

**TOWN OF CROMWELL
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION**

**REGULAR MEETING
7:00P.M. THURSDAY, MARCH 15, 2007
ROOM 219 CROMWELL TOWN HALL**

MINUTES

1. Call to Order: Chairman Nobile called the meeting to order at 7:02p.m.

2. Roll Call/Seating of Alternates:

Present: Chairman Richard Nobile, Robert Jahn, Victor Harpley, Dave Beauchemin, Glen Johnson and Alternate Allan Spotts

Also Present: EDC Coordinator Craig Stevenson, First Selectman Paul Beaulieu (arrived at 8:25p.m.) and Selectmen Al Waters and Myron Johnson

A **motion** was made by Mr. Harpley 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. Johnson to approve the agenda and was *unanimously approved. Motion passed.*

4. Public Comments: Mr. Johnson stated that he has ideas for improving Rte. 9 at exit 19 and Mr. Stevenson commented that there is a study currently underway regarding the Rte. 9 corridor. Problem areas have been identified and the group is now working on ways to solve the issues. Mr. Stevenson suggests that Mr. Johnson bring his ideas to the Rte. 9 Task Force currently conducting the study within the Regional Planning Agency of which Cromwell is a member of the central division. Mr. Johnson asked for support from the EDC in bringing his suggestions to the task force.

Mr. Johnson also inquired about the status of the Citgo station on West Street. Mr. Stevenson spoke with the owners and they are currently in negotiations with a prospective leaser. Chairman Nobile stated that the EDC can only offer assistance with finding a leaser not with enforcing the owners to sell or otherwise occupy the space. Mr. Waters commented that the current economy makes it difficult to find an interested party for the lease. Mr. Beauchemin asked about the property behind the Citgo. Mr. Stevenson stated that East/West Co. has an option on buying the property. Mr. Fazaekas and the owner of Champions are both interested in developing the land as a soccer field and are in communication.

Mr. Johnson also stated that he would like to see the property adjacent to the Daata Mart cleaned up. Chairman Nobile stated that if a formal complaint was lodged, it could be passed along to Mr. Curtin.

5. New Business:

a. Modification to Merola Properties, LLC Tax Abatement: This abatement application came before the EDC in January of 2005. Mr. Johnson stated that a precedent would be set if the abatement was reopened. Mr. Harpley is not confident that Phase II would be built if the abatement was modified. Chairman Nobile stated that he is opposed to a modification, an agreement was reached and that the abatement was contingent on Phase II being built. No action was taken. Mr. Stevenson will contact Mr. Merola.

b. The Computer Company Ribbon Cutting: The Microsoft bus will be visiting Cromwell the week after the ribbon cutting. The ribbon cutting is scheduled for the week of April 17, 2007.

c. Gymboree Lease Renewal/Relocation Assistance: Mr. Stevenson called the property owner and learned that Gymboree has left the space they had been leasing. Mr. Harpley believes there is an impasse between the property owner and Gymboree and would like Mr. Stevenson to contact Gymboree to investigate and see if the EDC can be of any assistance to help them remain in Cromwell.

6. Old Business/Economic Development Coordinator=s Report: ProMold will be leaving Cromwell. They could not find an adequate location and will be moving to Portland. Mr. Snow is looking for a tenant for the site on Rte. 3 at Court Street before beginning construction. A site walk has been scheduled for the Lowe=s site on Rte. 372 on Sunday, March 18, 2007 at 10a.m. Safe Home Security would like to build behind the current building. A site on Sebethe Drive is under option and could become a hotel. Construction at Hammerhead Place is underway for a Walgreens, American Eagle Credit Union and a restaurant/coffee shop.

a. Cromwell Northern Tier Industrial Development:

i. Coles Brook Commerce Park: Mr. Stevenson met with Slifer Brothers Autobody and gave them a tax abatement application. Their current location has been sold and will become an office for a company that rents garbage dumpsters.

ii. STEAP Grants: An RFQ has been prepared and will be sent out for work upgrading the pump station on Shunpike Road and the design of a sewer main installation. The pump station will be gravity fed.

iii. Federal Grant: Ed Mann, Senator Dodd=s Chief of Staff is assisting with the applications. The process must be started over.

iv. Development of Eastern Side of Shunpike Road: None.

v. Join Efforts with Town Of Rocky Hill: See next.

vi. Conversion of Transfer Station Driveway: The driveway will need to be widening slightly into Rocky Hill. No property owner along the road in Rocky Hill has expressed desire to use the road. The town attorney is currently working on the legal details of this arrangement.

b. CRUHA/Historic Downtown Committee: There is \$75,000 in total grant funds to be distributed. The Downtown Committee will review the applications and make recommendations and suggestions to EDC. Mr. Jahn stated that the EDC is an advisory committee only and that the building inspector should have the final approval. Mr. Stevenson stated that because EDC is the administrator of the grant, it would be appropriate to grant approval. Cromwell currently has no design guidelines that would be helpful for conformity. Mr. Stevenson is working on an RFP for a design engineer for a street-scape, Memorial Green and Stocking Triangle design. There are state permits that will be required. Once the plan is developed, more grant money could be sought.

c. Riverfront Development: Town owned property: Mr. Stevenson will be sending out an RFQ for the Phase II Environmental Study. The time frame for this depends on the results of the Phase II study. Mr. Beaulieu stated that he had just attended a meeting in Middletown with the State DOT regarding the Arrigoni Bridge and believes that the riverfront could possibly become the site for a new bridge.

d. 14 Alcap Ridge: Mr. Stevenson is currently showing the site at least once a week. The First Selectman felt the offer that was made by the first mortgage holder earlier this year wasn't worthy of presentation to the finance board. The town is currently foreclosing on the property for overdue taxes. The town is also pursuing the property owner, Robert Miller, in court. Mr. Beauchemin asked what would happen if the property is remediated and not sold. Mr. Stevenson stated that he is confident that an interested party will come forward.

e. Planning & Zoning Issues:

i. Rezoning of Main Street: None.

ii. Plan of Conservation and Development: None.

f. Zoning Enforcement Report [Blight Committee]: The Blight Committee report was not included. Mr. Beaulieu stated that the committee only meets if there is an issue to discuss. Mr. Stevenson stated that he requests particular information to be included in the agenda packet that isn't always included. Chairman Nobile would like the minutes and agenda of P&Z and the Blight Committee report, when available. Chairman Nobile stated this information would be helpful for coordination between commissions and committees. Mr. Jahn also requested the ZEO's staff report to each commission.

g. Travelers= Championship Exhibition: Construction of the First Tee site is under way.

h. Riverport Festival Status: Planned for September 13, 14, 15 and 16.

I. MCC Business EXPO: None.

j. Safe Home Security Ribbon Cutting: Sometime during the week of April 17, 2007.

k. Hartford Publications Cromwell Feature: Mr. Stevenson=s intern is currently reviewing the business list and verifying information. Mr. Johnson suggested putting the updated information on www.mycromwell.com website which links from the town=s website.

l. Other: none.

7. Communications: none.

8. Chairman=s Comments/Commissioner=s Comments: Mr. Jahn asked when the copies of the CEPA will be available for review. Mr. Jahn also asked if copies of the RFQ were sent to the Sewer Department, Bob Jahn (Public Works Director) was sent a copy.

Mr. Spotts stated that a new amusement company has been found for the Riverport Festival September 13, 14, 15 and 16, 2007. The next planning meeting is tentatively scheduled for the third Wednesday of the month.

Mr. Harpley is surprised by the news that ProMold is leaving town and Mr. Stevenson stated that he had never received word that it was official and therefore couldn=t comment on it publicly. ProMold will remain the owner of their current site and will be leasing it.

Mr. Beauchemin is disappointed that the Welcome to Cromwell signs have not been installed and that Mr. Stevenson has not pursued the matter further. Mr. Beaulieu stated that he vetoed the signs in order to develop a more uniform design that will represent Cromwell more appropriately. Mr. Beaulieu stated that he has designs for two signs. Mr. Nobile stated that there is need for five more signs.

Mr. Johnson asked for an update on the Viola property. Mr. Stevenson stated that the Viola=s have obtained demolition permit forms.

9. Approval of Minutes; February 15, 2007: A **motion** was made by Mr. Spotts and **seconded** by Mr. Harpley to approve the minutes of February 15, 2007 with a correction to page three stating that the Riverport Festival will take place beginning September 13, 2007 not September 1, 2007 as stated and was *unanimously approved. Motion passed.*

10. Items for next meeting agenda: Give items to Mr. Stevenson. Chairman Nobile will contact Town Planner Craig Minor about including requested reports in the agenda packets each month.

11. Adjourn: A **motion** was made by Mr. Spotts and **seconded** by Mr. Harpley to adjourn at 9:00p.m. and was *unanimously approved. Motion passed.*

Respectfully submitted,

Catherine Potter
Clerk