



**City Middletown, CT
Economic Development Committee
Minutes from the Economic Development Committee Meeting
March 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

Meeting Minutes

1. **Call to Order:** Chairman V. Loffredo called the meeting to order at 7:18 PM.
2. **Minutes:** P. Pessina made a motion, seconded by E. McKeon to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of February 9, 2021.

Vote: Unanimous in favor of the motion.

3. **Public Session:**

Glenn Russo, President of Landmark Development, spoke on his proposed tax incentive application. He reviewed the history of the application and his negotiations with the Mayor on 2/5/21.

John Hall, Jonah Center for Earth and Art, spoke on NRG new turbine. Recommends the City terminates the agreement for financial and climate reasons.

Jim Fellows – from Middletown, 44 Andrews St, spoke against the NRG turbine. The City should negotiate with the new owners.

Krishna Winston – spoke on the NRG agreement. City should negotiate with the new owner. The City should not have new fossil fuel generation, but should reduce energy use instead.

Michael Harris – lives in Deep River, spoke on the NRG agreement. Submitted a report to the Mayor on the repowering proposal. Recommends cancelling the agreement to open something better like a clean energy project.

Chairman Loffredo closed the public session.

Chairman Loffredo moved this New Business item before Communications

6. New Business

a. Boathouse Building

J. Samolis reviewed the history of the boathouse project. EDC committed funding to develop four concepts for a new boathouse to serve MPHS and community rowing programs.

G. Daley of the boathouse committee gave the history of the plan. Recommended moving the project forward because the facility is not adequate for MPHS rowing and the community.

Wendy Shiel serves on the boathouse committee. Spoke in favor of the plan to create opportunities for all people in the City to enjoy rowing.

Rebecca MacLachlan – of Central CT Rowing. Spoke in favor of the plan as interest is growing and MPHS alumni are coming back to row. She spoke against the tax abatement for the NRG repowering project.

Jenn Alexander spoke in support of the project. It is a Middletown-scaled project. Concept A creates 3 buildings along the river giving it a New England look.

Angela Wong – supports the project to accommodate more rowers and to be an upgrade to the riverfront.

Alicea Charamut – resident of Newington and a rower from out of town. Central CT Rowing raised money to buy more boats and now needs more room for them.

Ryan Baer – spoke in favor of the boathouse. His children rowed for MPHS.

Christina Wasch, Di Battisto Associates – Reviewed the 4 Schemes.

Scheme A: 11,425 sq. ft. - includes a new boat house for MPHS and rehabilitates the existing boat house.

Scheme B: 15,800 sq. ft. – demolishes the existing boat house and includes separate bays for community rowing and MPHS teams. Adds on to scheme A.

Scheme C: 14,000 sq. ft. – includes 4 boat bays, existing boathouse remains with no rehabilitation. Building is rotated and includes observation deck.

Scheme D: 23,300, sq. ft. – includes 4 boat bays, 1 repair bay, rowing tanks, demolishes existing boathouse.

Lorri DiBattisto – reviewed a picture of scheme A and the costs of the four schemes.

G. Daley – reviewed the presentation and endorsed Scheme A as it is the lowest cost and addresses needs of community and MPHS. Asked the committee to request more funds from the Common Council for a more detailed design.

V. Loffredo suggested bringing the committee back to another meeting for a more detailed presentation. The Committee discussed the proposals and the BOE’s lack of funding of MPHS rowing program, flood plain issues, the cost for detailed designs and space for new boats.

Vote: No vote was taken

4. Communications:

Chairman Loffredo submitted a press release from ISO-NE giving the results of its forward looking capacity auction which took place on February 11, 2021, and the Middletown Press article on the Flying Monkey Restaurant’s proposal for Canoe Club. There was no discussion.

Vote: No vote was taken.

6. New Business (cont.)

Chairman Loffredo moved this New Business item before Old Business

b. Discussion on the status of the Tax Payment Agreement with Middletown Power LLC and NRG Middletown Repowering

E. McKeon reviewed DEEP’s hearing on NRG’s repowering project. DEEP staff said application would be approved. NRG acknowledged the plant was for sale. The committee discussed the agreement and the section on termination. The members requested a copy Michael Harris’ report to the Mayor on the project. V. Loffredo made a motion, seconded by E. McKeon, to recommend to the full Council to terminate the agreement according to Section 2 (c) of the agreement and work with the new owners, if so appropriate, on a new agreement.

Vote: Unanimous in favor of the motion

5. Old Business:

- a. **Update on Issues Related to \$55 Million Bond** – J. Samolis updated the Committee on the bond expenditures. He said nothing has changed since February's meeting.

Vote: No vote was taken

- b. **RFPs being reviewed and Background & Future Development of the Middletown Yacht Club Building (aka Canoe Club)** – J. Samolis reviewed the RFP for 80 Harbor Park. The RFP is out for the restaurant. We held a pre-bid walk through with six restauranteurs. Responses will be reviewed by EDC for a new tenant. Staff was directed to send a copy of the RFP to the committee.

J. Samolis reviewed the RFQ process for the riverfront development plan. The review committee is interviewing 12 of the 21 responders. Nine interviews are complete.

Vote: No vote was taken

- c. **Update on the Status of the Vallone & Fox Development Proposals**
Mayor Florsheim has asked for information from one of the developers who is still working on the response.

Vote: No vote was taken

d. Small Business Grants

L. MacPherson reviewed the three applications for CDBG COVID relief grants.

- i. The Whey Stationary LLC - LMI positions
- ii. Caffery Dance and Gymnastics – LMI positions
- iii. The Hair Spray - Microenterprise

Businesses can still apply for a grant. Fifty four businesses have qualified or are in the review stage. P. Pessina made a motion, seconded by J. Blackwell, to approve the grants and move them to the full Council.

Vote: Unanimous in favor of the motion

6. New Business (cont.)

a) Keating Leases

Forest City Brewing

Skatz Holy Smokez BBQ

Found Apparel Company

Kiro Bespoke Cidery LLC

J. Samolis reviewed the new leases. All need P&Z approval for 8-24 review. No action was necessary until they receive approval from the P&Z.

Vote: No vote was taken

7. Adjournment

J. Blackwell, made a motion, seconded by P. Pessina to adjourn the meeting.

Vote: Unanimous in favor of the motion.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:11 PM