

Town of Stonington
Economic Development Commission, Regular Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, January 20, 2016

Town Human Services Building, 166 South Broad Street, Pawcatuck- 7:00pm

Present: Blunt White, David Hammond, Rich Balestracci, Virginia Abernathy, Joel Valenti, Edward Planeta, Jr., Pete Robinson.

Town Guests: Jennifer Ansay, Daniel Barber – Northeast Property Group, Jason Vincent Director of Planning Town of Stonington, Amy Arruda – former EDC member

Call to order: 7:00 PM

Approval of November 18, 2015 Minutes

Motion: Blunt White

Second: Dave Hammond

All in favor

Business:

Commission member change - Motion to thank Amy Arruda for 5 years of dedicated and exemplary service. Amy's 5 year term ended on 12/31/2015. Blunt to write thank you letter.

Motion: Blunt White

Second: Rich Balestracci

All in favor

Discuss developing an action plan for the former Monsanto location at 62 Maritime Drive – Dan Barber, principal of NPG (Northeast Properties Group), is a realtor for the property. Dan Barber arranged a tour of the property for Director of Planning Jason Vincent and two EDC members on Wednesday January 20th. Monsanto will likely cease operations at the site by September 2016 at which time it will become vacant. EDC's observations were that the 91,000 sf building is in immaculate condition; it's a Fortune 500 corporate research lab facility and will have appeal to a world-wide audience. While it has 33,000 sf of greenhouses, there are not that many companies in the plant genome engineering business. A likely buyer will probably only be interested in its value as an office research facility.

Blunt proposed that EDC prepare recommendations to assist PZC in their planning capacity. Some ideas discussed were reducing M1 regulatory constraints, specialized zoning to better fit a desired occupant, how to expand the audience that may be interested in purchasing and, exploring approaching Centerbrook Architects for simple architectural drawings showing a office research building where the greenhouses are currently sited. An increase in the

FAR regulations to expand the size of the building (it's a 15 acre site, largely surrounded by dedicated open space, M1 floor area ratio maximum is presently 30%). The overall goal would be for PZC to develop strategies and tactics to encourage a prompt sales transaction that would realize an excellent economic return to the Town.

Motion to prepare and send a letter to PZC, in advance of their next meeting on 2/2/2016, containing: recommendations for new strategies and zoning tools to (1) Encourage a prompt sale or lease transaction to a premier office research user that would grow the highly qualified technical expertise in this community, (2) Increase real estate property tax revenue from the current \$102,000 to \$200,000 per year, (3) Consider changes to M-1 zoning regulations to encourage a high value add transaction to occur, (4) Consider preapproving a 2 story office research building where the greenhouses are presently sited, and (5) Specifically requesting that PZC add to their formal List of Initiatives: Development of Planning strategies and new Zoning tools for M-1 and 62 Maritime Drive.

Motion: Blunt White

Second: Edward Planeta, Jr.

All in favor

Commission member responsibility handoff - Amy Arruda reminded EDC that someone is needed to keep the documents up to date (she was previously responsible). Joel Valenti volunteered and Amy Arruda suggested Danielle Chesebrough could assist in keeping the CT Tax Incentives documents and the Doing Business in Stonington Guide and Brochure up to date. These documents should be reviewed annually by EDC.

POCD Implementation Committee - Dave Hammond, EDC member and POCD Implementation Committee member, led discussion and passed out the EDC and PZC Policy and Task Lists. EDC previously finalized the prioritization of its Policy and Task List and made priority recommendations for PZC's Policy and Task List (attached). At PZC's meeting on 1/19/2016 (the night before) PZC completed their task prioritization, which in some cases was considerably different from EDC's recommendations. EDC will receive the final PZC version prior to its February meeting and consider a response to PZC (next POCD Implementation Committee meeting on 3/7/2016). Troubling to EDC was a PZC Task prioritization of "Low" assigned to Task 10.4.5 "Consider changes to zoning to offer additional flexibility for the future growth of Mystic Aquarium." EDC had requested that this Task be assigned a High priority because during the POCD writing and approval process it was determined to be very important to the Aquarium. The Aquarium is located in the TC-80 zone where "technically" aquariums are not an Allowed Use. This requires the Aquarium to apply for, and appear frequently before PZC to obtain approvals for normal aquarium activities.

Blunt White presented a draft tool to manage POCD implementation details titled EDC Program Activities Matrix, it's based on business segments and clusters and, although a work in progress, members have volunteered assignments and to start

gathering data. Future discussions will continue to shape this tool (draft Program Activities Matrix attached with assignments).

Business outreach – Members were encouraged to read zoning regulation 7.2 Groundwater Protection Overlay District to become familiar with it for future discussion.

Web presence - Joel Valenti, EDC's manager of web presence, spoke about EDC's Facebook page and explained the merits of its configuration as a "page" versus a "Group." The advantage of a Page is that the EDC has more control over content and statistical web traffic data can be collected. A recent EDC Facebook post that linked a story in the Westerly Sun regarding PZC's approval of a zoning text change to allow microbreweries and brewpubs in LS-5 and DB-5 zones had over 2,000 Likes.

Flood Hazard regulations - Clint Brown is willing to meet next week on FEMA Flood issues. EDC will firm up dates/times with Scott Deledda, Wayne Greene, Jason Vincent and other interest parties. Purpose is to begin to identify key issues with our Zoning and FEMA regulations that could have an adverse impact on prompt rebuilding after a major storm event. This is a POCD task and EDC is planning additional meetings, ultimately producing written recommendations to PZC.

seCTer and CEDS 2016 activity – Dave Hammond EDC liaison to seCTer led the discussion. The CED's report (a regional, 21 municipality Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy) is done every 10 years. In mid-March seCTer is preparing to hold a meeting in Stonington to gather input on CEDS. EDC members will review and add names to seCTer's invite list.

Adjourn: 9:44 PM

Motion: Blunt White

Second: Ed Planeta, Jr

All in favor

Attachments – EDC Program Activities
PZC's Policy and Task List with EDC Recommendations

Approved 2/16/2016
Blunt White, chair EDC

BUSINESS SEGMENTS (Clusters)	Leader	EDC PROGRAM ACTIVITIES - Individual Tasks roll up to Projects which roll up to Program Activities							Comments
		Economic Analysis	Regulatory Analysis	Infrastructure Analysis	Impact on Grand List	EDC Recommendations	Business Outreach	New Business Development	
Senior Care	Blunt W.								
Tourism									
Hotel and Hospitality	Virginia A.								
Retail	Suzanne L.								
Marinas and Marine Trades	Blunt W.								
Downtown Village Areas - Pawcatuck	David H.								
Downtown Village Areas - Mystic	David H.								
Commercial Office Space (Existing)	Rich B.								
Commercial Office Space (New)	Rich B.								
Manufacturing Space (Existing)	Ed P.								
Manufacturing Space (New)	Ed P.								
Vacant Land									
Commercial Fishing									
Agriculture/Aquaculture									
Construction Trades	Pete R.								

PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION

CHAPTER 5. NATURAL RESOURCES

5.1. Protect Water Quality and Quantity

Task #	Tasks	Priority (high, med, low)	Leader	Partners	Task Designation (initial, modified, deleted or new)	Lead Point of Contact	Start Date (Planned or Actual)	Completion Date (Planned or Actual)	Estimated % Complete	Comments
5.1.9	Investigate strengthening the Town's Groundwater Protection Overlay District to limit uses according to their potential risks using the State's Aquifer Protection Program as a model.	High	PZC	DOP Water Providers						Natural Resources Category EDC Input (high priority): Review GP0D 7.2.5 Use Regulations, review all Prohibited and Conditional Uses. Revise Research Labs 7.2.5.1.6 and 7.2.5.2.13. Revise Manufacturing 7.2.5.1.8 and 7.2.5.2.15. Update GP0D regulations so mitigants can be proposed and considered by PZC. Goal should be to reduce risk to satisfactory levels while allowing transactions and economic activity to occur.
5.1.11	Consider adopting "effective impervious coverage" requirements for all commercial and industrial zones which may possibly replace floor area ratio requirements in these zones.		PZC	DOP						General Regulations Category

5.2. Protect Inland and Coastal Wetlands

Task #	Tasks	Priority (high, med, low)	Leader	Partners	Task Designation (initial, modified, deleted or new)	Lead Point of Contact	Start Date (Planned or Actual)	Completion Date (Planned or Actual)	Estimated % Complete	Comments
5.2.4	Clarify land use regulations regarding buffers from natural resources particularly in residential zones.		PZC	DOP						Natural Resources Category

5.3. Protect Other Natural Resources

Task #	Tasks	Priority (high, med, low)	Leader	Partners	Task Designation (initial, modified, deleted or new)	Lead Point of Contact	Start Date (Planned or Actual)	Completion Date (Planned or Actual)	Estimated % Complete	Comments
5.3.4	Amend regulations to prohibit the introduction of invasive species during the site development process.		PZC	IWWC, CC, DOP						Natural Resources Category
5.3.5	Amend regulations to require review of CTDEEP's Natural Diversity Database (NDDb) when land use applications fall under the NDDb area of concern.		PZC	DOP						Natural Resources Category
5.3.6	Amend regulations to prohibit new excavation operations, such as quarries, in Town.		PZC	DOP, STF						General Regulations Category

CHAPTER 6. OPEN SPACE

6.1 Protect and Preserve More Open Space										
Task #	Tasks	Priority (high, med, low)	Leader	Partners	Task Designation (initial, modified, deleted or new)	Lead Point of Contact	Start Date (Planned or Actual)	Completion Date (Planned or Actual)	Estimated % Complete	Comments
6.1.7	Consider revising regulations to prohibit detention basins, sewerage pumping stations and utility rights of way from being counted towards the percentage of open space set-asides.		PZC	CC, DDP						General Regulations Category
6.1.8	Update Open Space Development regulations to eliminate requirement that open space cannot have a greater percentage of wetlands than the entire property.		PZC	CC, DDP						General Regulations Category

CHAPTER 7. SCENIC & HISTORIC RESOURCES

7.1 Maintain the Scenic Character of the Town										
Task #	Tasks	Priority (high, med, low)	Leader	Partners	Task Designation (initial, modified, deleted or new)	Lead Point of Contact	Start Date (Planned or Actual)	Completion Date (Planned or Actual)	Estimated % Complete	Comments
7.1.7	Establish policies and regulations as needed to protect scenic resources.		PZC	CC, BOS, DPV, BOS						General Regulations Category
7.1.9	Designate additional Scenic Roads as shown on the Scenic Resources Map in this chapter.		PZC	CC, DPV, DDP, BOS						General Regulations Category

7.2 Encourage Protection of Historic Resources										
Task #	Tasks	Priority (high, med, low)	Leader	Partners	Task Designation (initial, modified, deleted or new)	Lead Point of Contact	Start Date (Planned or Actual)	Completion Date (Planned or Actual)	Estimated % Complete	Comments
7.2.9	Review regulations dealing with the impact of development on historic resources.		PZC	DDP, HS						General Regulations Category

7.3 Protect Archaeological Resources										
Task #	Tasks	Priority (high, med, low)	Leader	Partners	Task Designation (initial, modified, deleted or new)	Lead Point of Contact	Start Date (Planned or Actual)	Completion Date (Planned or Actual)	Estimated % Complete	Comments
7.3.2	Review regulations for identifying and protecting archaeological resources and update as needed.		PZC	DDP						General Regulations Category

CHAPTER 8. VILLAGES

8.2 Encourage and Support Vibrant Villages

Task #	Tasks	Priority (high, med, low)	Leader	Partners	Task Designation (Initial, modified, deleted or new)	Lead Point of Contact	Start Date (Planned or Actual)	Completion Date (Planned or Actual)	Estimated % Complete	Comments
8.2.5	Review the NDD and IHRD zoning requirements for potential updates.	High	PZC	DOP						General Regulations Category EDC Input (high priority) Consider adding Master Planning Tools to the RA40 zone (for Perkins Farm Campus). Review the IHRD requirement of "preservation, to the maximum feasible extent of original buildings and architectural significance."

8.3 Address Village Business Needs

Task #	Tasks	Priority (high, med, low)	Leader	Partners	Task Designation (Initial, modified, deleted or new)	Lead Point of Contact	Start Date (Planned or Actual)	Completion Date (Planned or Actual)	Estimated % Complete	Comments
8.3.3	Address parking issues.	Medium	PZC	EDC, CDC, DOP, DPW						General Regulations Category EDC Input (Medium) include with ID.2.9 Review of Current Zoning Regulations.

CHAPTER 9. RESIDENTIAL HOUSING

9.1 Diversify our Housing Portfolio

Task #	Tasks	Priority (high, med, low)	Leader	Partners	Task Designation (Initial, modified, deleted or new)	Lead Point of Contact	Start Date (Planned or Actual)	Completion Date (Planned or Actual)	Estimated % Complete	Comments
9.1.5	Modify zoning regulations to make more provision for mixed use development, including residential units.		PZC	DOP						General Regulations Category
9.1.6	Explore changes to the Attached Housing regulation to allow for additional development		PZC	DOP						General Regulations Category
9.1.9	Investigate potential use of affordable housing (or a fee-in-lieu payment) as part of every residential development.		PZC	AHC, DOP						General Regulations Category

CHAPTER 10. COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

Task #	Tasks	Priority (high, med, low)	Leader	Partners	Task Designation (initial, modified, deleted or new)	Lead Point of Contact	Start Date (Planned or Actual)	Completion Date (Planned or Actual)	Estimated % Complete	Comments
10.2.6	Study the economic impact of new FEMA regulations regarding re-building after major storms.	High	PZC	EDC, DOP						General Regulations Category EDC input (high priority) with considerable already-developed commercial and residential zoned property in the FEMA Flood Hazard Area, zoning regulations need to be reviewed and updated, where appropriate, to allow prompt rebuilding (to current code) after a storm event. Prepare procedures in advance so that rebuilding will not be delayed.
10.2.7	Amend the LI-130 zone regulations to allow agricultural uses and allow expansions to existing residential uses.		PZC	DOP						General Regulations Category
10.2.8	Review text of LI-130 zone to update for new uses, review bulk requirements and eliminate uses considered inappropriate.	Medium	PZC	DOP						Economic Development Category , EDC input (medium priority) include with 10.2.9 Review of current zoning regulations. Consider elimination of Warehousing (low value add) from Permitted Uses.

10.2.9	Review text of the current zoning regulations to modernize language, objectives, uses and purpose of commercial zones, specifically the M-1 and TC-90 zones.	High	PZC	EDC, DOP													Economic Development Category EDC input with respect to M1 and TC90 (high priority): Create additional categories for M1 as recommended in the Planmetrics M1 Zoning Strategies Study dated 10/16/2012. For TC90 where the Aquarium is located, add Master Planned zone like the MHD (Maritime Heritage District).
10.2.10	Create a Heritage Mill District (HM) zone for historic mill sites.	High	PZC	EDC, DOP													Economic Development Category EDC input (high priority): establish the HM zone and contemporize allowable uses to promote economic development

10.4 Maintain and Promote the Town's Economic Drivers

Task #	Tasks	Priority (high, med, low)	Leader	Partners	Task Designation (Initial, modified, deleted or new)	Lead Point of Contact	Start Date (Planned or Actual)	Completion Date (Planned or Actual)	Estimated % Complete	Comments
10.4.5	Consider changes to zoning to offer additional flexibility for the future growth of Mystic Aquarium.	High	PZC	DOP						Economic Development Category EDC input (high priority): Update zoning by creating a Master Planned zone for the Mystic Aquarium properties similar to the Mystic Seaport's MHD (Maritime Historic District).

CHAPTER 12. UTILITIES

Task #	Tasks	Priority (high, med, low)	Leader	Partners	Task Designation (Initial, modified, deleted or new)	Lead Point of Contact	Start Date (Planned or Actual)	Completion Date (Planned or Actual)	Estimated % Complete	Comments
12.5.3	Develop guidelines for locating telecommunication towers including a plan to identify the most desirable future sites.		PZC	DDP						General Regulations Category

Total Planning and Zoning Commission Tasks

24