

**Town of Cromwell  
Economic Development Commission  
Regular Meeting  
7:00pm, Thursday, April 21, 2011  
Room 224 Cromwell Town Hall**

Minutes

Present: Chairman Richard Nobile, Mertie Terry, Robert Jahn  
Absent: Joe Fazekas, Stanley Stachura  
Also Present: Selectman Al Water (arrived 7:12pm and EDC Coordinator Craig Stevenson (arrived 7:12pm), Planning and Zoning Commission Chairman, Enzo Faienza

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Richard Nobile at 7:00pm.

2. Roll Call/Seating of Alternates:

The presence of the above commissioners was noted.

3. Approval of Agenda

A **motion** was made by Robert Jahn to approve the agenda and **seconded** by Mertie Terry. *All in favor, the motion was approved.*

4. Public Comments – none

5. New Business

a. Walmart Presentation

The following representatives were present from Walmart:

Al Maiorino, President of Public Strategy Group  
John Knuff, Attorney with Hurwitz Sagarin Slossberg & Knuff  
Sunday Bougher from Scott & Gable Architects  
Alan Carpenter, Vice President from CPH

Attorney John Knuff begin the presentation by saying they were making the presentation to the commission since they are looking for their support of the project. He said that Walmart is currently 130,000 square feet and they are looking to add another 37,000 square feet which includes a 125 square foot garden center. That is the size of the existing garden center but the new garden center would be in a different place. They plan on submitting the plan to the appropriate Commissions/Board on May 2, 2011. They have been waiting for the new Planning and Zoning regulations to become effective on May 1, 2011.

Al Carpenter then came up to talk about the plans. He said they do not have to get Inland Wetland approval since they won't be touching the retention pond. They plan on bumping out the vestibule in front and will make 2 new vestibules. One would be the entrance to the grocery side and the other would be the entrance to the general retail side. The majority of the parking would be on the grocery side. The existing garden center will be turned into the retail part and more

parking would be added to that side. They have conducted a traffic study and there are no indications that any offsite road improvements would be needed. They will put a new storm management system in place which will not increase the runoff. They are leaving as much of the landscape as possible.

Commissioner Terry asked about the sewer pipes that run underground. Mr. Carpenter said they will not be disturbing that area. Commissioner Terry also asked why they plan to expand. Al Maiorino came up and said that this market is underserved with inexpensive groceries.

Chairman Noble asked if they would have an entrance to the garden center with parking nearby and Al Maiorino said yes they will. Selectman Waters asked if they would have groceries and a gas station and Mr. Maiorino said yes to groceries but no gas station. Craig Stevenson asked if there was anything tricky or did they have any concerns about the application that they would be submitting to Planning and Zoning? Attorney Knuff replied that all initial staff review and meetings with the Fire and Police Department and Town Planner Craig Minor are going well.

Sunday Bougher reported that the front image would be more consumer-friendly and not as overwhelming as before. They are incorporating glass and brick and adopting some of Cromwell's flavor into the design. There will be a pedestrian area in front for people to sit down. They will be decorating the east side that is facing the public street so they can be sure to put their best foot forward. Commissioner Terry asked if there would be plenty of lighting in the parking lot and Al Carpenter came up and said yes and also security cameras on the building.

Commissioner Noble remarked that he had no doubts that this would be a great addition and feels that Walmart are good neighbors. Al Maiorino said they would be adding more full time employees (full time means 34 hours or more) and this would also mean more tax revenue for the Town of Cromwell. Selectman Waters said that Walmart has been good to Cromwell in many ways. Commissioner Terry asked what kind of marketing or PR is planned for the projects. Mr. Maiorino said they will be continuously talking to town officials and elected leaders to make sure there are no problems.

Al Carpenter said they would be hiring local companies for things like milk and bakery items that would be delivered more frequently. They would have a special loading dock for these smaller companies. They are looking to start the project in the spring of 2012 and hopefully be open for the Holiday season of 2012. If it's not done for the Holiday season they would stop work until after the season. The store will not close at all during the construction or transition phase.

A **motion** was made by Richard Noble to support the project contingent on land use approval and Planning & Zoning approval and **seconded** by Mertie Terry. *All in favor, the motion was approved.*

b. Public Wi-Fi for the Historic Downtown Riverport area – no discussion

6. Economic Developer Report

Craig Stevenson handed out his report for April 2011. There was discussion on the updated Welcome to Cromwell book that will be used for visitors, the Travelers Championship, Riverport Festival and the Middlesex County Chamber Expo. Mr. Stevenson said that Cromwell Printing has agreed to print

the brochure for a good price and gave some good ideas to reduce the price. The book will be ½ the size of the previous larger one. He also said that a small ad will run for under \$200. Chairman Noble asked how the budget was for this and Mr. Stevenson said that we are all right for this year. He also reminded the commission that the First Selectman always says to come back to him if things come up. Mr. Stevenson also asked the Commission if they wanted to request that \$1250.00 be moved from the town development line item of the budget to a sponsorship of the book line item.

A **motion** was made by Robert Jahn to ask the First Selectman if \$1250.00 could be moved out of the Economic Development line item in the budget to a sponsorship of the Welcome to Cromwell book and was **seconded** by Terry Mertie. *All in Favor, the motion was approved.*

Mr. Stevenson also said that some downtown businesses feel ignored so they will be a big part of the business guide. The owner of the Tea Room expressed interest in advertising as well. Chairman Noble said the owner of the tea room was upset with what she thought was lack of plowing in the downtown area and he thought it was just hard for the plow truck with the new configuration. Robert Jahn asked Mr. Stevenson if the numbers were accurate for the amount of visitors expected to visit the army base each weekend. Mr. Stevenson replied that Larry McHugh of the Middlesex County Chamber of Commerce has gathered these numbers and they do seem accurate. Mr. Stevenson said that Terry Gerber, Marketing Director of the Travelers Tournament is glad to know that the town is interested in having a table at the tournament. Mr. Stevenson said the table will be in the Fan Feast area instead of the middle like in past years. Glen Johnson Realtors and others will help at the booth.

7. Economic Development – discussed with Mr. Stevenson’s report.
8. Old Business
  - a. Main Street Revitalization Project - Chairman Noble said he doesn’t even know where to begin with this. There is no destination there and he does not see any light at the end of the tunnel.
  - b. Zoning Enforcement – no discussion
  - c. Northern Tier Development Industrial - Craig Stevenson said that Joe Mazurek had previously told him that they are Master Planning the whole area. Robert Jahn asked if there is money for that. Mr. Stevenson said there is between \$500,000 – \$700,000 of unspent grants for this project. He also said that it would be reasonable to ask for a presentation from them for an update.
  - d. Planning and Zoning Issues - The New Zoning Regulations are approved and will be effective May 1, 2011.
  - e. EDC “A-Frame” signs – Commissioner Terry asked where they are since they have designated Liturgical Publications as New Business of the Month in May. No one could respond to where the signs are. Mr. Stevenson said that he and Joan are working on putting a Press Release together for the event.
  - f. Façade Program: 41-34 River Road – dead issue
  - g. Tax Abatement Program – no discussion
  - h. EDC Budget Report and Update – Chairman Noble said everything looks OK. He did say that \$10,000 was transferred somewhere without the Commission's knowledge. Craig Stevenson said he thought that there was something needed in town hall. Chairman Noble wanted to know if they can arbitrarily go into the EDC's budget like that. Craig Stevenson said you would have to

check the charter for that answer and he will ask Finance Director Marianne Sylvester.

9. Communications

Robert Jahn asked Mr. Stevenson to ask Town Planner Craig Minor if he could provide the Commission with minutes from both Planning and Zoning meetings held each month. He also asked about Phase 2 of the project by the River. He wanted to know if there would be a phase 2. Selectman Waters thought there was no one interested in this property. Mr. Stevenson said an RFP was circulated to see if the area was attractive to the public. It didn't look at the redevelopment of the river but the whole downtown. Chairman Noble remarked that there is no anchor store downtown to draw people or other businesses. Planning and Zoning Chairman Enzo Faienza remarked that the new Zoning Regulations were designed to make the regulations more business friendly especially for mixed use. They realized the current regulations weren't easy to work with.

10. Chairman's comments/Commissioner's comments:

Chairman Noble said he was pleased with the Walmart presentation. Mertie Terry said that Berlin has approved 2 new projects with 2 new commercial tax breaks for 2 commercial developers. She also said that Rocky Hill operates very well with a successful town government.

11. Approval of Minutes

a. March 17, 2011

**Motion** made by Mertie Terry to approve the minutes with the following amendment – page 4, #12, change the wording to “fine for failing to submit personal property tax *return* to the Tax Assessor” and seconded by Robert Jahn. *All in favor, the motion was approved.*

12. Good & Welfare

13. Adjourn

A motion was made by Mertie Terry to adjourn at 8:32 pm and was seconded by Robert Jahn. All in favor, the motion was approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Imme  
Clerk