

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES - DRAFT
MONDAY, OCTOBER 20, 2014 – 7:00PM
NEW HARTFORD TOWN HALL – SESSIONS CONFERENCE ROOM**

PRESENT: Chairman David Childs, Bill Bohan, Jim Brett, Donna LaPlante, Shelley Lloyd; Mark Russo, Alternate Cindy Donaldson, First Selectman Dan Jerram

ABSENT: Bill Baxter, David Krimmel, Bob Switzgable; Alternate John Burdick.

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC: Pieter Visser, Troy LaMere & Joe Toro

1. CALL TO ORDER AND SEATING OF ALTERNATES.

Chairman David Childs called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

2. Chairman David Childs introduced Pieter Visser who is Scoutmaster of the Boy Scout Troop who will assist with clearing by the riverfront behind Town Hall. Troy Lamere asked the Boy Scouts to help and requested assistance from the Town in hauling away the debris. Chairman Childs indicated that the EDC will provide pizza to the boys and donate \$100 to the troop for their labor. First Selectman Jerram clarified that the boys may only use hand tools, no chain saws and the stumps may not be removed without authorization from Inland Wetlands. Mrs. Lloyd complimented the Boy Scouts on their community service efforts. Mr. Lamere requested assistance from the Commission on coordinating a date to complete the work. After the Boy Scouts have a date planned, First Selectman Jerram will ask for assistance from the Town Road Crew.

First Selectman Jerram reported that he and Barkhamsted First Selectman Don Stein met with the National Park Service on the plans for developing a Trail that expands from the rail network in Collinsville to Barkhamsted. John Monroe cautions that the actual line of the trail needs to be flexible as the plan develops. He will work with the Town in January in developing grant applications and a plan for moving forward. First Selectman Jerram also advised the Commission of discussions with Mr. Hurley and the change of zoning for his building that was approved during the past 30 days. Mr. Russo inquired if we would be offering incentives to Hurley's potential tenant since at least one potential tenant is considering alternate towns. Mr. Jerram confirmed that there could be some incentives to Mr. Hurley if he is able to sign the tenants, those incentives would be approved at Town Meeting. The Board of Selectman has discussed the intention for completing the Rails to Trails project as well as their willingness to consider offers on the Town Garage Property with Mr. Hurley. Mr. Brett and Mrs. Lloyd both commented that the Hurley property is essential to the Town Center development design. Mrs. LaPlante commented that even if these potential tenants do not sign, any future possible tenants will expect the same provisions from Mr. Hurley.

First Selectman Jerram further elaborated on plans to develop the downtown area and bring more activities to that area. Plans have been developed to build a covered patio pavilion area at the waterfront above the flood plain area that can become a destination for concerts and other entertainment. There have been additional discussions about building a foot bridge across the river and moving the ice skating to Callahan Park and closer to the town center as it used to be. Mrs. Lloyd mentioned the possibility of having an open mic

night on Saturday nights. The pavilion will have electricity available. She additionally commented that the Summer Concerts at Brodie have become well attended and could draw quite a crowd to the downtown area once it catches on.

First Selectman Jerram discussed the branding process to promote the slogan of “A Town for All Seasons”. This year all volunteers will receive a baseball cap instead of a plaque which will include the slogan. They arranged for Peggy’s Personalized Promos to make the hats. He has also requested a bid to redesign the Town Letterhead to include the slogan and get it on the website.

3. UPDATES

A. Gazebo

Chairman Childs mentioned a joint venture with the Friends of New Hartford to build a gazebo closer to the river with a \$5,000 contribution from them and from the EDC. Mrs. Lloyd commented that she approves the idea but would like to wait until the pavilion is in place before deciding on a location for the gazebo. First Selectman Jerram indicated that the timeframe for completing the pavilion would be sometime next year due to all the approvals and plans still needed to complete the process. Mr. Toro suggested that a local contractor might be willing to build at a reduced rate in exchange for advertising his business. Mrs. Lloyd commented that a riverfront gazebo would need the same approvals. Ms. Donaldson questioned if anything should be built in the flood plain. Mr. Bohan and Mr. Russo commented that they believe that the gazebo should be added to the pavilion project and obtain all approvals together. First Selectman Jerram described budgeting issues to allocate funding for the pavilion. The Board of Selectman plans for the pavilion including intended uses for the Griffin property should be ready for viewing at the next meeting.

Motion Mrs. Lloyd, second Mrs. LaPlante to allocate \$1,000 for the hats promoting the branding to the volunteers. Unanimously approved.

D. Town Calendar

Chairman Childs advised that Mr. Krimmel has been working on the Town Calendar and gathering information, but was unable to attend the meeting tonight.

E. Former Waring Building

Chairman Childs described plans to possibly allocate a portion of the Waring property parking lot to recruit a company who develops hydroponic greenhouses that had been turned down in Goshen. They may be interested in space in the industrial park, but failing that the Waring property may also be an option.

B. Mountain Bikes

A new town resident Jeremy Schaller is an avid Mountain Biker. The State has been contacted for information on developing a biking trail in Nepaug. Chairman Childs commented on a town in Vermont that has mountain bikers who visit regularly and spend at least \$100 each. The mountain biking association has been contacted for suggestions on developing the trail. Mr. Lamere commented that the course is not greatly invasive as riders prefer rustic courses. Mrs. LaPlante commented that the way to generate revenue from this would be through coordinated events and have the restaurants bring food to the attendees.

C. Street Paintings

Mrs. Lloyd commented that she had seen Karen Meares and she plans to focus on developing the plan for the Spring. The project will be moving forward.

F. WPCA

Chairman Childs wrote a letter to the WPCA supporting their efforts to expand the water and sewer lines.

G. Rails to Trails

Mr. Bohan inquired if the subcommittee should continue to pursue funding for the Rails to Trails project. He then updated that the subcommittee had a teleconference with a representative from the State DOT. Mr. Brett elaborated that the next step will be a routing study with feasibility, political assessments and environmental impacts. The routing study will be needed in order to apply for funding.

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

Mr. Brett inquired what was happening with the Independent. Mrs. LaPlante commented that she believes they will be raising their advertising rates and she hopes that their advertisers will increase their advertising budget not just advertise less frequently for the same funds. Mrs. Lloyd commented about the man who runs the Canton Patch.

**5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:
September 8, 2014 regular meeting.**

MOTION Mrs. Lloyd, second Mr. Russo, to approve the minutes of the September 8, 2014 regular meeting; unanimously approved.

6. ADJOURNMENT:

MOTION Mr. Brett, second Mr. Bohan, to adjourn at 8:02 PM; unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,

**Debbie Ventre
Commission Clerk**