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Regular Meeting
Town of Vernon Economic Development Commission
Wednesday, January 13, 2016 at 7:30 A.M.
Vernon Town Hall, 3rd Floor, 14 Park Place
Rockville/Vernon, CT

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VERNON TOWN CLERK
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APPROVED MINUTES

1. **Call to Order** –Chairman Jeff Cohen called the meeting to order at 7:36 am. The following members were present: Jim Sendrak, Jeff Cohen, Bill Breslau, Meghan Scranton, Peter Olson, and Bruce Kellogg. The following members were absent: Bill McGurk, Dan Kennedy, and Jill Merriam. Also in attendance was Economic Development Coordinator Shaun Gately and Leslie Campolongo, Recording Secretary.

2. **Public Forum** – There was no one present for Public Forum.

3. **Approval of Minutes - September 9, 2015** – Motion to approve the minutes as presented was made by Mr. Breslau and seconded by Mr. Olson. Motion passed unanimously.

4. **Economic Development Status Update**

   A. **Current Projects** – Mr. Gately provided an update on the following projects

   - **200 West Main St** – The project will appear before the Planning and Zoning Commission shortly. Next step is to work through the Office of the State Traffic Administration (OSTA) for parking permits, etc.

   - **Talcott Brothers Mill** – Received financing. Site abatement and demolition planned for the spring of 2016, with work completed by 2017.

   - **Amerbelle Mill** – Contract for abatement of Hazardous Building Materials will be issued shortly, with specifications for selective demolition of the structures being drafted now.

   - **19 Grove Street** – The State recently removed remaining oil drums. Investigating final use as park and/or parking for development at Amerbelle parcel.

   - **Cumberland Farms** – Received approval at the former Bennigan's site. Groundbreaking will take place in the spring of 2016.

   - **Moe's Southwest Grill** - will be opening at the former Radio Shack in Tri-city Plaza. Same owner as Wingstop and Mooyah's.

   - **Starbucks / Farmington Bank / AT&T** – Construction is underway at the former Blockbuster building.

   - **CT FastTrack East** – Plans to bring the ridership of CT FastTrack easterly with destination of UCONN using HOV lanes, and stops at existing commuter lots. Vernon's stops would be located at exits #64 and #67.

- **Filming of the movie "Sitter" concluded in Dec.** - Project concluded in December, with filming taking place at various locations around town. Project received tax credits from DECD.

- **Carter Chevrolet** – project has been approved.

- **Seraphin Ford** - will receive façade upgrade.

- **Multi-family Units** - pending project for 300 luxury units for Gerber Farms.

- **133 Tunnel Rd.** – Town acquired property for a new Senior Center.

5. New Business

A. **2016-2017 Meeting Dates** -Mr. Gately reported that dates have been posted with the Town Clerk's Office and remain being held on the second Wednesday of every month as follows: 1//13/16, 2/10/16, 3/9/16, 4/13/16, 5/11/16, 6/8/16, 7/13/16, 8/10/16, 9/14/16, 10/12/16, 11/9/16, 12/14/16, and 1/11/17.

Discussion took place regarding the façades of the buildings located across from Town Hall and the possibility of outside funding to unify the appearance of both sides of the street.

6. Old Business

A. **Three-year Plan discussion-** Discussion took place regarding items from the May 2015 meeting. Mr. Gately reported that the subcommittee (Mr. Gately, Ms. Scranton, Ms. Merriam) has been working to address the revisions. Notable progress has been made in some areas of the plan while in other areas minimal progress has been made. Ms. Scranton noted that the Commission serves as advisory council to each mayor.

Ms. Scranton also expressed that timely use of all grant funds received is imperative.

B. **Community Outreach/ Events.**

- **Business Showcase Breakfast-** Perhaps in October 2016. Mr. Sendrak suggested use of the upstairs of the Senior Center as possible location.

C. **Grants Update**

- **Assessment ($200,000)** - has been fully expended.

- **$4,000,000 remediation** - Contract for abatement of Hazardous Building Materials will be issued shortly, with bid specifications for selective demolition of the structures being created now.

- **$400,000 MSIF Citizens Block** – Internal environmental testing completed (EPA/CRCOG funded). External renovations - (MSIF funds) Project manager and architect selected. Plans reviewed/finalized. Out to bid by March work completed by August 2016.

- **$300,000 reuse planning** grant – being drawn on as part of overall Amerbelle work, where applicable.

- **Environmental reports on Citizens Block** (see above, Citizen's block)

D. **Review of Implementation Plan and Three year Plan** – Mr. Gately reported that the portion of the overall Plan of Conservation and Development is being reviewed and acted upon.

7. **Ribbon Cuttings/ Ground Breakings/ New Businesses**

- **Ribbon Cutting at Loom City Lofts** was held on 10-22-15. Discussion took place regarding current occupation rates and the overall site appearance, which enhances the area.

- **Ground breaking at Talcott Mill** was held on 12-16-15. This was a kick-off and walkthrough. A groundbreaking will take place when work is completed.

- **Spare Time Bowling** – Ribbon cutting to launch new Laser Tag will be held on 1/27/16 at 8:30 am.

- **Moe's Southwest Grill** – will open on 1/21/16 with a ribbon cutting at 9:30 am.

Mr. Gately also reported that Economic Development Commissions of Ellington and Tolland will hold a meeting with CERC and CEDAS tonight, 1/13/16, from 6:00 to 8:00 pm at Ellington Town Hall. Mr. Breslau expressed that Vernon's presence may be helpful.

8. **Adjournment**

Motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Olson and seconded by Mr. Breslau. Motion passed unanimously. Meeting concluded at 8:33 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Leslie S. Campolongo
Recording Secretary