



**City Middletown, CT
Economic Development Committee
Minutes from the Economic Development Committee Meeting
February 9, 2021**

Meeting was conducted via video conference call

Present: V. Loffredo, T. Gennaro, P. Pessina, J. Blackwell, E. McKeon Absent: Executive: Staff: J. Samolis, T. Marano, L. MacPherson, M. Kozikowski
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Minutes

1. Call to Order: Chairman V. Loffredo called the meeting to order at 7:15 PM.
2. Minutes: P. Pessina seconded by J. Blackwell made a motion, seconded by E. McKeon to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of January 12, 2021.

Vote: Unanimous in favor of the motion.

3. Public Session: There were no comments from the public.

Jeff Pugliese, Vice President of the Middlesex County Chamber of Commerce, spoke on the Chamber's behalf.

Deborah Shapiro, Middletown Historian, spoke on the Historic Preservation Tax Abatement (HPBTA). Historic buildings provide link to the past and have intrinsic value. She advocates for HPBTA

Krishna Winsted, 655 Bow Lane, lives in a 1750s house and applauds the HPBTA if rehabilitation is in keeping with historical context.

Jesse Nasta, Executive Director of Middlesex County Historical Society, supports the HPBTA to keep our continuity with the past. Historical buildings are a tangible link to the past.

Trevor Davis, Commercial broker and building owner, supports the HPBTA. Suggested the City consider a way to protect historic properties which are tax exempt, putting a lien on the property if the owner gets an abatement and consider interior items in the ordinance.

Alain Munkittrick, Portland resident, architect, and board member of Middlesex County Historical Society. Suggested a wording change in Sec D, #5: change 'consult' to 'comply'.

Chairman Loffredo closed the public session.

4. Communications:

- Mr. Glenn Russo sent an email requesting withdrawing his tax incentive application. He will submit a new one in consultation with the Mayor and staff.

Vote: No vote was taken.

Chairman Loffredo moved New Business ahead of Old Business because the appropriate staff had not joined the call to discuss Old Business items.

- **New Business**

- **Historic Rehabilitation Tax Abatement Program**

J. Samolis reviewed the Ordinance, the numbers of properties and suggested changes to the review process in the future. CGS SEC 12-127a allows for tax abatements with no caps on amounts or years.

The members discussed the ordinance, how the Common Council will determine the length and amount of the abatement, current uses of the Adaptive Reuse language in current zoning and incorporating language for both interior and exterior modifications.

E. McKeon made a motion, seconded by P. Pessina, to move this ordinance to the full Common Council.

Vote: Unanimous in favor of the motion.

- **Open Space Acquisition – 124 South Plumb Road**

M. Kozikowski, City Planner, reviewed the acquisition of this property. The lot has 19 acres of tilled land, the rest is forest for a total of 39 acres. Property abuts Smith Park and Moody School. Comports with POCD. The price is \$725,000. Owner will pay for a new driveway for abutting owner.

E. McKeon made a motion, seconded by P. Pessina, to recommend purchasing this parcel to the full Common Council.

Vote: Unanimous in favor of the motion.

- **Open Space Donation map-lot 07-0029 Country Club Road, 8.07 Acres**

M. Kozikowski, City Planner, reviewed the donation of this property. Owners want to donate property to the City because it is landlocked and abuts Smith Park. The members discussed the donation.

E. McKeon, P. Pessina, made a motion, seconded by J. Blackwell, to recommend to the full Common Council the City receive this donated parcel.

Vote: Unanimous in favor of the motion.

5. Updates

- **\$55 Million Bond** – J. Samolis reviewed the expenditures to-date. City is spending \$475,000 to buy out the lease to 80 Harbor Drive of Mr. Frank Marratta. Staff will send out an RFP for a new restaurateur to lease the property. The members discussed the lease, the new restaurateur using the Historic Property Tax Abatement program, tying the restaurant to the Riverfront Plan and the investment necessary to bring the building up to code.
- **Parking Study:**
J. Samolis said VHB is updating the Parking Study of 2008. Consulting fees are being paid out of the Parking Bond of 2015.
- **Riverfront Plan:**
J. Samolis reviewed the process for choosing a planning consultant. The Mayor appointed a committee which has met and have narrowed down the 21 responses to 12. The members discussed the process and how the consultant will be paid. Staff to make available the 12 proposals to the committee.

Vote: No vote was taken on any of these items.

6. Old Business:

- **Landmark Development Tax Incentive Proposal**
Mr. Glenn Russo of Landmark Development withdrew this application.

Vote: No vote was taken.

- **Middletown Applications for Economic Incentives** – J. Samolis, and L. MacPherson, Community Development Specialist, gave an overview of the seven applicants for the CDBG grants. Members discussed the businesses.

1. **Ron’s Tax SVC -**
2. **Jessica’s Color Room -**
3. **NoRa Cupcake Company LLC -**
4. **Stage Left Dance LLC -**
5. **A&R Lamonica Restaurants LLC – withdrew application**
6. **P.J. Jewelers -**
7. **Kerry Kincy LLC**

The members discussed the grants. P. Pessina made a motion, seconded by E. McKeon, to move the applications to the full Common Council.

Vote: Unanimous in favor of the motion.

- **Adjournment**

P. Pessina made a motion, seconded by E. McKeon, to adjourn the meeting.

Vote: Unanimous in favor of the motion.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:31 PM