

TOWN OF CROMWELL
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
Regular Meeting 7:00 P.M. Thursday December 20, 2007
Room 224-225 Cromwell Town Hall

Minutes

1. **Call to Order:** Chairman Nobile called the meeting to order at 7:07p.m.
2. **Roll Call/Seating of Alternates:** Chairman Richard Nobile, Robert Jahn, Glenn Johnson, Victor Harpley and Alternate Allan Spotts

Absent: Dave Beauchemin

Also Present: EDC Coordinator Craig Stevenson, Selectman Al Waters and Selectman Myron Johnson (arrived at 7:10p.m.)

A **motion** was made by Mr. Jahn and **seconded** by Mr. Johnson to seat Alternate Allan Spotts and was *unanimously approved. Motion passed.*

3. **Approval of Agenda:** A **motion** was made by Mr. Jahn and **seconded** by Mr. Spotts to approve the agenda with the addition of item 5a. Election of Officers and move New Business to item 5b and was *unanimously approved. Motion passed.*
4. **Public Comments:** P&Z member Peter Keithan expressed concern over the development along the riverfront and the articles that have been in the paper recently. Mr. Keithan would like to know exactly what would be done there to make revenue for the town.

Al Waters expressed concern about the Mattabassett District's plans for expansion. Mr. Shingleton and the Board of Selectmen are looking at ways to delay or halt the project. Mr. Waters is also concerned about the health impacts and the detriment to the development of the downtown area and the homeowners.

Mr. G. Johnson recalled that the Mattabassett District came before P&Z for an expansion and the EDC stated that they were against the project. Mr. G. Johnson would like to know what the result was of the permit application. Mr. Waters have to be purchased for the expansion. Mr. G. Johnson requested that the EDC find out the status of the project progress and for Mr. M. Johnson and Mr. Waters to represent the best interests of Cromwell residents.

Mr. M. Johnson was at a recent meeting at which the development of the Portland Bridge was discussed. Mr. Nobile commented that he believed the new bridge would land in Cromwell.

Mr. M. Johnson commented that a few businesses have been lost recently and he is looking forward to moving in a new direction.

5a. Election of Officers: A **motion** was made by Mr. Spotts and **seconded** by Mr. G. Johnson to nominate Mr. Nobile as Chairman. Mr. Jahn moved to close the nominations. *The motion passed, Mr. Harpley opposed.*

A **motion** was made by Mr. G. Johnson and **seconded** by Mr. Spotts to nominate Mr. Jahn as Vice-Chairman. Mr. Spotts moved to close the nominations. *The motion passed, Mr. Harpley opposed.*

5b. New Business: Review of Bids Regarding the Riverfront property Phase II Environmental and Highest & Best Use Study. Appointment of Selection Committee and Discussion. As members of the Metro-Hartford Alliance, there is a grant available to conduct the Phase II analysis. The firm of Faust and O'Neill would conduct the analysis. Mr. Stevenson suggested informing the firms that have already submitted bids that the Phase II portion will no longer be required and to resubmit bids on the highest and best use portion. Mr. Stevenson also suggests forming a committee to meet the first or second week in January. Chairman Nobile asked about the time-frame. Mr. Stevenson will find out. Mr. Stevenson suggested appointing or selecting EDC members for the committee to select a company to do the highest and best use. Mr. Spotts would suggest going ahead and pursuing the grant and schedule a special meeting. Mr. G. Johnson would like to get on the same page as the First Selectman and move forward as soon as possible and he would like to know where the park would be situated. Mr. Stevenson stated that he understands the First Selectman's plan is that the town would finance the park phase to improve the appearance of the area and to increase public access to the riverfront. Mr. G. Johnson thought that the Apollo Holdings concept for the park was larger than three acres. Mr. Stevenson was not sure of the size or location of the park.

A **motion** was made by Mr. Jahn and **seconded** by Mr. Spotts to agree to the terms set by the Metro-Hartford Alliance to do the study along the riverfront. Mr. Harpley asked if the Phase II was necessary and if it would include a report from the Army Corps of Engineers, and Mr. Stevenson stated that the Phase II is necessary but that the ACE would be consulted but not sure if they would be writing a report. CT DEP approval would need to be obtained first. *The motion was unanimously approved. Motion passed.*

A **motion** was made by Mr. Jahn and **seconded** by Mr. Spotts that once a letter of acknowledgement has been received from the Metro-Hartford Alliance, letters be sent to the firms requesting them to resubmit proposals for only the highest and best use portion and was *unanimously approved. Motion passed.*

6. Old Business/ Economic Development Coordinator's Report:

- a. Cromwell Northern Tier Industrial Development: The Public Works department has circulated an RFP for the design improvements to the pump station and the northern tier. Proposals are due December 28, 2007 and a selection will be made in January 2008. They are hoping to complete the work over the summer.
- i. Coles Brook Commerce Park: There is interest in the final available lot. Brothers Autobody is in development. Electricity needs to be run down the transfer station driveway. The Public Works director has been told to work with CL&P. Mr. Harpley asked if wires will be run underground. Mr. Stevenson said that yes they will and money has already been appropriated for the project. Mr. Waters stated that \$30,000 had be

appropriated. The Computer Company and Prime Pay have interested tenants for extra space in their buildings. Work needs to be done to change the zoning for the area. The town planner circulated an RFP to re-write the zoning regulations according to the new POCD with the Coles Brook area as a priority. Mr. G. Johnson stated that he thought the zoning regulations issue had been addressed and if not, then P&Z should be working on this. Mr. Stevenson has raised this issue with the town planner. Chairman Nobile asked if the letter has been sent to Algonquin about the overgrown brush and Mr. Stevenson said he's made phone calls but is waiting until spring to send a letter.

- ii. STEAP Grants: CEPA is completed and now waiting for a record of decision. The Department of Agriculture has recommended that for every acre of farmland lost to development, four acres are preserved. The town planner is working to get the ratio reduced.
 - iii. Federal Grant: The federal budget passed in D.C.
 - iv. Development of Eastern Side of Shunpike Road: None.
 - v. Join Efforts with Town of Rocky Hill
 - vi. Conversion of Transfer Station Driveway: One of the residential property owners is not inclined to give land to the town for the road. The Town Engineer is working on a concept using the land to the north. Once the plans have been completed, meetings will take place with the owners of Sysco and Rocky Hill.
- b. CRUHA/Historic Downtown Committee: The contract with GM2 for street-scape improvements was signed. They now have forty-five days to provide concept drawings that will be reviewed by EDC. Properties owned by Morello and Mellili have completed the work under the grant program.
 - c. Riverfront Development: Town owned property: See above.
 - d. 14 Alcap Ridge: None.
 - e. Planning & Zoning Issues: Discussed above.
 - i. Rezoning of Main Street
 - ii. Plan of Conservation and Development
 - f. Zoning Enforcement Report [Blight Committee]: None.
 - g. Riverport Festival status: None.
 - h. MCC Business Expo: None.
 - i. Hartford Publications Cromwell Feature: Mr. Stevenson told the First Selectman about this project.

- j. Web Site Update (Mycromwell.com): The First Selectman requested that this site be updated. Mr. Stevenson stated that updates are not included and would like money to do updates. Mr. Harpley and Mr. M. Johnson will work with Mr. Stevenson on the website.

A **motion** was made by Mr. Jahn and **seconded** by Mr. G. Johnson to allocate up to \$2,000 to update the website and appoint a volunteer committee and was *unanimously approved. Motion passed.*

- k. Travelers' Championship Exhibition: Mr. Stevenson will contact tournament coordinators in early 2008. Mr. Harpley requested that someone attend a future EDC meeting. Mr. G. Johnson stated that it is important that Cromwell has a presence and is acknowledged as the host town. Chairman Nobile would like to make arrangements early. Mr. G. Johnson would like this item moved to the top of Old Business.

l. Grant Resources

Mr. Stevenson also reported:

- 400 Corporate Row: the aerospace company is interested in leasing a 400,000 sq ft building.
- 800 Corporate Row: has been leased to a national distribution company.
- He will be working with an entrepreneur interested in developing an upscale seventy-five seat restaurant and martini bar in the site of the former Tom's Cafe.
- Mama Rioux's will become a Mitchell's coffee house and restaurant and they are currently doing renovations.
- The property owner of McNeill's Pharmacy is currently working on making improvements to the two floor 3,400 sq ft site.
- He is working with the state on a business incubator program-GKN is also interested in this concept.

Chairman Nobile asked about the town of Cromwell video. Mr. Stevenson said that portions have been filmed and they are working on editing.

Chairman Nobile asked about Ann Faust. Mr. Stevenson said he has a draft and would like to review the report and could send to commission members for their own review.

7. Communications: None.

- 8. Chairman's Comments/Commissioner's Comments:** Chairman Nobile stated he is looking forward to working with the new First Selectman. Mr. G. Johnson and Mr. Spotts believe things are moving in the right direction. Mr. Harpley would like more detailed information on businesses in town such as: number of jobs, cost to the town to support and salary information. Mr. Stevenson stated that without providing incentives, companies probably won't supply private information. Mr. G. Johnson stated that some information is available in the town Assessor's office. Chairman Nobile also stated that if they apply for a tax abatement that information can be requested. Mr. Jahn asked about the sewer pump station. The station will be located on the eastern side of Rte 3 near

Court Street and will be made available for the western side of Rte 3. Mr. Jahn also supports the P&Z's request for information from the ZEO and would also like to know what was in the memo from Sysco. Mr. Stevenson stated that Sysco wanted to know if the curb cut and road would support their traffic and also what it would look like. Mr. G. Johnson asked what the alternative is for the town if Sysco changes their mind. Mr. Stevenson stated that revisions would have to been made to the plan and negotiations with property owners would have to take place. Mr. Jahn also stated that he is not sure what the interest is in making an entrance to Algonquin is and he would like to know what the agreement is with the new property owner of the former site of Viola Landscaping. Mr. Stevenson stated that once property changes hands the agreements are void. Mr. Jahn suggested demolishing 14 Alcap Ridge. Mr. Stevenson said that the First Selectman believes that taking the property for back taxes is in the best interest for the town. Mr. Stevenson also stated that the site is not secure, should be boarded up and the potential for safety hazards exists. Environmental mitigation would still need to be done. A **motion** was made by Mr. Jahn and **seconded** by Mr. G. Johnson to send a letter to the First Selectman to explore securing the building at 14 Alcap Ridge and cc: Police and Fire Departments, Health Inspector and P&Z and was *unanimously approved. Motion passed.*

9. **Approval of Minutes: November 15, 2007:** A motion was made by Mr. Jahn and seconded by Mr. G. Johnson to approve the minutes of November 15, 2007. Mr. Harpley thought there had been discussion about Trader Joe's and Mr. Stevenson said that two supermarket type stores are interested in the former Sav More and Fabric Place sites. The motion was unanimously approved. Motion passed. Mr. Spotts and Mr. Harpley abstained.
10. **Items for next meeting agenda:** Mr. Jahn would like an overview on Pat Snow's Willowbrook Road project. Mr. Harpley requested that Ann Faust attend the next meeting.
11. **Adjourn:** A motion was made by Mr. G. Johnson and seconded by Mr. Harpley to adjourn at 8:57p.m. and was unanimously approved. Motion passed

Respectfully submitted,

Catherine Potter