

**TOWN OF CROMWELL
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION**

**REGULAR MEETING
7:00P.M. WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 21, 2009
ROOM 224 CROMWELL TOWN HALL**

MINUTES

PRESENT: Robert Jahn, Merrie Buchsbaum and Alternates Allan Spotts and Richard Duffy

ABSENT: Richard Nobile, Victor Harpley and Dave Beauchemin

ALSO PRESENT: Anthony Price and Director of Developmental Services Joe Mazurek

1. Call to Order: Mr. Jahn called the meeting to order at 7:06p.m.

2. Roll Call/Seating of Alternates: A motion was made by Ms. Buchsbaum and seconded by Mr. Jahn to seat Alternates Spotts and Duffy and was unanimously approved. Motion passed.

3. Approval of Agenda: A motion was made by Mr. Spotts and seconded by Ms. Buchsbaum to approve the agenda as presented and was unanimously approved. Motion passed.

4. Public Comments:

Peter Keithan asked about GKN and Mr. Jahn stated it would be covered under Old Business. Mr. Keithan also asked about the Expo and Mr. Price informed him that the EDC would have a table and give away tote bags leftover from the Travelers Championship and new note pads with pens. The hours for the Expo are Friday, October 30 9am-3pm with after hours beginning at 5pm. The event is one day only.

Bonnie Anderson, 25 Chestnut Court, asked about 2 Wall Street and Mr. Jahn stated that Mr. Mazurek would be providing an update. Ms. Anderson stated that there have been problems in the past on the site with oil coming up through the ground. Most likely the contamination was from Radcliffe Oil Company. Ms. Anderson asked if a Phase II environmental study would be conducted. Mr. Mazurek stated that staff could proceed with a Phase II study but he has heard that the new property owner is not interested in selling now. Mr. Price stated that if the property was financed, a Phase I study was most likely required.

Al Waters, 86 South Street, gave a history of Radcliffe Oil and agrees that a Phase II study should be done if the town is interested in purchasing the property because if a problem occurs, the current owner at the time would be responsible. Mr. Waters mentioned Mr. Duffy's efforts on the high speed internet issue to the Board of Selectmen and was impressed with Mr. Duffy's progress.

5. New Business: None.

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

a. Northern Tier Industrial Development:

Transfer Station Driveway: Mr. Mazurek had a meeting with the property owners that abut the driveway to outline the sewer project and the need for the road expansion. The discovery of artifacts should not impact the installation of the sewer or the road.

Development plans for the area need to be filed in order to secure future funding by the State. Properties in the area have shown interest in developing the land west of Shunpike Road.

b. Main Street Revitalization Project:

Parking lot/new development: Mr. Mazurek stated that the downtown project is nearing completion and just minor touch-ups are necessary.

A contract to improve Stocking Triangle has been signed. The DOT wants an electrical pole moved, but it has wires going in four different directions and CL&P has called it a difficult project. Mr. Mazurek will suggest that a new pole be installed twenty feet to the east. The curb return also needs to be changed (a larger radius) to make it easier for trucks.

Mr. Mazurek stated that both 313 Main Street and 2 Wall Street are critical for downtown parking and that the town has put aside money to purchase both properties. Mr. Duffy asked what would happen if the pole can't be moved and Mr. Mazurek stated that a letter would be sent to the DOT and work on Stocking Triangle would halt. No work on the grass, sidewalks or curbs would be done. Mr. Mazurek stated that there could be an opportunity to combine development on the former Viola site and 2 Wall Street. Mr. Duffy feels the purpose for purchasing 2 Wall Street should be narrowed down and if the purpose is for parking it should be reconsidered by the EDC. Ms. Buchsbaum asked if the purchase of 2 Wall Street would have to be approved at a town meeting and if the town is still considering leasing it to a developer. Mr. Duffy thought the parking lot could allow for overflow parking from adjacent developments. Mr. Spotts feels that if the property is valuable, Mr. Dayharsh and Mr. Duffy could jointly develop it and that the town is not in the position to sit on property. Mr. Spotts feels the current economy should be considered and any purchase should be considered after the new administration takes office. Mr. Price stated that if something isn't done with the downtown area, it will always remain the same. Mr. Spotts would like to have a plan for any continued development. Mr. Dayharsh asked Mr. Waters if the town would be interested in constructing a parking lot on his property and the town could use it for five years in lieu of taxes on the property. Mr. Jahn stated that Mr. Dayharsh would need to submit a proposal to the town for consideration. Mr. Price will explore the option.

c. Planning & Zoning Issues:

i. New Zoning Regulations: Mr. Keithan stated that work on Phase B should be done in January.

ii. Zoning at "Northern Tier": None.

d. Zoning Enforcement/Blight: The report was included in the agenda packet.

e. Riverport Festival: Mr. Spotts stated that the next planning meeting would be held in 2010.

f. EDC Coordinator: Mr. Price stated that an EDC Coordinator works for the best interest of the town and would ideally work about 20 hours per week but have flexibility to be available when needed. The First Selectman sets the agenda and then works with the department heads to move forward. Ms. Buchsbaum asked how many hours Mr. Price works and he said he works about 10-12 hours a week. Mr. Mazurek oversees Mr. Price now because Mr. Shingleton isn't seeking reelection. Mr. Price continues to attend Chamber meetings and attended the grand opening for Lowe's. Ms. Buchsbaum stated that when Mr. Shingleton leaves, there will be no EDC Coordinator for the town and would like to see a coordinator hired to work on the EDC's behalf. Mr. Mazurek stated that the issue is in limbo because of the upcoming change in leadership. Mr. Price stated that a new administration could provide the opportunity for working together. Ms. Buchsbaum stated that she doesn't see a vision for the town and would like to know what the town's goals are and what the commissions want Cromwell to be. Mr. Spotts concurred with Ms. Buchsbaum and stated that he feels a disconnect with the other commissions and the administration. Ms. Buchsbaum stated that there is an opportunity for transition and transformation.

g. Corporate Row Broadband Service (GKN): Mr. Duffy's summary of contact with Comcast was included in the agenda packet. A few things need to be explored such as the most economical installation route. There is financing and permits that will be needed. Cromwell needs to determine what they are willing to invest for the infrastructure upgrade. Mr. Duffy would like to find out if other businesses in the area are having the same issues as GKN and if they are interested in high speed internet. Mr. Mazurek suggested that the town could help by digging a trench to install conduit. Ms. Buchsbaum asked what makes GKN a viable customer to Comcast and Mr. Duffy stated that they would increase their usage but there isn't any incentive to install if they are the only ones interested. Mr. Jahn stated that he had asked Mr. Minor to explore funding opportunities and asked Mr. Mazurek to find out what permits are necessary. Mr. Duffy will contact the other businesses in the area. Mr. Mazurek suggested finding out what other utilities are underground to possibly use other conduit already in place. Ms. Buchsbaum asked what the tax amount would be for GKN's expansion and Mr. Price stated that he hasn't done an analysis based on the footprint. Ms. Buchsbaum believes the town should pay the \$19,000 in order to retain GKN. Mr. Duffy explained that he is hoping Comcast will assume more of the cost. Mr. Price stated that GKN needs to make a commitment to staying in Cromwell if the town pays any of the installation costs. Mr. Mazurek stated that GKN hasn't identified what their needs are.

h. Commissioner attendance: Ms. Buchsbaum stated that there is no information in the by-laws about attendance requirements or lack of attendance. There are certain members who are not attending regularly and alternates are attending more regularly. Ms. Buchsbaum believes some members should be asked to step down.

i. Middlesex Chamber "Expo": Mr. Price will be there early in the morning to set up the table. The giveaways are leftover tote bags and an eco pad with a pen. Mr. Jahn asked if commission members should help out at the booth and Mr. Price asked members to contact him

with their availability. There are extra tickets if businesses are interested in attending.

7. Communications (see attached P&Z Report; Zoning Enforcement Report; P&Z Minutes): Mr. Jahn asked where there is still development available on Beechwood and Mr. Mazurek replied that there is some frontage available and that some lots could have extra acreage.

8. Chairman's Comments/Commissioners' Comments: Mr. Spotts thanked Mr. Duffy for helping with the Comcast issue.

Ms. Buchsbaum stated that she hasn't been contacted by Ms. McKnight for information on the website and she isn't sure where the disconnect is occurring. Ms. Buchsbaum is also unsure of her role. Mr. Price stated that a website is the front door and if it is too difficult people will leave. Mr. Mazurek thinks the town could use some professional help in developing an eye-catching site that Ms. McKnight would maintain. Ms. Buchsbaum feels that the town needs an IT department. Mr. Duffy concurred. Ms. Spotts commented that Ms. McKnight was trained and then the town went in a different direction.

9. Approval of Minutes: September 18, 2009: A motion was made by Mr. Spotts and seconded by Mr. Duffy to table approval of the minutes of September 18, 2009 and was unanimously approved. Motion passed.

10. Items for next meeting agenda: Items include: 1. IT support for town departments, 2. Wall Street, 3. Comcast/Internet/Broadband progress, 4. Synopsis of Mr. Prices efforts, 5. Remove commissioner attendance from agenda but add the definition of the EDC's purpose, 6. copies of by-laws

11. Adjourn: The meeting was adjourned by general consent at 8:49p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

**Catherine Potter
Clerk**