



**TOWN OF MADISON
CONNECTICUT 06443
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION**

Approved March 10, 2016

Minutes of the regular meeting of the Economic Development Commission held on February 11, 2016, 7:30 p.m. at Madison Town Campus.

Present: Commissioners Ryan Duques, Jim Ball, Anne Foley, Lisa Miksis, Ed Pellegrino, Chris Weiller

Also present: Tom Banisch, First Selectman; Dave Anderson, Town Planner;

1. Approval of minutes of regular meeting, December 10, 2015. On motion made by Mr. Pellegrino, and seconded by Ms. Miksis, the Commission voted unanimously to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of December 10, 2015 as submitted.
2. Public Comment. There were no public comments.
3. EDC Budget. In response to a question by Mr. Duques, Mr. Banisch noted that the Selectmen moved the EDC budget forward through the process as submitted.

Mr. Duques noted that he and Mr. Anderson had attended a REX open house and were pleased that they had information on Madison available.

Mr. Banisch noted that they are working on a project to put together a group of realtors who will work to attract people to the area. He also noted that at the Chamber of Commerce meeting, information was provided on the Town Center project. In response to a request of why people are attracted to Madison, individuals expressed appreciation for the schools, beaches and community life.

4. Website update. Ms. Miksis noted that the list of the members of the Commission on the website needs to be updated.
5. Venue Management. Ms. Foley noted that Maggie and Katie, the representatives from a local venue management company have indicated an interest in making a presentation to the Commission at the March meeting. They had given a presentation to

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the Commission a number of years ago and have gained additional experience since that initial proposal. Ms. Foley agreed to contact these representatives and arrange for their attendance at the March meeting.

6. Madison Center Project update. Mr. Duques noted that on Wednesday at 8:15 a.m. there will be a public information session, hosted by the Economic Development Commission and Chamber of Commerce, to provide information on the next phase of the Madison Center Project. Members of the business community and public are encouraged to attend. The primary concern of retailers is about the possible negative impact appearance can have on business during construction. The information session is one way to work on addressing concerns through dialogue to help people understand the various aspects and stages of the project. The South side is narrower than the North side and requires less curb cuts so this part of the project should be able to move more quickly. Mr. Duques encouraged the Commission members to attend this meeting.

Ms. Miksis recommended that EDC members visit the impacted businesses on a regular basis so that action can be taken to address any concerns that might arise. Mr. Duques noted that during construction last year, some visits were made to affected businesses and it was very helpful. He agreed that efforts of Commission members to visit businesses would be helpful during the construction process to head off any concerns.

Mr. Duques reviewed the timeline for Phase 2 of the project noting that the South side work should begin in early March or April and be completed by late May, before the summer retail season begins. The work on the median should take a few months to complete but it is uncertain when this work will begin.

Mr. Duques reported exciting news about a \$2 million transportation grant application that was filed in the last two weeks. A total of \$1.5 million is needed to finish Phase 2 and the balance of the grant funds could be earmarked for renovations to the Tuxis walkway including sidewalks and the cross walk on Bradley Road to provide a safe walkway from the train station to the downtown area. Funds can also be utilized for a Waste Water Study which will assist with downtown development. Mr. Banisch noted that five Towns applied for this grant and he believes Madison will be given serious consideration since we have a compelling project that the State has supported in the past and will show results immediately since the project is ready to move forward this spring. The other towns are applying for planning money rather than construction activity. The Town has also applied for a \$500,000 STEEP grant.

Mr. Duques agreed to forward a copy of the grant application to the Commission members.

In response to a question by Mr. Ball, Mr. Banisch noted that the \$500,000 STEEP application for Strong Field would be used for an ADA compliant field house including a plaza, bathrooms, and changing rooms

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7. Planning and Zoning Report. Mr. Anderson reported on the following:
- the modular units on Cottage Road behind Cohen's Bagels, are under construction and are coming along very nicely.
 - The Grove School Dining Hall renovation project is moving along very nicely and is very beautiful.
 - OL&M will be vacating a building.

Mr. Anderson noted that his new title is Director of Planning and Economic Development.

8. BOF Report. There was no Board of Finance report.

9. BOS Report. Mr. Banisch reported that the Board of Education continues to look at the education facility needs of the community. Discussions have included looking at closing Island Avenue or Jeffrey Schools and building a new school which might be more economically efficient than undertaking renovations. One possible option for a vacated school will be a lease or sale to the Mercy School which can make any renovations necessary to accommodate their needs.

Mr. Banisch commented that he believes the Economic Development Commission is doing a great job and has been very effective on working on projects and items that require action and in giving credibility to the Town's interest in promoting economic development.

10. Old business. There were no items discussed under old business.

11. New business. Mr. Duques noted that Ms. Miksis has agreed to serve as the Sustainable Energy Liaison for the Commission. There will be a meeting with the representative of the Town Energy Efficiency Committee to help businesses learn about retrofitting for energy efficiency. Mr. Duques also noted that the Economic Development Commission, the Chamber of Commerce and Energy Committee are sponsoring this presentation and associated costs are being covered by Eversource. He encouraged Commission members to attend.

Mr. Duques noted that Ted Kennedy and the Chamber of Commerce are spearheading a South Central Connecticut Economic Summit on March 28 at 5:00 at the Stony Creek Brewery. He is asking for recommendations for a dynamic speaker from a business or agency who could participate. Topics to be discussed include development, the cost of doing business in Connecticut and a discussion on infrastructure. He encouraged Commission members to attend to represent Madison.

In response to a question by Mr. Ball regarding the status of the Railroad Station, Mr. Banisch noted that he recently was advised that construction of the platform is scheduled for 2018 and construction on the garage would happen at a later date.

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Mr. Banisch noted that they are also working on putting together a workshop with downtown property owners to discuss downtown issues and the possibility of a Downtown Development Authority. Important issues that could benefit from an authority include sidewalk maintenance, waste water issues and other possible improvements.

Mr. Duques noted that the Commission has talked about the idea of an Authority with some of the larger property owners and there had been some interest expressed by some of the owners.

12. Adjournment. On motion made by Mr. Pellegrino, and seconded by Ms. Foley, the Commission voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 8:35 p.m.

Terry Holland-Buckley
Clerk

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