



City of Groton
295 Meridian St.
Groton, Connecticut 06340
860.446.4103

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION & TIF ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MINUTES
March 3rd 2021
5:30PM - 7:00PM

Agenda:

- I. Call to Order@ 5:32pm**
 - a) Present: Jason Rusk (Chairman), Annemarie Seifert, Nishant Sahoo, Margaret Hirsch, and Cheryl Auerbach
 - b) Liaison: Tina Daniels & Stephen Sheffield
 - c) Staff: Cierra Patrick
- II. Introduction**
- III. Minutes Approval**
 - a) February 3rd 2021
Motion to accept the minutes of February 3rd 2021
Motion: Annemarie Seifert
Second: Jason Rusk
Decision: 2- 0- 2
- IV. New Business**
- V. Old Business**
 - a) EDC Working Groups
 - i. Commissioners will circle back with staff on finalized dates for the Coast Vulnerability, Thames Center, and Programming Working Groups
 - b) Staff Report
 - Staff provided an overview of the [City of Groton Planning and Economic Development website](#) and associated project pages

- Commissioner Sahoo recommends a webpage edit to the City's Home page. Under the top right business tab add a drop down list of projects to make easy for community members to access.
- The Department of Parks & Rec is putting on a community Easter egg hunt to locate egged business between March 24th - April 5th
- Project for Public Place is having a [free training webinar](#) on March 9th to help communities identify immediate improvements that will help jump start long-term planning and further development.

i. Project Status

1. [Pedestrian & Bicycle Network Assessment](#)

- Community members who are interested in participating in the Working Group can share their emails.
- The 1st Meeting will be held virtually March 17th @ 4:00pm
- The Working Group will transition to site visits and walking tours.

2. [Resiliency & Hazard Mitigation](#)

- Staff and Consultant SLR are awaiting approval of QAPP to move forward with data collection
- Project schedule is being reevaluated due to QAPP approval delay

3. [Strategic Communications](#)

- Consultant Miranda Creative conducted a website audit to assess design, user experience, and external connections. MC reported that the City's Site is well organized and user friendly compared to other municipal website. MC recommended minor improvements and to focus on content creation.
- Staff is member of the City's internal communications team and is working with department to identify content appropriate for internal and external communications.
- [Participate in the City of Groton Communication Preference Survey](#)

4. Visioning Thames Center

- This project and Thames View Park will be linked together.
- Projects RFP, webpage, and community outreach is under development

5. Thames View Park Improvements

6. Riverwalk (Coast Guard Academy Capstone Project)

- Disclaimer: this work is for academic purposes only. Any research, recommendations, or work done by the cadets does not reflect an official endorsement by the U.S. Coast Guard. Nor do the deliverables represent a completed design that can be provided to a contractor

for construction. All completed work submitted by cadets will be reviewed by City of Groton officials and Professional Engineers licensed in the State of CT before proceeding with any potential recommendations.

- The City is using this academic exercise to have a deeper discussion with community members on the redevelopment of Thames Street as well as public waterfront access, and future flood and erosion protections.
- Webpage and 1st Community survey is set to launch this month.
- Commissioners recommend the City be proactive in community engagement to provide a clear interpretation and expectation of the project.
- Cadets are scheduled to present at the March 22nd Committee of the Whole meeting
- Proposed next steps will be for the Pedestrian and Bicycle Network Assessment Working Group to conduct a street audit of Thames Street. This information will then be passed along to the Thames Center Working Group for project development discussions. Each working group will be able to provide their specific assessment.

ii. Tax Increment Financing District

iii. Projects in the City

- i. The City Planner is scheduled to join our April meeting to discuss the Multi-Use Design District (MUDD)
- ii. There's an application before the Planning and Zoning Commission for a text amendment to the General Commercial Zone. A new business is looking to expand their Auto paint protective business to the former NAPA Auto retail store on Bridge Street. This business needed to apply for a text amendment to allow for an auto paint protection use within the General Commercial Zone.
- iii. Commission inquired about the development of Advance Improvements parcel and the former Roller Skating Rink.
- iv. Staff will be conducting property owner outreach over the spring and summer to build relationships with the new City Planner, Building and Zoning Official, and Economic Development Specialist. Property owner will have one-on-one with the team to discuss further plans for their parcels.
- v. Commission inquired on the planter program. Staff will be reaching out to Marian Galbirth for plant recommendations. The Canna Cannova have due well. However the geraniums and vinca vines varies in health depending on locations. In regards to maintenance, Public Work will be installing water

barrels for easy watering during the season. Commissioner Seifert recommends New London and Mystic as points of contact for plant recommendations.

VI. Public Comments

- Liaison Sheffield will be attending the National League of Cities Congressional Conference from March 7th-10th via zoom. Furthering the discussion with the federal government on resources that can be applied to assist with local economic development projects. Liaison Sheffield has lobbied for municipal bonds remaining tax free to help with infrastructure projects.

VII. Adjournment

Jason Rusk moved to adjourn
Cheryl Auerbach seconded the motion
The meeting was adjourned at 6:26 PM

Submitted by Cierra Patrick