

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES - DRAFT  
MONDAY, JUNE 08, 2015 – 7:00PM  
NEW HARTFORD TOWN HALL**

**PRESENT:** Acting Vice Chairman Jim Brett, David Krimmel, Donna LaPlante, Shelley Lloyd; Mark Russo (arrived 7:16 pm), First Selectman Dan Jerram.

**ABSENT:** David Childs, Bill Bohan, Bill Baxter, Bob Switzgable; Alternates John Burdick and Cindy Donaldson.

**MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC:** Bud Butler, Joe Toro, Katherine Boughton– Waterbury Republican/American

**1. CALL TO ORDER AND SEATING OF ALTERNATES.**

Acting Vice Chairman Jim Brett called the meeting to order at 7:05 PM. He explained that Vice Chairman Bill Bohan had been delayed at work and asked that he fill in.

**3. UPDATES**

**A. Rails to Trails**

Mr. Brett reported on the progress made in drafting a proposed trail from downtown to Memorial Field in Canton with the assistance of First Selectman Jerram and Zoning Officer Steve Sadlowski. In walking the proposed route, the committee has also identified the 9 landowners who abut the proposed route. They have set up a project plan for a communication strategy to approach the landowners to assess their position. The next step would be a feasibility study to evaluate the proposed route and provide alternatives to meet the requirements of RTT. The proposed route is approximately 5 miles. Connecticut DOT might be a potential vendor to complete the study and the implementation and should be considered when the project is put out to bid. Once the feasibility study is completed, the next step would be to identify funding sources. 80% can be expected from the Federal Government with the remainder from grants and fundraising.

Mr. Jerram commented that with the completion of the proposed map trail, we now qualify for an evaluation from a State agency. Mr. Butler inquired about what alternative routes had been considered. Mr. Brett responded that other routes had been considered on the other side of the river and this was determined to be the best path to connect the downtown area with the Canton trail. Mr. Butler asked about the elevation behind Dunkin Donuts. Mr. Brett indicated that the feasibility study would help to determine if the grade is too steep and provide alternatives. Mr. Butler inquired where the property ownership information had been obtained and Mr. Brett replied that it was from the Town's Assessor records. Mr. Butler indicated that WPCA has not been able to determine that the Town owns the railroad bed. There are transfers on record from the Railroad to the State of Connecticut, but there is no transfers on

record for sections A & B from the State to the Town. Mrs. LaPlante clarified that there are transfers on record for other sections of the railroad bed, but not that specific area.

Mr. Krimmel suggested that before the communication program begins the Rails to Trails subcommittee should communicate with the Town Boards and Commissions to be sure they are all on board. He also suggests that the Business Council needs to be supportive and 100% behind this plan. Mr. Jerram indicated that taking this too public before contacting the owners could potentially create problems. He suggests reaching out to the property owners at least casually.

Mr. Jerram indicated that they are working toward a GPS map of the trail toward Barkhamsted that would connect to this proposed section, with the downtown section as the hub.

**2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**  
**May 11, 2015 regular meeting.**

**MOTION** Ms. Lloyd, second Mr. Krimmel, to approve the minutes of the May 11, 2015 regular meeting; unanimously approved. Acting Vice Chair Brett abstained.

**3. B. Street Paintings**

Ms. Lloyd shared the postcard mailing on the Paint the Pavement program. The committee is already starting to look at the materials which will be needed. They have individuals monitoring the sales at Home Depot and Lowe's for supplies such as brushes which they know will be needed in order to purchase them at the lowest possible price.

The designs are due by August 1 and the finalists will be posted in Town Hall to be voted on by the public. The Town for All Seasons design will be painted in front of Torrington Savings Bank. The other 2 designs will be age related.

Ms. Lloyd suggested that the EDC provide an additional \$500 or \$1,000 toward the purchase of supplies. She believes this event will draw a lot of visitors to the downtown area and will be really good for the area. Mr. Brett asked when the event will be happening. Ms. Lloyd replied that it will be Saturday, September 19<sup>th</sup> the day before New Hartford Day. Ski Sundown will also be having an event on Friday evening. This will be a New Hartford weekend with the intent of drawing people in for an entire weekend of events.

Mr. Toro commented that Home Depot has been very supportive of making donations to events and projects within the town. Ms. Lloyd clarified that the committee member is working on the donation aspect first. But they will need road paint for the project itself so the paintings will last approximately 5 years.

Mr. Brett commented that we need to be cautious of setting a precedent if this becomes an annual event. Mr. Russo inquired if there is a list of supplies needed and advised that he works for a building supply company but might be able to help obtain some of the supplies needed. He also suggests that we get aerial photographs of the project in process either with a drone or a bucket truck to publicize the event.

**MOTION** Ms. Lloyd, second Mr. Russo, to allocate \$1,000 to the New Hartford Art League toward the Paint the Pavement project; unanimously approved.

Mr. Jerram commented that the Town will be sealing the pavement prior to the event to provide a clean canvas.

**C. Marketing project** (Marketing Communication, Media Kit, Publicity Outreach and Sign Depot) – Cindy Donaldson

Ms. Lloyd provided an update that the committee had met by email. She presented the information in Ms. Donaldson's absence.

They would like to suggest that we purchase advertising in the Connecticut Fall Getaway Guide which offers a multi-media campaign reaching 4 million people. Mr. Butler asked how they reach 4 million people. Ms. Lloyd responded that it is a multi-media campaign that includes an insert in Connecticut newspapers from September, 2015 to January, 2016. Mr. Krimmel inquired how often it appears. Ms. Lloyd speculated that it might be monthly. Ms. Donaldson is willing to prepare the copy and be sure it is submitted to meet the deadlines if this is approved. A discussion listed activities that could be promoted during that time frame ranging from hiking and fishing to fall harvest activities. Mr. Brett inquired if the web based campaign ties in with the Still-Revolutionary campaign by the State. Mr. Brett commented that he would like to see that in the future, but the message needs to be clarified first. Mr. Krimmel agreed that items need to be identified to be highlighted first. He commented that efforts have been made to collect an events calendar over the past 2 years, but that has not yet been completed.

Mr. Jerram commented that there is nothing like a tight deadline window to force one to complete a goal whereas if you plan for tomorrow you may never actually achieve the goal. The budget funds are there if you want to try for a print media campaign but there needs to be information to back up the link.

Mr. Butler commented that EDC seems to be caught in a time loop. There is a conflict between tactical and strategical objectives. There needs to be plans to develop the infrastructure to build out the town's potential. He does not see a need to advertise the assets of the town that may already be utilized to the fullest. Mr. Brett replied that a couple of meetings back there were specific goals that the Commission is working toward including Rails to Trails. There

have been steps toward developing an image for the town and marketing that image.

Mrs. LaPlante commented that before committing to advertise we should determine if Ski Sundown and other businesses are using this publication. Mr. Russo interjected co-branding as a comment. Ms. Lloyd replied that she does not know if this will give results as she does not have specific statistics on how many page hits have come up on the Facebook page. She has received specific feedback from seniors especially who appreciate the information that has been posted on the Facebook page.

Ms. Lloyd also mentioned that she and Ms. Donaldson will be working on setting up an online newsletter for the town. Mr. Brett inquired if they will be developing an overall marketing strategy. Ms. Lloyd replied that they are working toward that goal. She expressed that she disagrees with Mr. Butler's assessment that everyone who is going to use West Hill Lake already does use it. She has taken visitors to the lake who have expressed how beautiful it is, but had no idea it was there. Mr. Toro commented that there is no place for visitors to stay in town. Mr. Brett inquired whether developing infrastructure is within the mission of this commission.

Mr. Krimmel commented that he does not believe that we can achieve the goals without drawing in more residents to the town. There is no plan in place to build housing to keep the elderly in town. Affordable housing for elderly to remain in town would drive the infrastructure. Mr. Brett commented that EDC's support of the downtown plan is creating the climate for a downtown area that would facilitate developing senior housing in the downtown area. Mrs. LaPlante commented that she believes that we do have housing available as some people are moving out of state and other people are moving here to be close to the natural resources as well as the school system. She sees the role of EDC to help bring everything together.

Mr. Jerram commented that even as difficult as the budget process was this year, we are going to be able to build the pavilion downtown. Mr. Russo mentioned that you have to be careful how you refer to elderly/senior housing as national trends indicate that seniors do not want to live in areas that are just designated senior housing. Ms. Lloyd indicated that she believes that this Commission has supported the high density housing and the sewer treatment plant expansion and recognizes that having a population downtown would develop this area. She highlighted the components of the upcoming presentation next Thursday evening that will focus on towns similar in size to ours.

**D. Strategic Planning/Real Estate and Marketing Consultant – Bill Baxter**  
No information available due to Mr. Baxter's absence.

- E. Plan of Conservation & Development approval process**  
No information available.

**4. ANY BUSINESS PROPER TO COME BEFORE THE COMMISSION**

Mr. Jerram commented that Mr. Peabody has done a lot of work on his building for the Bakker Insurance Agency moving into the former Hoffman Hardware building. The Parrott Delaney Tavern is having a soft opening by invitation only this Saturday. The official opening is the 27<sup>th</sup>. The Hurley Building has also opened a lot of studio spaces recently. Waring has a new dance studio opening shortly. There is definitely more activity on the 44 corridor than in some time.

Mr. Russo inquired if the marketing campaign could be prefunded with this year's funds. Mr. Jerram indicated that is not permissible with municipal accounting procedures.

Mr. Krimmel inquired of the WPCA members present if there is anything that he or EDC can do to support their initiatives. Mr. Butler indicated that they are continuing to develop their plan of action. They have interviewed and hired CDM Smith and set a clear plan of mandates that need to be done. Mr. Toro indicated that EDC can share positive support. Ms. Lloyd commended Mr. Butler on his presentation to the EDC on the Analysis

**5. BUDGET BALANCE - \$5,913**

Mr. Brett commented that the remaining budget of \$4,913 will be surplus. He asked if any members had memberships that they would like to propose. No members responded. He indicated that he would like to have a budget discussion at the next meeting for budget planning for the next fiscal year. Ms. Lloyd commented that she thought it was important that the agenda list the remaining budget amount each month and that the accounting report be distributed to all members each month.

**6. "PARKING LOT" ITEMS**

Budget Planning

**7. ADJOURNMENT:**

**MOTION** Mr. Brett, second Mr. Krimmel, to adjourn at 8:45 PM; unanimously approved.

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Debbie Ventre**  
**Commission Clerk**