

NEWINGTON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
NEWINGTON TOWN HALL
131 CEDAR STREET
NEWINGTON, CONNECTICUT
CONFERENCE ROOM L-101 LOWER LEVEL, TOWN HALL
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 19, 2016

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

III. ROLL CALL

PRESENT:

Commissioner Maria Pane
Commissioner Jennifer Ancona
Commissioner Dan Fisher
Commissioner Dana Havens
Commissioner Michael Fox

Town Council Liaison Gail Budrejko

Economic Development Director Andrew Brecher

ABSENT:

Commissioner Ken St. Onge (excused)
Commissioner Clifford Stamm (excused)

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Fox made a motion to accept the September 7, 2016 minutes. Chairman Pane seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

V. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None

VI. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR'S REPORT

A "Request for Expressions of Interest" (RFEI) is being prepared by Director Brecher and the Capital Region Development Authority, the Town's development consultant for the National Welding property. Unlike a Request for Proposals (RFP), an RFEI seeks out conceptual plans from potential developers without committing them to quoting a purchase price. Based on the responses to the RFEI, the Town will decide its next steps regarding development of the National Welding site, which could include an RFP.

Tyler English Fitness has submitted an application to the Town Plan and Zoning Commission for permission to open a customized health/fitness facility in 6,000 square feet (roughly the size of Damato Chiropractic) at Best Market Plaza. This location will be a relocation of their West Hartford facility. They also have locations in Canton and Vernon. When complete, Best Market Plaza will be fully leased except for the two storefronts at the west end of the plaza closest to the post office.

The Wood-n-Tap restaurant is slated to have its soft opening within a week, with a grand opening to be held in early November.

Eversource is negotiating a Purchase & Sale agreement for its property at 3333 Berlin Turnpike. Should those negotiations be successful, it could still take 12-14 months before the sale of the property would close.

51 Market Square, home of Market Square Dental Associates, has been sold to Dr. Walter Leckowicz, principal of the practice, for \$325,000 or \$134 per square foot—showing that Town Center properties are holding their values. Meanwhile, the long vacant industrial building at 111 Holmes Road was sold to the owner of Integral Industries, an aerospace components manufacturer, for \$885,000 or \$44.70 per square foot, a fair price for a building needing some improvements. It is anticipated Integral Industries will be moving their West Hartford location to 111 Holmes Road.

There has been new interest in other long vacant industrial properties as well, such as 90 Day Street and 81-85 Alumni Road, although no actual deals have been announced. A proposal to convert the building at 610 North Mountain Road to multi-tenant use is on hold as the mortgage holder has balked at the plan.

Indian Hill Country Club has signed a lease with the owner of Café Louise to provide catering and restaurant services, replacing Lessings. The facility is in the process of being spruced up and staff is being hired. Café Louise has an excellent 24 year reputation in West Hartford. They will now service the club and have a venue of their own for catered functions plus offering restaurant style dining. A new name and hours of operation will be announced shortly.

The Town Council approved hiring a traffic engineer to review the Alumni Road/Cedar Street safety improvements plan proposed by TPZ. Mobilitie, the firm proposing to install data towers in many towns in Connecticut, including two locations in Newington, visited with the Town Manager before meeting with State officials to resolve jurisdictional issues regarding approvals.

VII. OLD BUSINESS

A. October Business Event

The Business Breakfast, jointly sponsored by the EDC and the Chamber of Commerce will be held Wednesday, 10/26/16, at 7:30 am at Stew Leonard's. Commissioner Brecher will present an overview of services available to businesses from his office and other town officials will be on hand to answer questions. The price of the event is \$10 per person, including a contribution to the Newington Food Bank.

Gail Whitney, Chamber Executive Director, advised that attendance is expected to approach the 50 person capacity of the room. There will be a sign-in sheet and name tags to facilitate interaction of the participants and provide a means to contact them after the event.

B. Districts

With no new appointments made to the Commission, there remain too few members to cover all the district assignments.

C. Working Group Reports

None.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

None.

IX. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None.

X. COMMISSIONER AND LIAISON COMMENTS

None.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Fox made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Commissioner Ancona seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 7:48 pm.

Respectfully Submitted:



Sophie Glenn,
Recording Secretary