

1 **Economic Development Commission**
2 **Regular Meeting Minutes**
3 **May 12, 2016**
4 **“Subject to Approval”**
5
6

7 **1. Call to Order**

8 Kristen Barnett, Co-Chair, called the regular meeting of the Economic Development Commission to
9 order at 7:34 a.m. on Thursday, May 12, 2016 in the Main Meeting Room of the Simsbury Town
10 Offices located at 933 Hopmeadow Street, Simsbury, CT. The following members were also present:
11 David Balboni, Carolyn Bligh, James Devivo, Leo George, Chuck Minor and Allan Raphael. Also in
12 attendance were Thomas Cooke, Director of Administrative Services and other interested parties.
13
14

15 **2. Review of the minutes – March 10, 2016**

16
17 *Commissioner Raphael made a motion to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of*
18 *March 10, 2016. Commissioner Bligh seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion*
19 *passed.*
20
21

22 **3. Town Updates: Tom Cooke**

- 23 • Update on current Projects at The Hartford Property
24

25 Mr. Cooke stated that things are moving along quickly and they are well into the demolition stage.
26 He noted that the new owners allowed the Town to use the property for an emergency drill on the
27 property. Mr. Cooke discussed other items that have been completed as well as others that will be
28 started early next year.
29

30 Commission members asked questions regarding The Hartford property to Mr. Cooke. Some of the
31 topics asked:

- 32 • Metal recycled
33 • Grinding concrete on site
34 • Timetable/1st stage started
35 • Update on Charter Revision recommendation
36

37 Mr. Cooke stated that the Charter Revision Commission has sent their draft report to file with the
38 Town Clerk and it has been delivered to the Board of Selectmen. He noted that the primary focus of
39 the Commission is the form of government. Mr. Cooke noted that there was a seven to four vote to
40 recommend a Town Manager form of government.
41
42

**Economic Development Commission – Subject to Approval
Regular Meeting Minutes – May 12, 2016**

43 Mr. Cooke discussed other topics of the draft report to Commission members, which included the
44 possible combination of Planning and Zoning and the number of Boards and Commissions in the
45 Charter. He stated the two recommendations made for removal were the Human Relations
46 Commission and the Economic Development Commission.

47
48 Mr. Cooke discussed the options the Board of Selectmen has on the Economic Development
49 Commission if they are removed from the Charter. He noted that it will be done by Ordinance. Mr.
50 Cooke noted that the Board of Selectmen has 45 days to hold their own hearing on the Charter
51 Revision Commission’s recommendations. If the Board of Selectmen approve the
52 recommendations, it would then be sent to referendum. If the Board of Selectmen have
53 recommended changes, it would go back to the Charter Revision Commission for their
54 consideration.

55
56 Commissioner Barnett noted that Commissioner Balboni and she attended the Charter Revision’s
57 last meeting. She noted that the Chamber presented a letter against the recommendation of the
58 Charter Revision Commission to remove the Economic Development Commission as a commission.
59 Commissioner Barnett also stated that she spoke against it. She stated that a few of the Charter
60 Revision Commission members stated that “if they had known what the Economic Development
61 Commission did, they would not of voted the way they voted”. Commissioner Barnett noted that
62 the decision was made by individuals that were completely uninformed of what the Economic
63 Development Commission does and the importance of it. She stated that they were surprised to
64 hear some of the things that the Economic Development Commission has done over the years yet
65 chose not to reverse their decision and continue to recommend the removal of the Economic
66 Development Commission from the Charter.

67
68 Commissioner Barnett stated that she will be attending the Board of Selectmen meeting when they
69 discuss this recommendation.

70
71 Commissioner Barnett distributed and read into the record a letter from Peggy Shanks, former First
72 Selectman from 1980 to 1989, who is also against this recommendation.

73
74 Commissioner Barnett read the recommendation from the Charter Revision Commission’s draft
75 report into the record.

76
77 Commission members asked questions and discussed this issue with Mr. Cooke. The discussion
78 included writing letters in support of the Economic Development Commission staying in the
79 Charter to the First Selectman.

80
81 Mr. Ferg Jansen noted that he attended the Charter Revision Commission meeting and stated that
82 he is in support of keeping the Economic Development Commission in the Charter.

83
84 Commission members questioned Ms. Nielson on why Main Street Partnership did not speak up in
85 support of the Economic Development Commission staying on the Charter. Ms. Neilson stated that

**Economic Development Commission – Subject to Approval
Regular Meeting Minutes – May 12, 2016**

86 Main Street’s Board members have never taken a position on any Charter Revision
87 recommendations.

88
89 Commission members discussed their frustration on the process of the Charter Revision
90 Commission decision.

91
92 *Commissioner Devivo made a motion to send a letter to the Board of Selectmen that expresses*
93 *our dismay with the process that the Charter Revision Commission used to determine whether*
94 *or not the Economic Development Commission should be in existence or not. Commissioner*
95 *George seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.*

96
97 *Commissioner George made a motion that the Economic Development Commission should let*
98 *the Board of Selectman know its position that the Economic Development Commission should*
99 *exist within the Charter as is. Commissioner Balboni seconded the motion. Six were in favor of*
100 *the motion. Commissioner Minor dissented. The motion passed.*

101
102 Each Commission member gave their opinions regarding keeping the Economic Development
103 Commission in the Charter. Six members agreed to keep the EDC in the Charter. Commissioner
104 Minor agreed with the Charter Revision Commission.

105
106
107 **4. Reports: FVVA; SMSP**

108
109 Ms. Nancy Anstey, FVVA, noted that their April 28 Historic Site tour was a success. She also noted
110 that their bus tour was a success as well. Ms. Anstey discussed the following:

- 111 • Brochures in the Welcome Center
- 112 • Try -Anthlon
- 113 • Open Art Studio
- 114 • Fountain Fund Raiser
- 115 • Music Festival

116
117 Ms. Sarah Nielson, SMSP updated Commission members on the following items:

- 118 • Try-Anthlon
- 119 • Funds for the Fountain Fund Raiser
- 120 • Business visitations with First Selectman’s office
- 121 • Innovation Fair
- 122 • Main Street Investment Grant
- 123 • Grand Opening of Maher’s Paint

124
125 Ms. Nielson noted that she does not think she should have been reprimanded for something that the
126 Economic Development Commission has just voted on today that her Board has yet to answer on.
127 She also noted that, although they are funded through the Economic Development Commission

**Economic Development Commission – Subject to Approval
Regular Meeting Minutes – May 12, 2016**

128 budget, the EDC does not give Main Street the funds. She stated that they present to the Board of
129 Selectmen every year and are funded through them.

130

131

132 **5. EDC Photo Contest**

133

134 Commissioner Barnet requested that the Photo Contest, which was to be judged at the end of May,
135 be extended through the summer to get additional photos. All were in favor.

136

137

138 **6. Old/New Business**

139

140 Commissioner Barnet noted that Chairman Mark Deming will be resigning from the Economic
141 Development Commission effective July 1, 2016 or sooner, provided a replacement is secured.

142

143

144 **7. Adjournment**

145

146 *Commissioner Bligh made a motion for approval for adjournment at 8:46a.m. Commissioner*
147 *Minor seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.*

148

149

150 Respectfully submitted,

151

152 Leslie Brigham

153 Commission Clerk