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**Economic Development Commission  
Regular Meeting Minutes  
March 3, 2014**

**Members Present:** Joseph Mirra, Chairman  
Richard Nunn, Vice-Chair  
Tom Collette  
Gary Fappiano  
Mark Gingras  
Rosemarie Preneta

**Members Absent:** Jim Wolfe

**Others Present:** Don Roe, Ec. Dev. Coordinator  
Lynn Wolff, Secretary  
John Thompson, Town Engineer  
Andrew Ragali, Record-Journal

Chairman Joe Mirra called the regular meeting of the Economic Development Commission to order at 6:38 p.m.

**2. Discussion and Possible Action on Regular Meeting Minutes dated February 3, 2014 – Mark Gingras made a motion to approve the February 3, 2014 regular meeting minutes as drafted; Rosemarie Preneta seconded the motion. The motion was approved by unanimous vote.**

**1. Update on Infrastructure Projects with Mr. John Thompson, Town Engineer – Mr. Thompson introduced himself to the EDC and proceeded to update the Commission on some on-going projects in Wallingford. Updates include:**

- Railroad station – The new facility will be a basic building with no facilities (restrooms, heat, air conditioning, ticket kiosk/booth) and is designed with lots of windows to allow local police to easily view inside. There will be 100 car parking capability on either side of the tracks with a 500' platforms and up-and-over walkway. The project is on schedule, with a one-year schedule for construction anticipated. Plans for installing double tracking should start in 2015 and should also take 1-year to complete; this will ultimately allow high-speed service.

44 Originally, Toelles Road was slated to be closed while this track work was occurring;  
45 however, the Town said this was totally unacceptable for the businesses in the area, traffic  
46 problems, etc. Engineering is working with the State DOT to resolve this; the State seems  
47 to understand the Town's objections. Another issue concerns train horns – when the new  
48 tracks are in place, it is estimated that 30-40 trains will go through the Town. If the current  
49 system of blowing horns at every crossing was still in place, this could be quite bothersome  
50 for residents near the tracks. A quiet zone is being considered so that the frequency of  
51 horns being used will drop. Gary Fappiano asked about the design of the station; John  
52 showed the EDC a drawing of the proposed building. Mark Gingras asked what is  
53 considered high speed? John said it is hoped that the trains will reach 90 mph in some  
54 portions; currently the trains reach up to 60 mph but drop to 25 mph within towns. Also,  
55 DOT is considering installing vehicle car charging stations at the railroad station. John said  
56 that the double tracking and station are scheduled to be completed by 2016, with limited  
57 new service. Full service with high-speed trains will be in place by 2030. Mark asked who  
58 will own the station, the platforms and security for both? John said DOT. Our Police  
59 Department hopes that security will be coordinated through an Amtrak office in Hamden with  
60 the local PD providing back-up. Tom Collette asked what will happen to the old railroad  
61 station. John said that fencing will be erected very close to the back of the current station  
62 next to the new double tracks; the current station will not be used by the railroad.

- 63 • Route 5 Corridor – John said improvements for the Route 68/Route 150 intersection are  
64 being considered by DOT now. Over 30 years of data shows that traffic volumes haven't  
65 changed much but the flow has changed. In answer to a question from Mark about  
66 accidents, John said that Toelles Road is #1, Route 5 at Center Street is #2, and the Route  
67 68/Route 150 intersection is #3. DOT expects to have the design work completed by July  
68 and construction completed in 2015.
- 69 • Interchange Improvements on River Road/Hall Avenue and Wilbur Cross Parkway – Back in  
70 December 2003, the EDC wrote to the Mayor and identified this as a problem area. Over the  
71 years, the price tag for DOT's various improvement plans grew to near \$9 million and those  
72 designs were abandoned as being too costly. Currently, a new plan has been proposed that  
73 would close the existing on-ramp and a new, 2000 foot-long on-ramp would be built off the  
74 Hall Avenue bridge. The Town has approved and funded its share (through COG) for this  
75 project; Amphenal is on board with this project as well. John anticipates 2 years for the  
76 design phase and 2 years for construction. Mark asked if there might be a spot on Town  
77 property near the tunnel for Linear Trail where the EDC could erect a highway sign? John  
78 said perhaps but didn't want to include it with the design of the project. Also Town property

79 near that location is much lower than the Parkway which might pose a problem. John said  
80 that if the EDC has a specific location in mind, he would be happy to review the plans.

81 • Don Roe asked if DOT is now OK with a center turning lane such as the one in place on  
82 Route 5 near CVS? John said that lane seems to be working well; DOT is OK with installing  
83 a center turning lane as long as the cost is borne by the developer, as in the case of the  
84 CVS site.

85 • Gary Fappiano asked why there was no left-hand turn lane at the bottom of Center and  
86 Route 5? As part of the increased frequency of railroad pre-emption events related to the  
87 upcoming railroad work, John said that a 3-lane configuration is being considered.

88 The EDC thanked John Thompson for his presentation; they found it interesting and informative.

89

90 **3. Review of Monthly Expenditure Report** – Don Roe reviewed the January report. He said that  
91 the Salaries/Wages account should have enough funds to last through the end of the fiscal year;  
92 money put aside for resurfacing the Merritt Parkway sign (budgeted within Promotional Expenses)  
93 will not be expended because the sign fell down and a new site is being considered; and that the  
94 second dues payment to REX was paid in February out of Dues/Fees and a reduced balance will  
95 be reflected in the February report. There were no other questions about the January report.

96

97 **4. Chairman's Remarks** – No remarks were made.

98

99 **5. Staff Reports** – The February "Marketing Report" (*copy attached*) was distributed and reviewed.

100 Mark Gingras said the Hubcap opening went well.

101

102 **6. Committee Reports**

103 • **Marketing** – No Committee report; the Committee will be meeting on March 31. Don Roe  
104 updated the EDC on the FY15 budget request. This request was revised in order to add money  
105 to Promotional Expenses to include \$2,000 within Local Initiatives to allow for more work on  
106 projects such as the IHZ and railroad station. The total budget, excluding the \$10,000 budgeted  
107 for a new highway sign put into a capital account, increases the budget by \$637. **Mark Gingras**  
108 **made a motion to amend the 2014-15 budget to include money within Promotional**  
109 **Expenses for initiatives such as the Incentive Housing Zone and New Haven Hartford**  
110 **Springfield rail project; Dick Nunn seconded the motion. By unanimous vote, the motion**  
111 **carried. Also, a draft cover letter to the Mayor regarding the budget was unanimously**  
112 **approved without change.**

113 • **P&Z Liaison** – Joe Mirra said Jim Wolfe attended a meeting concerning the downtown. Three  
114 topics were discussed: transportation, affordable housing and infrastructure. Jim said that the

115 Town seems to have a handle on transportation and affordable housing but still is working on  
116 the infrastructure topic.

117 Don Roe said that Representative Mushinsky did introduce legislation regarding allowing an  
118 enterprise zone in a community where a US postal distribution facility is closing; Representative  
119 Mary Fritz is the co-sponsor. No public hearing has been scheduled yet.

- 120 • **Retention/Incentives** – Gary Fappiano said the Key Accounts Program still needs some  
121 modifications; the Committee hopes to be ready to launch in April. He solicited Joe Mirra to  
122 cover Bristol-Myers Squibb.

123 Also, letters have been sent out regarding the company visits scheduled for April.

124 **Discussion and Possible Action re: Hotel Project** – The Committee is working on a draft  
125 report about this project which should be ready before the special Town Council meeting on  
126 March 18. Because the EDC will not meet before the 18<sup>th</sup>, Don Roe asked if the EDC would  
127 allow the Chairman to present the final report to the Mayor; the EDC unanimously agreed. Don  
128 also asked the EDC to plan to attend the special TC meeting in case the EDC is asked to  
129 comment on the report. Gary Fappiano said he would be out of state and not able to attend; all  
130 members in attendance said they will put the 18<sup>th</sup> in their calendars.

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132 **7. Regional Matters (CCAED, GNHCofC, NHMA, QCofC, REX, WA)** – No updates.

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134 **8. Community Involvement** – Joe Mirra said he would like to be part of the Board of Directors for the  
135 Hubcap. **Rosemarie Preneta made a motion nominating Joe Mirra to the Hubcap Board as**  
136 **the EDC representative; Tom Collette seconded the motion.** Mark Gingras was asked whether  
137 he wanted to be a Board Member; he said he did not because he thinks EDC representation should  
138 be in an advisory capacity only. **By unanimous vote, the motion was approved.**

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140 **There being no further business, Rosemarie Preneta made a motion to adjourn the meeting**  
141 **at 7:55 p.m.; Tom Collette seconded the motion. By unanimous vote, the motion carried.**

142  
143 Sincerely,

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147 Lynn M. Wolff, Secretary

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149 Attachment