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ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION MINUTES
July 15, 2010
REGULAR MEETING

Chairman Deming called the regular meeting of the Economic Development Commission to order at 7:45 AM in the Main Meeting Room of the Simsbury Town Offices. Commission members, Gary Dornbush, and Lou George were present.

The June 10, 2010 minutes were tabled until the next regularly scheduled meeting because of a lack of a quorum.

Mr. Peck stated that the draft update of the Charrette regulation from Code Studio should be available next week. There were some delays because of the changes in the mapping boundaries. He stated that when he receives this document, it will be posted on the Town website and it will be distributed to the Boards and Commissions.

Regarding the consent calendar, Mr. Peck stated that this is workable; a number of applications would go to the Commission and there would be administrative things could be done to speed up the process. Mr. Peck stated that coverage issues, as well as changes to the boundaries, were two changes to the Code.

Chairman Deming stated that the Town was successful in getting the

conveyance of the parking lots from the State. They did go through the process where the Town or developer can now buy the lots from the State.

Commissioner George stated that this should be promoted.

Mr. Peck stated that this does not include the commuter lot. The two lots that the State has release are the two northern most lots. He stated that the property will be appraised and the Town will then have the opportunity to purchase them.

Commissioner Dornbush questioned what would happen in terms of parking after development takes place. Mr. Peck stated that when development takes place on these lots, there are provisions that were part of the Charrette process to provide additional parking.

4. Discussion and possible vote on a recommendation to create a Special Reserve Fund for accumulating funding for the creation of Design Standards for the Town Center Code.

Mr. Peck stated that the First Selectmen has considered establishing a Special Revenue Fund for the creation of the design standards for the Town Center Code. This is a request for a place to put funds if a grant is received or for any donations. He stated that the Board of Selectmen would like to get a feeling from the Land Use Commissions on where they stand.

Mr. Peck stated that the estimated funding for the creation of the design standards is approximately \$40,000. This is the amount of money needed in order to hire the consultant.

Mr. Peck stated that the design standards would be more than the current Design Guidelines. The standards will be more prescriptive than what is currently in the Design Guidelines.

Because several of the Commission members were not in attendance at this meeting, Chairman Deming asked that this issue be discussed at the next meeting when others can give their input also.

Commissioner George stated that from a development standpoint, he feels that design standards are too restrictive for people who want to invest and develop in Simsbury. He feels that guidelines are more helpful.

Chairman Deming stated that he likes the notion of more specific guidelines as opposed to standards. He feels that standards preclude future building materials, which they may not currently be aware of and/or building design.

5. Reports: SMSP, FVVA

Chairman Deming read a note from Ms. Ansty of the Farmington Valley Visitor's Association, to the Commission members. He stated that FVVA have finished their final plans for the Summer Film Festival and Mixer on July 24th. They will be showing films and trailers. They are also finalizing details on the Barn Tour, which will be held on October 16th in Simsbury and Granby. The FVVA is also working on a membership guide.

6. Promoting Simsbury to the Business Community: Current Process

Chairman Deming stated that currently, they promote Simsbury through Main Street Partnership and the Economic Development Commission website.

Commissioner George stated that it is this Commission's job to promote the status of the State parking lots. He feels that this is something that this Commission should be taking the lead on. This is of interest to developers and brokers. Chairman Deming stated that this was discussed at a recent Board of Selectmen meeting and it was also in the newspaper. Commissioner George stated that this information is something that should be mailed out to brokers.

Commissioner Dornbush questioned what other communities do in terms of promoting their communities. Chairman Deming stated that the Town of Simsbury used to have a part time person who promoted Simsbury. He stated that this Commission could put a newsletter on their website that could be updated frequently. This is similar to what the Town of Farmington does. He stated that he would send Farmington's link to the Commission members for their review.

7. EDC Budget Update: Annual Financial Modeling Projections for Simsbury

Chairman Deming distributed a financial handout to the Commission members. He stated that this is something that is done every year; it shows the projections and the percentage of change, which varies from 3%-6%. The Town should maintain projections so they can make more intelligent decisions.

Commissioner George stated that the Town has a Capital Improvement Plan, which shows projects that the Town would like to accomplish.

Commissioner Dornbush stated that having projections would provide support for the urgency for certain things.

Chairman Deming stated that he would like to continue this discussion in September when more Commission members would be present. He

stated that if the Commission agrees that the Town should maintain 3-5 year projections, they could write a letter to the Board of Finance and copy the Board of Selectmen.

8. Calendar Update: EDC Meetings for August/September

Chairman Deming stated that the August meeting has been canceled. The September meet will be held on the 16th.

9. Old Business/New Business

There was a discussion regarding the Talcott Mountain Music Festival. The Fourth of July event was well attended. The weather has been good for each event so far this year.

Commissioner George stated that this Commission should be aware of how local businesses have been doing during the TMMF events. He suggested having Mr. Ryan from the Performing Arts Center at their next meeting to give them an update.

10. Adjournment

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 8:40 a.m. The motion was seconded, which was unanimously approved.