

**Town of Stonington
Economic Development Commission
Meeting Minutes for March 8, 2012
Human Services Building 7:00pm**

Attendance: Blunt White, Robynne Madison, Paul Burgess, Amy Arruda, Ed Hart, Wendy Bury, Dan Oliveria, Ed Planeta

Call to Order: 7:05pm

Approval of Prior Minutes: February, 8, 2012

Motion: Blunt White

Second: Paul Burgess

Notes: Wend Bury approved as amended, changes sent to Ed Hart for incorporation and submittal to the Town Clerk.

Chairman White made the motion to table normal business agenda items to the later part of the meeting to accommodate the schedules of guest presenters, Tom Buxton and Julie Savin from TFB3, LLC presenting development plans for 8-30g affordable housing, Spruce Meadows and Steve Mansfield from Ledge Light Health District presenting the case for the Town joining the health district

Motion: Blunt White

Second: Wendy Bury

All in favor

New Business:

Developer presentation – TFB3, LLC 100-102 South Broad Street Pawcatuck, (Spruce Meadows) – Tom Buxton and Julie Savin. Application filed, PZC Public Hearing scheduled 3/20/2012

The Commission was briefed on Spruce Meadows, LLC, an 8-30g affordable housing project which will be the subject of a PZC public hearing on March 20. Neighborworks Horizons, a nonprofit housing developer with offices in both New Haven and New London is partnering with TFB3, LLC the current owner of the land.

The project will consist of 3 buildings:

- Two residential, 3-story buildings that are elevator equipped and
- One community building with community meeting space –
- 44 Units in total
 - 21 one bedroom units
 - 19 two bedroom units
 - 4 three bedroom units

Spruce Meadows is to be situated on 3.8 acres that will be architecturally landscaped to include privacy for residents and conservation of some existing vegetation and outdoor living. Designated Open Space will provide a recreation area including playscape, picnic tables and an outdoor grill.

- 28% of the acreage will be grassed lawn
- 18% mulched plantings
- 9% undisturbed grass/woods

Provisions for 79 parking spaces and planned overflow have also been made.

The project mix will be comprised of 70% of the units being rented at market rate and the remaining 30% set aside for individuals and families that fall into one of two categories, those individuals or families that earn up to 60% of the Area Median Income (AMI) and those that earn up to 80% of the AMI. With the current AMI being \$84,400 for a family of four, qualifying families under the 80% AMI guideline would

earn up to \$65,000 capped by the State of CT (rather than \$67,520), and those qualifying under the 60% AMI guideline would earn no more than \$50,640. Rents for 30% or 15 of the 44 units would be capped at 30% of the applicable qualifying household income and in accordance with the size of the unit being rented (8-30g hurdle).

The purpose of the project is to provide affordable housing in the Town of Stonington which would allow the 68% of workers currently commuting into Stonington daily for work to be able to live in the town in which they work. Some area businesses reported that the average commute for their workers was close to 48 minutes. The project would also allow for those individuals that once grew up in the Town to be able to return as a result of affordable housing availability.

EDC voted to support TFB3, LLC and Neighborworks PZC application.

Motion: Ed Planeta

Second: Wendy Bury

All members were in favor with one abstention, Blunt White.

Steve Mansfield, Environmental Health Director for Ledge Light Health District presented the highlights of the proposal to the Town and answered questions. Ledge Light will formally present its proposal to the Board of Selectmen and the public at the Selectmen's meeting on Wednesday, March 14 at 6pm at the Police Station. The decision to join rests solely with the Board of Selectmen. The Ledge Light District covers from the Connecticut River to the Rhode Island border.

Member Bury brought forth the concerns of the business community regarding an increase in fees and over regulation. EDC discussed whether or not there is a problem that membership in the health district would solve. The Ledge Light partnership would result in greater enforcement of State regulations thru more frequent inspections of restaurants, hotels, inns, salons, community centers and day care centers. At the present time the Town has a part time health inspector covering 163 establishments compared with over 8 full time District inspectors. Annual permits for affected business would approximately double in cost. Enforcement decision making and control would be at the Ledge Light level and no longer with the Town. Violations would be subject to significantly higher District fines. The net cost to the Town, on a per capita basis would increase to \$6.25 from \$5.75 (9% increase). A substantial portion of Ledge Light's budget is funded by State grants, with the balance supported by fees from business and Towns.

Old Business:

Business Guide - Member Arruda gave an update on how the guide is progressing. It is at the point where it is ready for publication in draft state. The Town hall will print up copies for distribution at the Town Hall. The online version and link to the fully detailed document can be released to our web service provider for inclusion on the EDC website as well. This is a pilot phase to see if we can determine how useful the guide is and to solicit feedback from site visitors/users, regarding improvements, corrections or desired additions.

Business Outreach:

First Selectman Haberek provided an update on potential new business for the Town. There were three inquiries on properties around Town in the last month one in particular was the former Maple Breeze Mini Golf Park on route 2 in Pawcatuck.

Meeting Adjourned: 9:20pm

Approved 4/12/2012

Blunt White
Chairman