

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES - DRAFT  
MONDAY, AUGUST 10, 2015 – 7:00PM  
NEW HARTFORD TOWN HALL**

**PRESENT:** Chairman David Childs, Donna LaPlante, Shelley Lloyd; Mark Russo.

**ABSENT:** Bill Baxter, Jim Brett, David Krimmel, Bob Switzgable; Alternates John Burdick and Cindy Donaldson.

**MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC:** Bud Butler, Paul Pobuda, Polly Pobuda, Joe Toro, Laura Garay

At 7:10 pm, member of the public Bud Butler commented that in the event that a Commission does not have a quorum, the Commission can conduct a workshop whereby they discuss the items on their agenda without voting in deference to the members of the public in attendance.

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

Chairman Childs commented that if individuals are unable to attend they should notify him so that the meeting could be cancelled if a quorum would not be present. It is unfair to the members of the public who attend the meeting that they take the time to attend the meeting to find that business cannot be conducted for lack of a quorum.

**2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:  
July 13, 2015 regular meeting.**

Postponed until next meeting

**3. UPDATE OF EDC/CMSC VIBRANT TOWN CENTER PROGRAM**

Postponed until next meeting

**4. DOWNTOWN CENTER PAVILION SITUATION**

Mr. Toro requested a discussion from the members present on their opinions on the proposed pavilion. Ms. Lloyd indicated that she believes anything that is intended to draw people to the center of town is a good idea.

Mr. Russo indicated that he is in favor of a pavilion but not the design that was presented. The design that was presented is not appropriate for the proposed cost. He believes a full set of plans should be prepared by an architect and submitted to the town. He does not agree that the pavilion should be called the EDC Pavilion if there is not unanimous support for the pavilion among the members of the Commission. He suggests that the Commission withdraw support until the design has been improved.

Mrs. LaPlante commented that she had attended the Inland Wetlands Commission meeting last week. Plans were presented to the Wetlands Commission with much more detail and topography including flood lines. She would suggest that those plans be presented at the next EDC meeting. If the site was closer to the river, she does not believe it would receive approval from the Inland Wetlands Commission. There were concerns expressed about the canoe/kayak launch at that meeting which were addressed. She also attended one of the concerts at Brodie a couple weeks ago. Assuming that the same group would attend the downtown concerts, she noticed that many of the attendees at the concert did not sit and watch the concert. The younger families that attended were at the back of the field socializing while listening but didn't watch the conventional way. As a result, she doesn't feel that the location of the pavilion is going to make a difference.

Mr. Russo inquired if the pavilion would be suitable for other events other than concerts. Mrs. LaPlante responded that the original remodel of Town Hall included steps down to the river behind the memorial bench for Charlotte Dufour, but those plans were scrapped when cost cuts had to be made. She believes that having places for people to sit along the river would encourage people to hang out downtown. She supports the pavilion in spite of the design because it makes a statement about the town's commitment to developing downtown.

Chairman Childs commented that he is very much in favor of it. He originally intended to build a gazebo with the cost split between EDC and Friends of New Hartford.

Mr. Butler commented that Litchfield County was gypped when flood control dams were re-evaluated because the Federal Government ran out of funds. All the flood plain information does not consider any of the preventative flood measures that have been installed after 1955. He does not believe the 100 year flood plain lines are accurate any longer and that the flood plain should not be an argument against the location of the pavilion. Mrs. LaPlante commented that we regularly get requests for more recent flood maps but we do not have them because they have not been updated. Mr. Butler added that residents of Pine Meadow have been paying for flood insurance when the flood plain lines have not been reassessed. Mr. Pobuda suggested that the MDC might have updated flood maps. Ms. Lloyd suggested the the Northwest Hills Council of Government should be approaching the State to request that the flood maps be updated in order to improve economics for their residents.

## **5. UPDATE RAILS TO TRAILS**

Mr. Butler provided an update on the Rails to Trails program that the deeds have been located together with the maps showing that the Town owns the railroad bed from the Canton line to downtown. However since it is the principal right of way for the water and sewer lines, installing a paved trail above those lines may present an obstacle to maintaining those lines. Ms. Lloyd commented that she understood that the feasibility study would determine if the trail needed to be shifted in some areas. Mr. Butler indicated that the WPCA is conducting a study to determine if the Jones Mountain

trunk line should be remediated or relocated, but that would not be decided until much more work is conducted.

Mr. Pobuda commented that his neighbors in Pine Meadow have commented to him that they do not want the trail through their backyard. He believes that there are more negative opinions among the property owners than positive. He would suggest a wider sidewalk along Route 44 instead of following the railroad bed.

## **6. BUDGET AND FINANCIAL COMMITMENT**

Chairman Childs distributed a summary of expected expenditures for the coming year. Ms. Lloyd commented that some of the expenses listed would not recur this year.

## **7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS TO PROPERLY COME BEFORE THE COMMISSION**

Ms. Lloyd offered an update on the Paint the Pavement event advising all present that the submissions for the Paint the Pavement event are posted around in the hallway the corner and asked that everyone present vote. The designs will hopefully be moved shortly to a more prominent location and Debbie is working on setting up a ballot on the website.

The committee will be selling T-Shirts also. She summarized that there will be three locations. The town motto design selected will be in front of Torrington Savings Bank. The Children's and Adult designs will be behind Attorney Rogers' office.

Ms. Lloyd inquired about the status of the corner lot opposite Dunkin Donuts. Mrs. LaPlante indicated that nothing has been recorded as yet. Mr. Toro commented that \$20,000 of town funds had been spent to improve the property. Chairman Childs corrected that \$35,000 had been spent but that the town would recover those funds.

Mrs. Pobuda commented that she believes that someone should look into more benches and seating around the Town Center area where people can sit and linger downtown.

## **8. PARKING LOT ITEMS:**

Ms. Lloyd proposed that perhaps there not be an August or December meeting.

## **9. ADJOURNMENT:**

Workshop concluded at 7:55 pm

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Debbie Ventre  
Commission Clerk**