

Economic & Community Development Commission

Meeting Minutes
January 2, 2013 7:15 PM
Trumbull Town Hall

I. Attendance

Commission: Chairman Scott Wich, Beryl Kaufman, Jack Berg, Ralph Sather, Evelyn Zamary, Tom Ginis

Town Staff: Edward Lavernoich

II. Old Business

Mr. Wich called the meeting to order at 7:20 PM. Mr. Berg made a motion to approve the December 5, 2012 minutes, which was seconded by Mrs. Kaufman. The vote was unanimously in favor of approval, 6-0. Mr. Wich stated that Gary Bean had resigned from the Commission and this opens the position of Vice Chairman, to which Mr. Bean had been re-elected at the previous month's meeting. It was discussed that having a Vice Chairman is not specifically required by Ordinance or the Town's Charter, but that it was particularly useful when the Chairman was unavailable to run a meeting. It was agreed that there should continue to be a Vice Chairman, and an election should take place at the February meeting for the position. Mr. Wich stated that the First Selectman has appointed John Pisinski to take Mr. Bean's place on the commission.

Mr. Berg initiated a discussion regarding commissioners who make public statements while identifying themselves as a member of the E&CD Commission. He suggested that there should be some consensus of the commission regarding those statements. He made it clear that he didn't want to limit anyone's ability to make statements as a private citizen. It was agreed by all present that an effort be made to assure that no person would be perceived as speaking for the E&CD Commission unless the Commission had been conferred with and there was a clear sense that the majority had agreed to the statement. There was also a discussion about sharing information, including the Director, so that commissioners would be aware of breaking news, to the extent possible.

III. New Commission Business

Mr. Lavernoich reviewed the Director's Report, highlighting certain projects and development activities where progress had occurred or the status of the project had changed in the last month.

Mr. Lavernoich discussed the business visits that he and Planning & Development Director Jamie Bratt have been pursuing; approximately 65 meetings have occurred, with more scheduled. He

stated that some companies do not wish to meet. He discussed his focus now being on larger companies, including manufacturing companies, in the coming weeks. Mr. Sather stated that the visits were an important way to update and expand the Commission's contacts, and briefly discussed the new database of company contacts that he hoped would be developed in the coming months. Mr. Ginis stated his intention to reach out to a contact at Fairfield University to discuss the database project.

Mr. Lavernoich showed the Commissioner a powerpoint presentation on the C-PACE program; the powerpoint presentation was one that he had obtained from Jessica Bailey of the state's Clean Energy Finance and Investment Authority. It was explained that C-PACE was a program intended to allow business property owners cost-effectively finance energy efficiency and clean energy improvements on their buildings; participating in the program would be completely voluntary on the part of local property owners, and the Town's role would be limited to placing a special assessment on participating properties, collecting payments from participants, then forwarding the collected funds to the Authority. Mr. Lavernoich stated that it was his hope that the commission could issue an endorsement letter for the program to the Town Council. He stated that he hoped to bring the program to the Council for its meeting in February. After some discussion, it was agreed that a letter could be issued. Mr. Wich volunteered to draft the letter in consultation with Mr. Lavernoich and send it to all the Commissioners to review before it is finalized. Mr. Sather stated that the letter should be factual, and not assert that the program is suitable for every company; companies should each undergo their own analysis to determine whether the program is a good fit for them. There was a general agreement to Mr. Sather's point.

Mr. Sather addressed three documents that had been handed out with the agenda: Trumbull ECDC Suggested 2012 Goals; Trumbull ECDC 2012 Results Summary Commission/Director Activities; and Trumbull ECDC 2012 Results Summary Top 10 Private investment Activities. He expressed his belief in the importance of comparing accomplishments with previous goals prior to establishing a new set of goals, to the general agreement of the group. There was a discussion of methods for publicizing the accomplishments, particularly the development activity. Mr. Lavernoich asked the commissioners to review a list of his (individual) anticipated activities for 2013, developed in conversations with the First Selectman, former Chief of Staff Daniel Nelson, and new Chief of Staff Elaine Wang. It was agreed that a discussion should take place at the February meeting regarding the Commission's goals.

IV. **Community Input**

No members of the community were in attendance.

V. **Adjournment**

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:59 PM by unanimous consent