

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
MONDAY, MARCH 4, 2013
7:00 P.M., UPSTAIRS FOYER**

MINUTES

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Note: These are summary minutes. A tape recording of this meeting is on file in the Commission Secretary's Office in the Wolcott Town Hall.

REGULAR MEETING

I. CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL

Chairman Chris O'Brien called the Regular Meeting to order at 7:03 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance and attendance was taken.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Robyn Mazas, Terry Mulhall, William Evans, Steve Bosco, Ryan Bessette, Chris O'Brien

MEMBERS ABSENT:

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Upon **MOTION** by Steve Bosco, seconded by William Evans, it was unanimously voted to **APPROVE** the minutes of the January 7, 2013 Regular Meeting.

At this time Chris O'Brien welcomed new commission member Ryan Bessette.

III. CORRESPONDENCE

Chris O'Brien said the only correspondence he received was from Attorney Tynan regarding C-PACE program (to be discussed later tonight). He also said he has been driving around to the new businesses that are opening and said March 23rd the Stonehouse Bakery will be having a grand opening. He said Froyo World will be having a soft opening on March 7th at 12:00 and the grand opening will be March 16th. Chris O'Brien also said that he spoke with Ryan (Bessette) about getting the press to some of these grand openings and asked the commission members to try to show up to help promote local businesses. There was a brief discussion regarding the new (Slice of the Bronx) pizza restaurant and the brewery in town.

IV. PUBLIC REQUESTS

There were no Public Requests at this time.

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V. SUB-COMMITTEE REPORTS

1. Zoning Regulations Review

Chris O'Brien said he still hasn't been able to speak with Ray (Mahoney). He said the zoning regulations were last updated in 1999 and he spoke with the Mayor in December about reviewing them. He said there has been debates about what the natural conformity to the architectural style of Wolcott along the Rte. 69 corridor is and there is always a discussion about how many parking spaces there should be for certain businesses and are there things that are obsolete that should be taken out or new technology that should be put in (the regulations). He said it was (discussed) between him and the Mayor that a subcommittee be put together between this Commission and the Planning & Zoning Commission to revise the zoning regulations and bring them up to date. Chris O'Brien said he spoke with the Chairman of the Planning and Zoning Commission before Christmas who agreed with him. He said he then sent (P&Z Chairman) an email who returned with, what do you want changed and Chris said he thought we were in agreement, that minimally, they were old and needed to be looked at again. Chris said he sent him another email and is waiting to hear from Ray. He asked if anyone from this Commission would like to be on the subcommittee and no one volunteered so he said to talk to him after the meeting, (if interested).

VI. OLD BUSINESS

1. C-PACE - Clean Energy Investment Program

Chris O'Brien said they received a letter from Atty. Tynan today (before meeting) but he hasn't had a chance to read it. William Evans said he didn't read that letter as saying we should do this (program). Chris O'Brien said he spoke to Beth (Secretary for Town Council) who said Town Council has to approve it and they haven't yet and every week he's asked he has been told it is in Atty. Tynan's hands (and the letter was just received today) so it will probably be another few weeks. Chris O'Brien said this would be a loan that the Council would have to approve for any business that wants to upgrade their energy infrastructure and then it somehow gets paid back through their taxes. William Evans said he doesn't know of any bank that would sign off on this (program). Steve Bosco said there is also another problem as this agreement also requires that the municipality assign to the authority all liens filed by the municipality's tax collector and he doesn't believe the tax collector would do that. Chris O'Brien asked if the town manages the lien or does the authority and Steve Bosco said the authority does. Steve Bosco said the town is even

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giving its tax lien authority to them. He said basically (this program) is telling the town that they have to collect it and if you fail to collect it then (the town) is liable. Chris O'Brien stated that Atty. Tynan says it is a great program for the State from an environmental aspect but sees lots of problems with the program and William Evans said Atty. Tynan says (in his letter) that "all things considered I would suggest that the Town approve this agreement. Chris O'Brien said the next sentence states "only time will tell whether it ends up being a benefit or burden to the Town". Chris O'Brien said the Mayor brought this program to his attention in November or December but gave him nothing on it so he printed a page from the website but clearly there is more detail to this than what's printed on the website. There was more discussion regarding the letter from Atty. Tynan (see attached) and the program itself and it was stated the town should not get involved in this as there is no benefit to the Town but they have all the obligation.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

There was no New Business at this time.

VIII. UPDATE ON WOLCOTT BUSINESSES

Steve Bosco said again that we as a town do not have any economic development because we do not have an agency or a director. He said we do not have someone that can take people by the hand and (guide them) through all the departments in order to bring their business to town. He said we need to find a piece of property that has good development potential and then we focus on that property with the owner and the town in getting that developed. Again Steve Bosco suggested the piece of property on Meriden Road where the old drive in was. He said at one time this piece of property was approved for a 10,000 square foot commercial shopping center but nothing ever happened. He doesn't see it being developed as an industrial park as one property nearby has been trying to do so with their property for three years now and has had no success. He said it was (next) approved for age-restricted apartments but that (approval) has lapsed but that could still be a viable option. Steve Bosco said maybe another piece of property is where Alden's is as they were approved for more than what is currently there. Chris O'Brien said he called them last week but has not heard back from them. Chris O'Brien asked how we can market something (for these properties) and Steve Bosco said that you have to figure out what potential use would attract someone here and then how do we make it easier for them to develop it to be less costly. He said in this economy it is all about

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helping the developer or the owner of the business because whoever is going to give them the most is where they are going to go. There was a brief discussion about a

few other properties in town that have been in limbo for quite some time (i.e.: 1500 Wolcott Rd. and Property on Wolcott Rd. before the bowling alleys). This was followed by a brief discussion regarding the regulations and uses as to what is allowed and if they are legal non-conforming uses, etc. There was also a discussion regarding elderly apartments and how there is a need for them in town and the difference between age-restricted apartments and regular apartments. Steve Bosco said one difference is the age. He also said that one has a huge impact on the town and one doesn't along with one having huge revenue for the town and one being a huge expense. Chris O'Brien said we have more work to do on this item so we will continue discussion at next meeting.

IX. ITEMS FOR THE NEXT AGENDA

It was stated to keep the same items on the next agenda.

At this time Ryan Bessette suggested putting this meeting in the newspaper as the paper does it as a courtesy so business owners will see it and Chris O'Brien said we can do that.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Upon **MOTION** by Steve Bosco, seconded by Terry Mulhall, it was unanimously voted to **ADJOURN** the Regular Meeting at 7:50 p.m.

APPROVED:

Chris O'Brien, Chairman
Economic Development Commission

Edna Henderson, Recording Secretary
Economic Development Commission