



TOWN OF ELLINGTON

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ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING MINUTES WEDNESDAY, MARCH 10, 2021, 7:00 PM ZOOM MEETING

PRESENT: Chairman Sean Kelly, Vice Chairman Donna Resutek, Regular Member Jim Fay and Alternates Bryan Platt, Susan Conte, and Amos Smith

ABSENT: Regular Members Chris Todd and David Hurley

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 7:03 PM.

BY CONSENSUS AGREED TO ADD DISCUSSION REGARDING MUNICIPAL STRATEGIES FOR REGULATING SMALL CELL WIRELESS FACILITIES AS ACTIVE BUSINESS ITEM 6

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

III. ACTIVE BUSINESS:

1. Report: Tolland County Chamber of Commerce

Ms. Houlihan reported that the Legislative Breakfast on February 17, 2021 was well attended by about 30 participants including legislative representatives Dan Champagne, Tim Ackert, Tammy Nuccio and Mike Winkler. She stated there was conversation regarding assistance being provided to small businesses and discussion specific to manufacturing and rules for journeymen and apprentices.

2. Report: Agricultural Initiatives

Nothing new to report, at this time.

3. Report: Connecticut Economic Development Association Best Practices

a. Discuss future Shop Ellington event

Chairman Kelly discussed the possibility of doing 2 different events this year suggesting one could focus on companies in town that produce goods and services such as Rice Packaging, Dymotek, Earthlight Solar & Energy Solutions, Bolles Motors, Violette

Mechanical, Skips Wastewater Services and Barber Utilities. He suggested coordinating with the school system to host an event that would showcase what the businesses offer for employment opportunities so that students and the general public can learn what job skills non-retail-oriented businesses in town look for in an employee. Discussion ensued to market the event as a job fair and/or business expo for anyone who would like to attend and suggested the high school gym or cafeteria could be used noting COVID-19 protocols need to be kept in mind. Commissioner Resutek suggested that each business could have a sign-up sheet at their booth to schedule open houses for those who are interested in learning more. Ms. Houlihan will reach out to the superintendent to see if there is any interest in participating along with Dymotek, Rice, Earthlight and Bolles for a late July or early August event, providing COVID-19 restrictions allow for such a gathering. The Commission will discuss this matter at the next meeting in April to determine the next steps once Ms. Houlihan has verified the potential interest.

The commissioners then agreed to plan another Shop Ellington event for retail businesses keeping the same 2 weekend timeframe as last year. Commissioner Conte suggested the idea of adding a map of participating businesses on the back of each raffle card and reiterated the idea of using the Farmer's Market to spread the word as well as including more signage this year.

4. Report: Tax Incentive/Abatement Programs
 - a. Discuss additional amendment to the Tax Abatement Program, pursuant to the Town Attorney's recommendations.

Ms. Houlihan reviewed the revised amendment to the Tax Abatement Program with the Commission. The town attorney suggested adding a 10-year recapture clause for businesses similar to the existing farm recapture clause. The commissioners discussed the matter and decided to enact a recapture clause for businesses that mirrors the same schedule as the existing farm recapture clause.

MOVED (PLATT) SECONDED (RESUTEK) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPROVE AMENDMENT TO THE TAX ABATEMENT PROGRAM DATED MARCH 10, 2021 WITH THE ADDITION OF A RECAPTURE CLAUSE SCHEDULE FOR BUSINESSES THAT MIRRORS THE RECAPTURE CLAUSE SCHEDULE FOR FARMS TO BE FORWARDED TO THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN FOR REVIEW AND APPROVAL.

Ms. Houlihan will notify the Commission once the matter is on the Board's agenda.

5. Report: Current Economic Activity

Nothing new to report.

6. Discussion: Municipal Strategies for Regulating Small Cell Wireless Facilities.

Ms. Houlihan summarized materials she received from a Zoominar which she and Commissioner Hurley attended that discussed municipal strategies regarding small cell wireless facilities. She believes this information should be brought to the attention of the Planning and Zoning Commission to establish regulations regarding where small cell wireless facilities can be located and their appearance. She stated that the Connecticut

Siting Council will consider town regulations that are in place when deciding applications to install 5G facilities. Ms. Houlihan encouraged members interested in understanding this topic more fully to review the handout. She referred to item number 1 regarding a public private arrangement that could potentially encourage installation of infrastructure and improve access to 5G technology. Discussion ensued. The Commission supports the initiative in a way that makes the technology accessible but without jeopardizing Ellington's overall viewshed.

BY CONSENSUS AGREED TO EXPRESS TO THE PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION THAT THE EDC SUPPORTS REGULATIONS FOR SMALL CELL WIRELESS FACILITIES THAT ENABLES 5G ACCESSIBILITY FOR ELLINGTON BUSINESSES AND RESIDENTS WHILE SETTING STANDARDS TO PROTECT VIEWSHED, AESTHETICS AND RIGHT-OF-WAYS.

IV. ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS:

1. Approval of the February 10, 2021 regular meeting minutes.

MOVED (SMITH) SECONDED (RESUTEK) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPROVE THE FEBRUARY 10, 2021 MEETING MINUTES AS WRITTEN.

2. Correspondence:

Chairman Kelly reported that Commissioner Hurley submitted a sample of a bingo card event being used in Berlin, similar to the Shop Ellington card, but with the rules of bingo as a suggestion for a Shop Ellington event. He said it would take a good amount of coordination and cooperation with the participating retailers and that the Commission can discuss the logistics at the next meeting.

Ms. Houlihan reported that her department will be talking with the Planning and Zoning Commission about extending the temporary certificates for outdoor dining which were granted last year pursuant to Executive Orders resulting from COVID-19 restrictions. She also indicated that The Hidden Still is seeking approval to permanently expand their outdoor patio.

V. ADJOURNMENT:

MOVED (RESUTEK) SECONDED (SMITH) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO ADJOURN THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION MEETING AT 8:07 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Christine Post, Recording Clerk