



TOWN OF HAMDEN, CONNECTICUT

Economic Development Commission

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

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The **Economic Development Commission**, for the Town of Hamden, held a **Regular Meeting** on July 11, 2023 at 6:30 PM via Zoom.

https://hamden.zoom.us/rec/share/7W4GmdXf1eLZdutUt-Nw64k9_6ZqxVBPoWqHxfG5VgGDObXPOk-yVUtHFqTfMbK3.2-rahSv8V1qDKqgb
Passcode: se?mw=1G

Commissioners in attendance: Donald Moses, Anthony J Delgrego, Ken Good, Dashone Hughey, Dan M. Smolnik, Anthony Sacchetti, Jr., John Keegan

Staff in attendance: Robert Velez

Residents in attendance: Sarah Clark, Eileen Devries, Donald Levy

1. Call to Order/Roll Call:

2. Public Comments:

- i. Sarah Clark- They had a suggestion regarding high meadows. They said they saw that the new RFP is on a bid site but the high meadows section does not specify that a new RFP is posted. They wonder if it is possible for there to be a specific reference to that RFP and if there could be a way for people to be able to search for that RFP. They also commented that when someone searches the Economic Development website to look for the RFP; it is not easy and it can take a while for the search bar to appear.
- ii. Eileen Devries- They had a question about what the economic benefit is of the High Meadows plans for the town. Would any revenue coming in exceed the cost of services in providing housing. Economic analysis should included surrounding property values. They expressed concerns about the debt that the town is impacted by and Director Erik Johnsons comments from the previous meeting on how no one project would be able to alleviate the raising of the mill rate. They reiterated that they would like their questions to be answered.
- iii. Donald Levy- They had comments on how this development must generate net revenue. It must conform to the neighboring communities of single-family homes. It must not endanger the safety of drivers by contributing to traffic. It must increase the value of the properties in the neighboring communities. It must enhance the environment. The citizens

committee is composed of four members, at the public meetings it was declared to be a five member committee and they are one member short. They have recommendations on community members for this role.

- i. Chairman Moses pointed out that the citizens committee does have 5 members, each of which he identified.
- iv. Commissioner Smolnik commented that he has two articles in the Connecticut Mirror, both undertaking the data on housing development that he thought would be useful reference points on Hamden's housing needs. Director Erik Johnson asked Commissioner Smolnik to summarize the articles.

3. Review of Previous Meeting Minutes:

- i. Chairman Donald Moses called for a motion to approve the minutes for June's Special meeting. Commissioner Delgrego made a motion. Commissioner Keegan seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously.
- ii. Chairman Moses said that May's minutes still need to be approved and that that would be addressed in next month's meeting.

4. Correspondences:

- i. There was no correspondence

5. Chairman's Report:

A. Business community update

- a) Chairman Moses commented that the renovation and expansion of McDonald's at 2320 Dixwell Ave is progressing well.
- b) There is tremendous progress regarding construction within the PDD.
- c) Chairman Moses requested a copy of the study to expand the sewer line in North Hamden.
 - a) Director Erik Johnson commented that out of the town's allocation of ARPA funds, there is 200,000 dollars that was committed regarding a study. He mentioned that the town will begin this project and be able to go back to the state. The state may then allocate some funding. This will begin next year.
 - b) Chairman Moses commented that when the sewer line project was brought before the council, the council recommended that a complete plan be prepared and brought back to the council within 6 months. Chairman Moses asked Director Johnson if the timing of that study will align with the 6-month period. Chairman Moses also stated that if the sewer line is upgraded, it creates a different perception of economic development for northern Hamden.
 - c) Director Erik Johnson said that if the project was to move forward, there would be acres of land that could be redeveloped or newly developed. If the lines were extended, there would be an economic impact. Still there are a number of initiatives that Economic Development office is working on.
- d) Chairman Moses stated that the access of the viewpoint system can be made through the building department's website in order to identify economic development progress within the town.
 - a) Director Johnson commented the economic development department, the building department, and the planning department will be able to coordinate and give a summary; which will be able to identify permits pulled on any project. This would include being able to pull permits on projects. Chairman Moses responded that the EDC IT committee should be a part of this process and asked that Director Johnson include commissioner Ken Good (Chairman of the IT committee) to be a

part of the construction of this system. Director Johnson pledged to include commissioner Good in this process and instructed Sharon Regan of his office to contact commissioner Good and schedule a meeting with he and commissioner Good.

- b) Chairman Moses stated that the EDC IT committee should be a part of this process and asked Director Johnson include commissioner Ken Good (chairman of IT committee) in the conversational discussions of constructing the viewpoint system. Director Johnson pledged to include commissioner Good in the construction process of the viewpoint system, and he instructed Sharon Regan of his office to contact Commissioner Good in order to schedule a meeting with him and commissioner Good.

B. Hamden Economic Revitalization

- i. Chairman Moses commented on the need to examine futuristic means of enhancing Hamden's economic needs through such avenues as TIF (Tax Increment Financing) for brown field properties and manufacturing.

6. Executive Director Report

i. High Meadows Update

- 1. Director Johnson responded to Sarah Clark's comment. He said the current process is established by the procurement department. That is how they want information published. However, Director Johnson said the economic development department would work toward easier access.
- 2. Director Johnson responded to Eileen Devries comment. Director Johnson reiterated that it's unclear what recommendations will be given regarding the project and they could not speak to some of these concerns yet.
- 3. Director Johnson responded to Donald Levy's comment. Director Johnson agreed that the town shares some of the same concerns and reiterates that there is a process that proposals and projects must go through.
- 4. Director Johnson's update on High Meadows was that the new RFP has been posted and he is waiting for interested parties to engage.

ii. Small business grant program

- a) Director Johnson spoke on a small business grant program being launched. This grant program will provide 15,000 dollars for a brick-and-mortar business and 10,000 dollars if it is a virtual business. This funding will allow for exterior and interior improvements, office equipment and business programs, lease buy down, and advertising. The online application will open September 9th and remain open until the second week of October. 20-25 awards will be distributed. The checks will be in the hands of business owners before Thanksgiving. If money is awarded from this program, it does not prevent business owners from applying for other programs.
- b) Chairman Moses asked for the closing date of the RFP.
 - 1. Director Johnson Clarified that it is September 5th, 2023.
- c) Chairman Moses asked if this program is a one-and-done program or will it continue with future phases?
- d) Director Johnson confirmed that this is only the first phase of the small business grant program and it is not a single phase program.

iii. Sinking homes/foundations

- a) Director Johnson stated that the town has identified another 3.5 Million ARPA dollars, and the state has awarded another one million dollars to address the Pinerock Condos.
 - b) Director Johnson elaborated on the state of affairs regarding the sinking homes, and the town has developed a plan for effectively expediting a solution.
 - c) Chairman Moses asked for a synopsis of the steps within the economic development restoration plan.
 - d) Director Johnson Identified the resolution steps as:
 - 1. Secure a community facilitator.
 - 2. Collect existing data from HEDC (Hamden Economic Development Corporation).
 - 3. Confer with DEEP (Department of Energy & Environmental Protection) regarding soil contaminants.
 - 4. Complete analysis of homes impacted within the contaminated area and cost for repairs.
 - 5. Equal treatment for all residents affected within the contaminated area.
 - 6. Identify a method of acquiring unsalvageable homes in contaminated area.
- iv. Potential marketing ideas for Hamden
- a) Director Johnson indicated that the town's marketing department is working on creating a series of campaigns for branding the town through context surrounding community, culture and family. The marketing director will be presenting her plan at the August EDC meeting.

7. Old Business:

- i. There was no old business.

8. New Business:

- i. There was no new business.

9. Adjournment:

- i. Commissioner Delgrego made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Smolnik Seconded. Motion was passed Unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 7:43 PM.