

Town of Stonington
Economic Development Commission, Regular Meeting Minutes DRAFT
Wednesday, June 15, 2016
Town Human Services Building, 166 South Broad Street, Pawcatuck- 7:00pm

Present: Blunt White, Rich Balestracci, Suzanne Lane, Dave Hammond, Danielle Chesebrough, Pete Robinson

Absent: Kevin Bowdler, Ward Smith, Ed Planeta

Town Guests: Marsha Standish

Call to order: 7:05 PM

Approval of May 25, 2016 Minutes

Motion: Rich Balestracci

Second: Blunt White

All in favor

RECEIVED FOR RECORD
STONINGTON, CT
16 JUN 22 AM 11:31
CYNTHIA LADWIG
TOWN CLERK

New Business:

- 1) *Consider recommendation to Department of Planning concerning Town of Westerly RFP for Municipal Broadband Infrastructure Upgrade and Expansion.* This issue was not discussed during the meeting.
- 2) *Consider recommendation to Board of Selectman concerning POCD implementation and previous EDC recommendations.* After discussion, the EDC agreed that the upcoming turnover in PZC members (August 2016) is a critical juncture, and presents an opportunity to restate and reemphasize EDC and POCD objectives and priorities. To that end, EDC agreed to write a letter to the Board of Selectmen, which lists these planning and development priorities.
 - a) The HM Zone for Mechanic Street
 - b) Additional uses of the Monstanto property, currently M-1 Zone
 - c) Creating a zone master plan for the Mystic Aquarium, similar to the Mystic Seaport.

Approval of letter to Board of Selectmen

Motion: Dave Hammond

Second: Pete Robinson

All in favor

- 3) *Consider recommendation to Board of Selectman concerning Mechanic Street Flood Barrier.* EDC agreed to discuss and research this issue further, but no immediate actions were set. The issue will be discussed at next meeting.

Old Business:

- 1) *Velvet Mill business and community outreach – planning June 27 meeting, progress report.*

Danielle Chesebrough gave the EDC an update and the EDC members made suggestions involving attendees, format, and structure. Danielle will send an agenda to the EDC team for review and comment.

- 2) *EDC Program Activity Matrix – Business Segment outreach and progress Reports.* Pete Robinson discussed an update on the building trades section. Rich Balestracci discussed conversations with Liberty Crossing\Breslin Development.
- 3) *POCD Implementation Committee – progress report.* Last meeting canceled, no updates, not discussed at the meeting.
- 4) *Web presence, webpage on town website, Facebook group.* Not discussed at the meeting.
- 5) *Budget.* Not discussed at the meeting.
- 6) *Applications for zoning text amendment - PZ1611RA Suzanne R. Moore 40-44 Washington Street - Regulation Amendment to ZR Section 4.3.4 Buffer Requirements to change the buffer requirements in the LS-5 Zone to fifteen (15) feet of screening for a commercial use adjoining a residential zone, and eliminating the screening requirements of ZR Sections 4.3.4.2 and 4.3.4.3.*

Marsha Standish discussed the background and context of this issue. The EDC agreed to attend and support this issue at the upcoming PZC meeting on June 21, 2016. Copy of EDC letter of support attached dated June 16, 2016.

- 7) *Fisheries – business outreach (Gambardella Wholesale Fish Dealers and SNEFLA) consider recommendations, report by EDC Business Segment (task leaders) Danielle Chesebrough/Ward Smith.*

The EDC members suggested ideas to support this issue. Blunt White will follow up with Diana Urban and Rob Simmons. Danielle will follow up with State Senator Murphy and US Senator Blumenthal. Pete Robinson will try to put Danielle in touch with a New York Times reporter.

Adjourn 9:50 pm

Motion: Dave Hammond

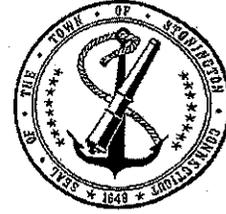
Second: Blunt White

All in favor

Attachments: Letter to PZC, EDC support for LS-5 text amendment

Economic Development Commission TOWN OF STONINGTON

152 Elm Street
Stonington, CT 06378
bluntwhite@stonington-ct.gov



VIA EMAIL

June 16, 2016

Mr. John Prue, Chairman Planning and Zoning Commission
Town of Stonington
152 Elm Street
Stonington, CT 06378

RE: EDC letter of support, Zoning Text Amendment PZ1611RA, Suzanne Moore

Dear John,

EDC supports text amendment PZ 1611RA which would remove fixed dimensional buffers between commercial uses and residential uses within the LS-5 zoning district. EDC calls your attention ZR 4.3 which states the intended purpose of LS-5 "a small lot business zone for built-up areas to provide a full range of services to residences in the area."

Village Areas of Stonington are predominantly LS-5 and DB-5. In DB-5 when commercial uses abut residential uses there is no fixed dimensional (10' or 15') Buffer, Bufferyard or Screening. The same thinking on fixed dimensional buffers should carry over to LS-5.

The proposed text amendment does not diminish PZC's authority (and responsibility), in all zoning districts, to determine appropriate Buffers, Bufferyards and Screening on a case by case basis. Those powers come from ZR 6.5 - Commission Powers Relative to Action on a Special Use Permit; and when a SUP is not required, from ZR 8.3.6.3 - Modification to a previously approved Site Plan (a Commission review process when a property use changes).

The LS-5 zoning district is largely pre-existing and built out. Good policy calls for regulatory schemes that address facts on the ground which differ from property to property (not starting from a vacant undeveloped lot). At 40-44 Washington Street the property owner could meet the existing 15' screening requirement (4.3.4.3) by demolishing a portion of the building to create a space that is the length of a car. Clearly that doesn't meet a test of reasonableness, the fixed 15' requirement should be removed.

Going forward, far better outcomes can be achieved by PZC determining, on a case by case basis, effective screening; for example, a cedar fence 8' tall, or a row of bushes 8' tall (aka new Dog Watch Barbecue). The Proposition: Both commercial and residential uses are allowed in LS-5. When commercial uses abut residential uses, the Community's interests are best served when PZC determines Buffers, Bufferyards and Screening on a case by case basis.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Stonington EDC
Blunt White, Chair

CC: First Selectman
Department of Planning
Suzanne Moore
Greater Mystic Chamber of Commerce