



TOWN OF ELLINGTON

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**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 2020, 7:00 PM
ZOOM MEETING**

PRESENT: Chairman Sean Kelly, Vice Chairman Donna Resutec, Regular Members Chris Todd, David Hurley, and Alternate Susan Conte

ABSENT: Alternate Bryan Platt

STAFF

PRESENT: Lisa M. Houlihan, Town Planner and Christine Post, Recording Clerk

I. CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Sean Kelly called the Economic Development Commission meeting to order at 7:05 PM.

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

III. ACTIVE BUSINESS:

1. Report: Tax Incentive/Abatement Programs

- a. Tax Abatement Application for Earthlight Technologies, LLC, 128 West Rd, APN 037-003-0002 in a Planned Commercial (PC) zone. Construction of a two story building, approximately 20,000 sf for corporate headquarters – Sales & Installation of energy efficiency equipment and solar PV system.

Tim Schneider from Earthlight Technologies, LLC introduced himself and his company and was joined by both Sam and Jake Schneider. Tim stated they have outgrown their facilities on Route 83 in Ellington along with their leased property in Vernon. To that end they are looking to expand and develop property at 128 West Road to be built as a show room to educate the public on solar energy, tesla batteries and the like. Sam Schneider gave an overview of the building which will consist of 8,000 square feet of office and showroom space and just under 12,000 square feet of warehouse space with the intent of having their entire business under one roof. They have designed the building to use electric power and use solar array on roof.

The commission reviewed the abatement application materials. Chairman Kelly asked whether the warehouse would be for assembly or maintenance and Sam replied it would be for storage only. Discussion ensued regarding anticipated construction costs, potential for new jobs and revenues from fleet vehicles.

Ms. Houlihan indicated that the abatement program has 3 tiers, of which \$3,000,000.00 is the top tier for a period of 7 years.

Kim Bechard, Ellington Assessor reported that the current tax revenue for the land is a few hundred dollars per year because it is presently under the PA 490 farm exemption. Ms. Bechard indicated that she needs the plans to prepare a proper assessment analysis to provide Earthlight with an estimate for the tax amount and abatement. Chairman Kelly stated that this project would provide all new revenue to the town.

MOVED (TODD) SECONDED (RESUTEK) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO FIND SCHNEIDER BROTHERS LLC/EARTHLIGHT TECHNOLOGIES, LLC AN ELIGIBLE BUSINESS AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW 20,000 SF CORPORATE HEADQUARTERS AND SITE IMPROVEMENTS ASSOCIATED WITH SALES AND INSTALLATION OF ENERGY EFFICIENCY EQUIPMENT AND SOLAR PV SYSTEMS TO MEET THE PURPOSE OF THE ABATEMENT PROGRAM BY ENCOURAGING GROWTH AND INVESTMENT IN EXISTING BUSINESSES AND FURTHER MEETS THE OUTCOME OF THE PROGRAM BY INCREASING LONG TERM TAX REVENUE AND PROVIDING POTENTIAL EMPLOYMENT AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR OTHER TOWN BUSINESSES TO SERVICE THE NEW COMPANY.

IN SO FINDING THE EDC RECOMMENDS AN ABATEMENT OF 90% FOR THE FIRST TWO YEARS, YEAR THREE AT 80%, YEAR FOUR AT 70%, YEAR FIVE AT 60% AND THE LAST TWO YEARS AT 50%, AND FORWARDS A POSITIVE RECOMMENDATION TO THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN FOR CONSIDERATION.

This motion will be forwarded to the Board of Selectmen (BOS) for their meeting on December 14, 2020.

2. Report: Tolland County Chamber of Commerce

Nothing new to report.

3. Report: Agricultural Initiatives

Ms. Houlihan reported that the farmland preservation proposal for Oakridge Dairy was approved by the BOS and has been forwarded to the Board of Finance after which it will then go back to the BOS for forwarding to Town Meeting.

4. Report: Connecticut Economic Development Association Best Practices

Nothing new to report.

5. Report: Current Economic Activity

a. Discuss: First Annual Shop Ellington 2020 Campaign

Ms. Houlihan updated the commissioners on the status of the campaign. She reported that 120 invitations were sent out via email and another 130 invitations sent via regular mail along with a Facebook page created solely for the event. To date, there are a total of 25 businesses that are participating, and the Journal Inquirer published an article from

a press release issued by the Planning Department. To garner more involvement, Lori Spielman, First Selectman, will visit businesses and the Connecticut Small Business Institution with UCONN will highlight the event in their publication.

The commission discussed the details of the raffle cards, stickers and specifications of how the customers and businesses will participate. It was decided there would be a \$100 grand prize gift card, two \$50 gift cards for the runners up, and four \$25 gift cards for 3rd place. Furthermore, all commission members agreed to reschedule next month's meeting from December 9, 2020 to December 16, 2020 to draw the winning names and allocate the prizes.

IV. ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS:

1. Approval of the October 14, 2020 regular meeting minutes.

MOVED (HURLEY) SECONDED (RESUTEK) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPROVE THE OCTOBER 14, 2020 MEETING MINUTES AS WRITTEN.

2. Approval of 2021 meeting schedule.

MOVED (RESUTEK) SECONDED (TODD) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPROVE THE 2021 MEETING SCHEDULE.

3. Correspondence:

- a. AdvanceCT – Guide to suppliers offering reliable and high-quality PPE.

Ms. Houlihan shared this information with the commission which was emailed to businesses on the commission's distribution list. Commissioner Conte indicated there is a PPE company she works with that she can reach out to if needed.

- b. Department of Economic and Community Development – Reopen CT Rollback to Phase 2.1

V. ADJOURNMENT:

MOVED (TODD) SECONDED (RESUTEK) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO ADJOURN THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION MEETING AT 8:36 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Christine Post, Recording Clerk