

*These minutes are subject to approval by the Economic Development Commission*

Minutes from the Economic Development Commission meeting on January 17, 2017, Municipal Building, Meeting Room 3, 3 Primrose Street, Newtown, CT. Chairman Robert Rau called the meeting to order at 7:00pm

**Present:** Michael Boyle(left at 7:20), Robert Rau, William May, Cramer Owen, Amelia Dent, Al Roznicki, Wes Thompson, Matthew Michalick

**Absent:** Dana Trado

**Also Present:** Director of Land Use George Benson and Deputy Director of Land Use and Economic Development Christal Preszler

**Public Participation** – None

**Minutes** – Bill May moved to approve the minutes from the December 20, 2016 meeting. Amy Dent seconded, motion unanimously approved.

*Business Tax Incentives* – George Benson reported that according to their procedures, the tax incentives are not transferred over to the next owner. He and Wes Thompson worked on wording for business incentives and changed 2a to read; The agreement is no longer valid upon the sale or transfer of the property. An exception would be allowed in a condominium project where the first buyer of an individual condominium property shall be granted the tax abatement. The tax abatement would begin when the entire project receives the final C/O and terminate at the original abatement agreement end date. Also, a new Agreement may be negotiated with a new applicant.

George Benson also reported that there is a little problem with Lexington Gardens finishing up. The tenants can't get the incentive until the entire project has the C/O. Ideally the tenants will put pressure on the developer to finish the project so they can get the tax incentives.

They have already allowed the abatement for a mixed use property (½ commercial and ½ residential). You can give abatement to an apartment complex which is not mixed used. George Benson will find out if the EDC has the authority to make the change or if it has to go to the council. Dental Associates is trying to move in and get their finances together. This is a way to make sure the developer finishes the project.

Covered bridge is another project that is mixed use and the investment is \$33.5 million. The Water and Sewer Authority is trying to work with them on the sewer assessment and reschedule the payment so they are lesser to start. It is incentive housing and it is important to show the state the town is promoting incentive housing.

The State allows the Town to go up to 100% for 7 years and we generally go 45% for 3 years. It is difficult to find out what other towns are offering because they try to keep that relatively confidential so it is hard to get specifics.

*Commissioner's Reports* – Wes Thompson reported that there is a misperception that the EDC was going to pay for a portion of the museum in the streets. There is approximately \$3800 that was not spent in their budget from last year that was locked with a purchase order for signs. It is thought that the po is for way finder signs. The Finance Director believes that those funds can be used for museum in the streets if the commission wants to. The Finance Director has also set up a line item for donations for the museum in the streets. This way if someone makes a donation for the Museum in the Streets, they write the check to the Town of Newtown and it will be a tax deduction.

Bill May presented an update on the Tech Park which is now called Deep Brook West. He showed plans for the property of a suggested proposal of 2 buildings for development. They are still waiting final approval from the Army Core of Engineers which is needed to effectively market the property. He also reported he and Wes Thompson had a meeting with two gentlemen who are interested in building a zip line adventure but they have not produced a business plan or financials.

Amy Dent reported that she is still trying to set up an appointment with a developer that Bob Mitchell wants them to talk to. She also had a meeting with George Benson last week requesting a list of the properties and what kind buildings they can hold.

*Chairman's Report* – Bob Rau read from an article in the Newtown Bee saying that CT is not business friendly. He mentioned this because it makes their job harder; in addition, the Town has lost \$400,000 of budgeted revenue. Maybe at the next meeting they can talk about things that they should be doing. Amy Dent said that one of the things discussed at a meeting she attended is that you are wasting your time if you are trying to market your town individually. The larger cities and the state of CT are sending out ambassadors to get people to move here and small towns can't do it.

The state has inspected the Village at Lexington Gardens and they didn't like how driveway was paved going into Chase bank. It has been fixed so the traffic light should be coming on soon. Dental associates and a restaurant should be complete in April.

Election of Officers – Al Roznicki made motion to keep the same officers for the next year. Bill May seconded, motion unanimously approved.

Having no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:40pm

Arlene Miles  
Clerk Pro Tem