

Town of Montville
Economic Development Commission
Regular Meeting Minutes for Monday, October 19, 2015
7:00 p.m. – Montville Town Hall - Room 203

1. Call to Order
Commissioner Butzky called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Roll Call
Present were Commissioners Karl Butzgy, Marge Gatheral, Walter Hewitt, John Protz, and Jim Toner. Absent was Commissioner Dianne Williams due to a previous engagement. Also present was Town Council Liaison Tom McNally.
6. Remarks from the Public regarding items on the Agenda (3 Minute limit) – *none*
7. Alterations to the Agenda – *none*
8. To Consider and Act on a Motion to approve:
 - a. The Regular Meeting Minutes of Monday, September 21, 2015
Motion made by Commissioner Gatheral, seconded by Commissioner Toner. Voice vote, 5-0, all in favor. Motion carried.
9. Unfinished Business
 - a. Brief and Review of proposals of EDC website design
Commissioner Protz reviewed the current and proposed designs for the EDC webpages:
Sidebar: The pages will include a sidebar on the left hand side of the page with a menu with the following categories:
 - Economic Development
 - Montville Snapshot
 - Living in Montville
 - Our Schools
 - Recreation
 - Businesses in Montville
 - Demographics
 - Town History
 - Development Opportunities
 - Starting Your Business
 - Links of Interest
 - Business Directorate, Chamber of Commerce Southeastern CT

The Sidebar will also include the Commission’s Contact Information and Upcoming Meetings. Discussion ensued regarding the possibility of obtaining and

including an EDC Town e-mail address from which an automatic response acknowledging the receipt of the e-mail would be sent and forwarding all received correspondences to the members of the Commission for discussion at their next meeting. The inclusion of a telephone number and the Commission Members were also discussed. Currently, the Planning & Zoning Office is handling all incoming inquiries and it appears that not all of the information received by the Office is being disseminated to the Commission.

Economic Development: This webpage will present a slideshow featuring prominent Montville businesses, such as RockTenn, Rand-Whitney, and Kobyluck. A brief statement providing the scope and breadth of the Commission, i.e., who they are, what they do, and what they can do for existing and incoming businesses, will be placed below the slideshow.

Montville Snapshot: Though this section may overlap with other areas in the Town's website and may not be directly related to the task of the Commission, it may be of interest to prospective businesses. It will highlight and provide an overview of such aspects of the Town as its schools (in relation to the Town's branding, "Proud of our Schools") and Recreation. The page would include a photograph of Town Hall or a Town Sign and an inset of a map, highlighting its location between New London and Norwich. Discussion ensued regarding the integration of testimonials, which, it was agreed, may be integrated within the various pages of their site. Donna Geary, who volunteers for the IT Department, suggested the establishment of a Facebook page on which the Commission would be able to include items that are less formal in nature. A link to the Facebook page may be placed on the EDC page. Parks & Recreation, Youth Services, and other Boards/Commission have established a Facebook page.

Development Opportunities: This page currently exists and includes a sentence with a link to the CERC (Connecticut Economic Resource Center) website. The proposed re-designed page will include an aerial photograph of the Town or a slideshow of images highlighting select available properties. Below the main image(s) will be two strips of thumbnail images with properties for sale and properties for lease along with each property's basic specs, i.e., square footage/acreage, utilities, distance to highway, etc. The inclusion of a link to a third party website with available commercial properties to reduce the necessary management and maintenance of the information was discussed. Because the maintenance of such a listing would be minimal, it was felt that the Commission would be able to handle the management of the information and provide monthly updates. In addition, to avoid any possible issues, the Commission felt that it might be best to include verbiage and no images of the available properties.

Commissioner Protz will meet and collaborate with Town Planner Marcia Vlaun regarding the receipt of any available properties for the monthly updates.

The remaining categories (Starting Your Business; Business Directorate, Chamber of Commerce Southeastern CT, and; Links of Interest) exist on the current site and, for the time being, will remain the same. Ms. Geary suggested the inclusion of the Town's workforce on the site.

10. New Business

a. Tax Abatement for Commercial Solar Improvements (Commissioner Hewitt)

Chairman Butzgy commended Commissioner Hewitt on the draft for the Tax Incentive Program. Commissioner Hewitt stated that, when the State passed a law instituting a residential tax exemption for solar and other renewable energy systems, they neglected to include businesses. The Commission would be proposing the mailing of letters of forgiveness, issued by the Tax Assessor, for those businesses who apply and are approved to receive the exemption. Councilor McNally stated that the formation of a five-member Commission to review the proposal and determine an estimate the costs for the program would be required before any action is taken by the Town Council.

Commissioner Hewitt recommended the institution of a process by which a third party is brought in to aid incoming or existing businesses that may be having issues. Adapted from the Town of Colchester's Tax Incentive Program, Commissioner Toner volunteered to speak with the Town of Colchester and determine the feasibility of instituting a process to handle such matters.

11. Status of Businesses

a. Existing Properties/Businesses

1) Drive-in property – updates?

The Commission received conflicting information regarding the property. To date, the official status of the property remains unknown.

b. New Businesses – *none*

c. Lost Businesses

There are unconfirmed rumors regarding the status of Rock-Tenn Company, which is indefinitely closed. Tri-Town Plaza was recently purchased.

d. Prospective Businesses

1) Water park rumors – updates?

Councilor McNally reported that the Mohegan Tribe has obtained a private investor for the proposed water park, which may be located on the reservation. He also reported that, as published in a recent newspaper article, approximately

\$212,000.00 will be eliminated from the Town's tax rolls due to the approval of land being taken into trust by the Mohegan Tribe.

12. Feedback from the Townspeople and Businesses – *none*
13. Proposed Recipients for Business Recognition Award
Commissioner Gatheral requested that, in the future, the Commission submit the application form and provide adequate time for the ordering of the plaque. The Award will be presented to a business two to four-times a year and a list of the date and recipient of past Awards will be included in future Agenda Packets.
14. EDC Liaison Tom McNally Update
Councilor McNally thanked everyone and reported that this will be his last meeting as the EDC Liaison for the Town Council. He introduced two of the Town Council candidates, Joseph Rogulski and Wills Pike, both of whom are Republicans and strong believers in the EDC. Also present was Christopher Napierski, who was recently interviewed by the Town Council to fulfill a vacancy on the Commission. He also reported that he received a positive response from the Mayor and Town Council regarding the EDC's interest in looking into revising the Blight Ordinance, which will be included in future agendas.
15. Communications – *none*
16. Remarks from the Public (3 Minute limit) – *none*
17. Remarks from the Commissioners – *none*
18. Adjournment
Motion made by Chairman Toner, seconded by Commissioner Protz, to adjourn the meeting at 8:28 p.m. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted by:

Agnes Miyuki, Recording Secretary for the Town of Montville