



Town of Griswold



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**GRISWOLD ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
MINUTES**

NOVEMBER 19, 2008

GRISWOLD TOWN HALL

I. REGULAR MEETING (7:00 P.M.)

1. Call to Order

Chairman Thomas Giard, Jr. called this regular meeting of the Griswold Economic Development Commission to order at 7:00 p.m.

2. Roll Call

Present: Chairman Thomas Giard, Jr., Paul Lach, Matthew Baber, Town Planner Carl Fontneau, and Recording Secretary Donna Szall.

Absent: Vice Chairman Melvin Jetmore, Chris Hargus

3. Determination of Quorum

T. Giard welcomed new member Matthew Baber. T. Giard stated that there is a quorum for this regular meeting of the Economic Development Commission.

4. Approval of Minutes

A. Minutes of Regular Meeting of October 15, 2008

T. Giard asked for a motion to approve the minutes. P. Lach made a motion to approve the minutes. T. Giard seconded the motion. All were in favor. The motion was carried.

5. Workshop

A. Garnet Consulting Services status report.

C. Fontneau explained that Leslie Cosgrove from Garnet Consulting Services has not arrived yet. T. Giard stated that we will move on to Item B.

B. Status of Draft #3 of Municipal Development Plan

T. Giard asked C. Fontneau for an update. C. Fontneau explained that the changes to the #3 MDP draft and the comments and changes were sent to TPA and that those changes were in the MDP draft 3 that they have before them. He explained the details for the local enactment of the draft and then to answer any comments made by DECD. There was discussion of this matter.

C. Fontneau explained that he has asked TPA for electronic copies of the mapping in the draft MDP; and TPA will send a PDF file to make copies for people locally. He explained that TPA did mapping of the utilities, location of waterlines, and sewer lines in the Draft MDP that are not available to the town and that TPA wanted \$2500 for copies of those maps.

C Fontneau explained that the Draft is before the DECD and the money is essentially spent. He explained that TPA's former project manager, Val Farro, will work on the loose ends of this project; and he explained that the \$7500 uncommitted budget to generate letter proposals after we receive the DECD review as to how to spend the \$7500. P. Lach asked about the maps in the draft MDP. C. Fontneau explained that he received the maps in a PDF format from TPA so that they can be printed but cannot be used in the GIS system. There was discussion of this matter

C. Fontneau explained that Liz Crutcher, who did the mapping in the Draft, is under contract to the Town to create electronic zoning maps and to format the products that we have to a more useable form for GIS software. He explained that the regional GIS system will be available on line.

C. Fontneau explained that the copies of Draft 3 MDP should be reviewed by the EDC members and then returned to him. There was discussion of this matter. T. Giard asked at the conclusion when the results from the state. C. Fontneau stated that the 25 copies are the draft so we may get one copy and may be able to hold TPA to an electronic draft. There was discussion of this matter including that there is no time frame.

T. Giard stated that Leslie Cosgrove is here and we will move back to Item A.

A. Garnet Consulting Services status report.

Leslie Cosgrove, Garnet Consulting Services made her status report to the Commission. She explained that she sent a e draft of the marketing brochure components. C. Fontneau made copies of the Marketing Brochure Components and distributed them to the commission.

L. Cosgrove reviewed the five tasks for the Economic Development Services L. Cosgrove explained the economic development brochure component and that some of the information will be converted to graphs so that the brochure will fit on 8" x 11" paper. She explained the purpose of the brochure for marketing to attract businesses and to attract residents. She explained that the brochure will highlight transportation access, photographs, maps, utilities, the enterprise district and information technology businesses. There was discussion of this matter including, photographs of to attract businesses, to highlight the proximity to the various colleges and universities showing an active, educated workforce as well as to create a map for the brochure in it's own scale to highlight Griswold's location as a projection masking the nearby competing towns showing locations to major towns and roadways.

T. Giard when the first draft of the brochure could be sent to the commission. L. Cosgrove explained that it can be ready by next meeting. T. Giard asked if it is done sooner to give it to Carl so the commission can look at it prior to the meeting.

L. Cosgrove explained that the brochure can have inserts to update events, demographics, and quality of life. There was discussion of this matter.

L. Cosgrove explained that she met with Mark James of CECD to discuss the website who would recommend any changes that should be made and that they can be done internally. There was discussion of this matter including that Connecticut PA 08-3 had forced some towns to abandon their websites. L. Cosgrove explained that there will be a conference call with C. Fontneau and Deb Donovan to work out ways to piggyback information regionally.

L. Cosgrove reviewed the Economic Development Contact Database and the EDDI which SECTER has worked on to provide critical information about Griswold on the internet to encourage site selectors and businesses to look at Griswold as a site.

L. Cosgrove reviewed the Business Incentive Policy explaining that it will be used to help existing businesses expand and to attract new business to Griswold. She explained that due to 12-65b for certain amounts for expansion in dollars. C. Fontneau stated that it is a statutory program by the State. L. Cosgrove explained that the Business Incentive Policy is used as a tie breaker to attract a business to Griswold and that this policy should be in place prior to negotiations with prospective businesses. T. Giard explained that the incentive policy must be approved at a town meeting. C. Fontneau explained that the incentives can be done as an ordinance under statutory authority give the BOS authority to make decisions on a case by case basis. There was discussion of this matter.

T. Giard asked C. Fontneau to check with the Town Attorney regarding the incentive policy as an ordinance before we go any further with this matter.

L. Cosgrove explained the program description, the eligible projects, the project amounts and time periods for real and personal property. She reviewed the provisions for consideration of the program such as permitted uses as defined in the Griswold zoning regulations, applicants should be in environmental compliance with DEP; applicants not delinquent in any fees or taxes owed to the town and that the policy is not retroactive; a completed application. She reviewed other considerations such as tax agreements, and that agreements are not transferable without BOS approvals, a time limit with projects beginning within 12 months and completed within 2 years. She reviewed the application process.

C. Fontneau asked about the period of assessment fixing agreement for real and personal property and if the benefit is prior to improvement or after the improvement is made. L. Cosgrove explained that there is a bench mark to an existing project for existing businesses using Wyre Wynd as an example of the new value. T. Giard stated that it would be the value of the value added on the whole property. There was discussion of this matter.

T. Giard asked L. Cosgrove to write a more thorough explanation on paper so that there would be no room for interpretation of the program. T. Giard asked L. Cosgrove to explain the Assessment Fixing Agreement. L. Cosgrove explained how the program would work with existing businesses as well as new business to forgive taxes or have taxes based on a percentage during negotiations. There was discussion of this matter. L. Cosgrove will use a sliding scale. T. Giard stated that a sliding scale will level the playing field for existing and new businesses.

C. Fontneau asked if the policies regarding the buy-in/tie-in fees will be addressed at another time. L. Cosgrove stated yes.

L. Cosgrove will meet with some of the businesses in town for next time to learn what their issues are. C. Fontneau stated that names would give last meeting. T. Giard asked what the

focus was for those meetings. L. Cosgrove explained that the focus is the EDC to understand what folks are saying about Griswold to make in more business friendly. There was discussion of this matter.

T. Giard stated that this will focus on negatives that business owners have experienced in Griswold. He asked C. Fontneau to attend a business mens meeting to ask them what does not work in town. There was discussion of this matter including that P. Lach could attend the chamber meetings with C. Fontneau.

C. Fontneau stated that there is a problem with huge letters of credit for projects from P & Z. He explained that he has tried to have the letters of credit pared down to absolute minimum that would protect the site so that the up-front money does not tie up the project by creating a disincentive. T. Giard asked if a community has a fund to create a guaranteed fund to back a business coming in using collateral such as the property. C. Fontneau stated he didn't know of any. There was discussion of this matter. L. Cosgrove will check into this matter.

L. Cosgrove asked about the time frame to give the commission the feed back from business. T. Giard stated that two months would be sufficient to bring back that information. M. Baber asked if he could review the contract. There was discussion of this matter including that the contract could be extended to five or six months.

T. Giard thanked L. Cosgrove for her presentation.

C. Discussion and possible input of EDC to changes in Zoning Map.

C. Fontneau explained that the zoning map will be a tax parcel zoning map and the P & Z will be instituting changes in some of the zoning parcel for commercial and industrial use. Fontneau explained the future land use map for the town to the commission and asked them to look at parcels of land where the zoning can be changed to commercial and/or industrial use such as along the railway as well as identify areas that can be added to the enterprise zone. T. Giard asked the C. Fontneau to come up with his ideas for changes to the existing land use map and the Commission will look at those at the next meeting of the potential commercial and industrial uses for specific parcels.

D. Other items of interest.

T. Giard asked for other items.

C. Fontneau explained that he and P. Lach attended a conference on CBI series. He stated that there will be another series next year. He explained that the BOS approved the figures for the Affirmative Action/Minority Participation Plan.

C. Fontneau explained there is a Master Planning workshop on December 5 in New London that member may like to attend since there is a modest budget that he can set up for the them to attend.. There was discussion of this matter.

P. Lach explained that C. Fontneau sometimes has difficulty in getting authorization to attend some of these meeting. He suggested that a letter from the EDC recommending that C. Fontneau attend meetings that pertain to our subject because there is information that we can use.

T. Giard explained that the commission can authorize C. Fontneau to prepare and send a letter to the First Selectman when C. Fontneau feels that it is an important issue and will benefit the EDC and the community and T. Giard will sign the letter. There was discussion of this matter.

T. Giard asked for a motion to authorize the planner to prepare a letter signed by T. Giard for C. Fontneau to attend pertinent meetings, conferences and workshops. P. Lach so moved. M. Baber seconded the motion. All were in favor. The motion was carried.

T. Giard asked about the term limits. There was discussion of this matter D. Szall to research the term limits updates for the EDC members and provide this information to him. D. Szall will check with the town clerk for this information. M. Baber stated that the clerk said his term was five years.

6. Adjournment

T. Giard asked if there was any other business. T. Giard asked for a motion to adjourn. P. Lach made a motion to adjourn. M. Baber seconded the motion. All were in favor. The meeting adjourned at 8:41 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Donna M. Szall
Recording Secretary