed)

Commissioner Kelly confirmed the Go Local annual subscription (\$2,800) runs through the end of August. Ms. Houlihan confirmed the \$2,800 is proposed for contracted services for FY19/20 and could be used for other services if the commission foregoes Shop Ellington.

The Commission conducted round table discussion on how to further use the money in the budget currently being used for Go Local, and concluded to do homework on other ways the money could be used. The commission will revisit if they will move on from Shop Ellington because the website doesn't bring in much activity.

4. CEDAS membership renewal for 2019

BY CONSENSUS APPROVE RENEWAL OF MEMBERSHIP WITH THE CONNECTICUT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION FOR 2019.

5. Correspondence:

a. Review of economic development strategies for the Draft Manuscript of the Plan of Conservation and Development Comprehensive Review and Update Project.

Commissioner Kelly reported there is an economic development portion within the draft manuscript for the commission to go over. Commissioner Kelly reported it includes a proposal for a town square in the triangle of Maple, Main, and Route 83 and suggests the land be zoned for a village mixed-use area.

Ellington Airport expansion has also been discussed with favorable support through the town. Vice Chairman Todd reported there has been multiple plans overlooked for a longer runway for the airport. Commissioner Hurley confirmed there is a realignment options in the draft plan. Ms. Houlihan noted the plan supports preserving the airport as an asset for the town.

Chairman Kelly reported another portion concerning economic development is recommendations for agribusiness. They discussed better design standards, form-based regulations, and moving away from special permits.

Ms. Houlihan reported Big Y west development is expected to start this spring.

Ms. Houlihan reported the draft POCD is on its third revision. The manuscript will be presented and reviewed by the public before its scheduled for formal review.

- b. Email from Verogy, Utility-Scale Solar Project; DEEP Announces Zero-Carbon Resource Selection; and January 8, 2019 Board of Finance Minutes.

Chairman Kelly reports Verogy was not picked, but is still considering other options in town. Ms. Houlihan reported the Board of Finance does not support a fixed tax agreement. Ms. Houlihan confirmed the Town of Ellington is not forced to give a fixed tax agreement if approved through DEEP, but does not have local site plan and special permit authority.

In response to Vice Chairman Todd, Ms. Houlihan confirmed she will advise future solar companies that the commission does not support tax stabilization agreements..

- c. Connecticut Office of Tourism, January 2019, Tourism Marketing Fact Sheet
- d. Oakridge News December 22, 2018 and January 18, 2019.

V. ADJOURNMENT:

MOVED (HURLEY) SECONDED (TODD) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO ADJOURN THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION MEETING AT 8:14 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Samantha Getchell, Recording Clerk