Town of Stonington
Economic Development Commission, Special Meeting Minutes DRAFT
Wednesday, May 25, 2016
Town Human Services Building, 166 South Broad Street, Pawcatuck- 7:00pm

Present: Blunt White, Rich Balestracci, Virginia Abernathy, Suzanne Lane, Joel Valenti, Dave Hammond, Mark DuPont.
Absent: Danielle Chesebrough, Kevin Bowdler, Ward Smith, Pete Robinson, Ed Planeta
Town Guests: Jason Vincent

Call to order: 7:00 PM

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STONINGTON, CT.
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CYNTHIA LADWIG
TOWN CLERK

Approval of April 20, 2016 Minutes
Motion: Blunt White
Second: Rich Balestracci
All in favor

New Business:
Review two applications for zoning text amendments:

PZ1609RA Andrew Halsey, 35 Campground Road – Regulation Amendment to ZR Section 7.2 Groundwater Protection Overlay District (GPOD) to add conditional uses (Assembly Woodworking) in the CG-60 Zoning District. The Conservation Commission at their meeting on May 23 voted unanimously in support of Halsey's application. PZC will consider the application at a Public Hearing on June 7, 2016. At EDC's meeting on April 20, 2016 EDC voted unanimously to send a letter to PZC in support of the application. EDC discussed if any additional action was necessary and agreeing none was necessary it was agreed an EDC member will attend the hearing on June 7 in support of the letter (attached).

PZ1611RA Suzanne R. Moore 40-44 Washington Street – Regulation Amendment to ZR Section 4.3.4 change buffer requirements in the LS-5 Zone to fifteen (15) feet of screening for a commercial use adjoining a residential zone, and eliminate screening requirements of ZR Sections 4.3.4.2 and 4.3.4.3. The Conservation Commission at their meeting on May 23 found/voted that "...any effort to clarify and rationalize this area of ambiguous and confusing regulations is welcome. The consideration of both residential uses and commercial is high importance as both are impinged at present. Having regulations that cannot be complied with accomplishes nothing." This supports the Applicant's and EDC position that the status quo is unacceptable. A PZC Public Hearing is scheduled for June 21, 2016 to consider the application. At EDC's meeting on April 20, 2016 EDC voted unanimously to send a letter to PZC in support of the application. EDC discussed if any additional action was necessary and agreeing none was necessary it was agreed an EDC member will attend the PZC meeting on June 21 to speak in favor.

Grant opportunity for sidewalks along Route 1, SHS to Pawcatuck, consider recommendation to accompany Town grant application:

Jason Vincent presented the details of the Grant request, to be completed by the end of May, for $500,000 which will pay a substantial amount of the cost for sidewalks of $680,000.

The Grant is from the Department of Housing and is called the Main Street Investment Fund, its focus is economic vitality. Three major themes are policy, infrastructure and economic development. From an infrastructure perspective Jason's brought to EDC's attention concerns from the Pawcatuck Fire Department of a dead end municipal water main between Pawcatuck and SHS (Westerly Water Company) that should be "loop interconnected" for fire protection redundancy (if water main breaks, fire protection systems will become inoperative). Lack of adequate water service has the potential to curtail economic development along Route 1 where the sidewalks are contemplated. From a policy infrastructure point of view a grant could fund a portion of the cost to recommend solutions.

If the Grant is approved then Jason will go to Board of Selectman with a request for the remaining cost.

Motion to recommend the Town Center Commercial Plan Pawcatuck Streetscape Project Route 1 Corridor Design Plans as presented.

Motion: Blunt White
Second: Dave Hammond
All in favor

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

Stonington Fishermen, represented by the Southern New England Fisherman and Lobsterman's Association (SNEFLA) and Gambardella Wholesale Fish Dealers are very concerned about the effect Fishing regulations are having on their livelihood and businesses. They recently contacted Federal, State and local officials for help after Gambardella Wholesale Fish Dealers went public with news they might close because not enough fish are being landed in Stonington (principally due to a Federal 30% curtailment of flounder and sea bass landings). Congressman Courtney visited the Docks in April and produced a letter dated May 23 to the US Department of Commerce signed by 3 Senators and 12 Congressman (attached). EDC became involved because effective commercial fishing ports generally require an on-site fish wholesaler. EDC assisted with scheduling a meeting on May 26 at the Town Dock with CT outreach officers from Senator Murphy and Blumenthal's offices, DEEP Fisheries Director David Simpson, State Representative Diana Urban and First Selectman Rob Simmons. EDC member Danielle Chesebrough put together an informative document that outlines the problems with links to videos and data that explains the problem in great detail.

<u>Old Business:</u>

Velvet Mill business and community outreach progress report:

Date for business and community outreach event is on the calendar June 27, 2016 Monday 5:30pm at the Velvet Mill. Kevin Bowdler and Danielle Chesebrough are in charge of organizing and gathering data

to identify concerns, issues that are/may prevent/hinder business growth and further development in the Mill and to improve community relations. One issue identified by the residents is traffic. Bowdler and Chesebrough arranged for a traffic study by Stonington Police, it will include the last two weekends of the indoor Farmers Market (results at next EDC meeting). Another issue is resident opposition to a pending application before the State Liquor Control Commission for a liquor permit request from the Velvet Vine restaurant. All Town/Borough approvals have been granted. Blunt suggested EDC members reach out to Danielle and Kevin to see what support they need in regards to calls or invitations to help with the community outreach. Jason volunteered to pull a list of residents from the GIS system for the neighborhood meeting and $500 has been previously allocated from EDC budget to cover event costs.

POCD Implementation Committee progress Report:

Dave Hammond reported that the May Committee meeting was cancelled and no date was on the calendar for new meeting.

Activity Matrix:

Blunt reached out to Perkins Farm owner David Lattizori, who is working on text language for a zone change. He is creating a zoning text amendment for Master Plan Zone and expects to be ready to file in June 2016. EDC members to continue to research topics and will fill in matrix (Google file in shared drive).

EDC Budget for Fiscal Year Ending (FYE) 2017:

FYE 2016 Budget has a remaining balance of $2,000 from a starting balance of $2,700. New Fiscal year starts July 1, 2016 with the same budget amount as last year of $2,700.

Comments from DOP Jason Vincent:

Jason briefly discussed the Town of Westerly RFP for Municipal Broadband Infrastructure Upgrade and Expansion. Jason asked EDC to evaluate the business merits. Add to agenda for June EDC meeting.

Adjourn: 9:46 PM

Motion: Blunt White
Second: Virginia Abernathy
All in favor

Attachments:

Letter in support of Halsey zoning text amendment
Letter from Congressman Courtney dated May 23, 2016

Economic Development Commission
TOWN OF STONINGTON
152 Elm Street
Stonington, CT 06378
860 460-2881

VIA EMAIL

June 2, 2016

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

Re: In support of PZ1609RA, Zoning Text Amendment GPOD, Andrew Halsey, 35 Campground Road.

Dear John,

At EDC's meeting on April 20, 2016 it was unanimously agreed to write a letter in support Andrew Halsey's proposed text amendment to the GPOD (PZ1609RA). Please note there was no public opposition to Halsey's proposed text amendment at EDC's meeting.

EDC finds that Halsey's application is narrowly focused, conditionally allowing only "Assembly Woodworking" in the GC-60 zone, in the GPOD. Further, EDC notes that the application does not diminish PZC's ability to perform its job when considering future applications for Assembly Woodworking in GC-60/GPOD because current zoning regulations have strong language for managing risk in GPOD areas, specifically 7.2.7 Performance and Design Standards and 7.2.8 Inspection and Enforcement.

Additionally EDC wants to bring to your attention that PZC's approval would bring with it the very high likelihood of promptly receiving a GPOD application from a Stonington business interested in purchasing 35 Campground Road so that it can expand operations in Stonington.

In summary, EDC supports the text amendment and believes PZC's approval would be in the best interest for all of Stonington. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Stonington Economic Development Commission
Blunt White
Chair

CC: Planning Department
Eric Janney Esq. attorney for Andrew Halsey

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

May 23, 2016

The Honorable Penny Pritzker
Secretary
U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20230

Dear Secretary Pritzker:

As Members of Congress from states with rich fishing heritage and storied maritime industries, we write today to voice our concerns about the current fishery management structure for the black sea bass, summer flounder, and scup fish stocks. As fluctuations in ocean temperatures shift fish populations northward, New England fishermen are unfairly shortchanged when bountiful stocks managed by a Fishery Management Council outside of their region allocates local states low catch quotas.

It has long been acknowledged that changes in our oceans' ecosystems would require greater coordination among Regional Fishery Management Councils established through the Magnuson-Stevens Act (MSA). In fact, in a 2007 report to Congress on council management coordination required by the 2006 MSA reauthorization, the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council (MAFMC) stated that "issues arise when overlapping species are managed exclusively by one Council." However, there are several overlapping species that we believe would be most prudently managed jointly by the MAFMC and the New England Fishery Management Council (NEFMC) rather than exclusively through the MAFMC.

Since the aforementioned 2007 report, New England fishermen have consistently voiced their concerns regarding black sea bass, summer flounder, and scup quotas set by the MAFMC. New England states are noticing these fish stocks moving northward into traditional New England fishing grounds, yet state-by-state commercial allocations remain so low that our fishermen continue to throw catch overboard as fishermen coming from as far away as North Carolina can legally take sometimes more than ten times that of New England vessels in the same waters. Using summer flounder as an example, the MAFMC June 2015 summer flounder assessment state-by-state allocations provided New England states a combined quota of less than 25 percent share, while North Carolina had a share of over 27 percent. Furthermore, that same assessment noted that 24 percent of all commercial summer flounder caught in 2014 were in Statistical Area 537—a zone just to the east of Long Island Sound and south of Cape Cod.

Looking at the current trend of northward movement of fish stocks, we urge the Department of Commerce to direct the MAFMC to work in coordination with the NEFMC on a joint management plan for the black sea bass, summer flounder, and scup fisheries. Until NEFMC member states' interests are officially considered when negotiating fishery management plans through joint management, our fishing communities will continue to suffer from the existing out-of-date allocation formula. We sincerely request that you take these considerations into account

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look forward to greater coordination among the coastal Atlantic states. Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,

JOE COURTNEY
Member of Congress

CHRISTOPHER S. MURPHY
United States Senate

EDWARD J. MARKEY
United States Senate

RICHARD E. NEAL
Member of Congress

MICHAEL E. CAPUANO
Member of Congress

NIKI TSONGAS
Member of Congress

ELIZABETH H. ESTY
Member of Congress

JOSEPH P. KENNEDY, III
Member of Congress

RICHARD BLUMENTHAL
United States Senate

ROSA L. DELAURO
Member of Congress

JOHN B. LARSON
Member of Congress

WILLIAM R. KEATING
Member of Congress

STEPHEN F. LYNCH
Member of Congress

JAMES A. HIMES
Member of Congress

KATHERINE M. CLARK
Member of Congress

SETH MOULTON
Member of Congress