

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

HYBRID MEETING

Thursday, December 9, 2021 – 7 P.M.
Town Hall, 2nd Floor Conference Room
302 Main Street, Old Saybrook

I. CALL TO ORDER

The chair, David Prendergast, called the meeting to order at 7:10 P.M.

II. ROLL CALL

Members present: David Prendergast, Carol Conklin, Sandra Roberts, Judy Ganswindt, Nick Prevost, Elizabeth Swenson, Kacie Costello Hand

Members absent: David Cole, Susan Quish

Staff: Susan Beckman, Economic Development Director

- III. **PUBLIC QUESTION & COMMENT** – Ron Lyman commented on the petition from Max's Place and Lyman Development Corp. to amend parking regulations and discussed parking requirements for other towns and changing shopping habits. He requested the EDC send a recommendation to the Zoning Commission in support of amending the regulations. R. Lyman also commented on the petition from Max's Place and Lyman Development Corp. to amend zoning regulations to permit retail gas sales as an accessory use in the B-4 zone.

IV. GUESTS – none

V. STAFF REPORT

S. Beckman distributed a staff report for November. The Saybrook Starlight Festival seemed to be a success and she thanked all commissioners who volunteered at the EDC table for the day. The Gingerbread Decorating Contest entries are due December 10. Three entries have been received to date and we hope more arrive on Friday. The RBDG grant funded Architectural Feasibility Study received 10 proposals. The committee selected four firms for interviews which will be conducted next week. A selection will be made by December 17.

VI. REGULAR BUSINESS

A. Approval of Minutes: November 11, 2021

Minutes were reviewed. C. Conklin requested to amend the minutes to recognize Majestic Electric Co. for their contribution to the Saybrook Starlight Festival.

<p>MOTION to approve the meeting minutes of November 11, 2021 as amended; MADE by N. Prevost; SECONDED by C. Conklin; VOTING IN FAVOR: D. Prendergast, C. Conklin, S. Roberts, J. Ganswindt, N. Prevost, E. Swenson, K. Hand. OPPOSED: None; ABSTAINING: None; APPROVED: 7-0-0</p>

B. Correspondence & Announcements –

- a) A request was made to donate a bench or tree to the town in honor of long-time residents. The bench program has been closed because all the locations are now filled. There is no tree program currently. Commissioners recommended contacting The Kate about the patio pavers, the schools or other charitable organizations.
- b) A proposal has been submitted to Parks & Recreation to build a memorial near Main Street at the Main Street parking lot. S. Beckman met with the gentleman making the proposal who appreciated getting feedback from the EDC. Although Commissioners felt frontline workers

should be recognized, they thought a less permanent tribute without long-term precedent-setting would be more appropriate. A scholarship to support students entering the fields in frontline industries was one recommendation.

- c) “Max’s Place, Big Foods and Lyman Development Corp.” Petition to Amend the Old Saybrook Zoning Regulations to amend Section 62.4.6.D.6. to allow a less stringent parking ratio for shopping centers from 1 space per 175 s.f. of gross floor area to 1 space per 225 s.f. of g.f.a. and to allow Applicants of buildings in excess of 10K s.f. to allocate the space devoted to storage to 1 space per 1200 s.f. Applicants: Big Y Foods, Inc., Max’s Place, LLC. and Lyman Development Corp. Agent: Atty. David M. Royston

The Commissioners reviewed the petition, asked R. Lyman questions and discussed the amendments.

MOTION to send a recommendation to the Zoning Commission in favor of the petition; **MADE** by E. Swenson; **SECONDED** by N. Prevost; **VOTING IN FAVOR:** D. Prendergast, C. Conklin, S. Roberts, J. Ganswindt, N. Prevost, E. Swenson, K. Hand. **OPPOSED:** None; **ABSTAINING:** None; **APPROVED:** 7-0-0

- d) “Max’s Place, Big Foods and Lyman Development Corp.” Petition to Amend the Old Saybrook Zoning Regulations to amend Sections 34.2.1 and 51.1 Special Standards to permit retail gasoline sales as an accessory use in the B-4 Zoning District Applicants: Big Y Foods, Inc. & Max’s Place, LLC. Agent: Atty. David M. Royston

The Commissioners reviewed the petition, asked R. Lyman questions and discussed the amendments.

MOTION to send a recommendation to the Zoning Commission in favor of the petition; **MADE** by C. Conklin; **SECONDED** by N. Prevosts; **VOTING IN FAVOR:** D. Prendergast, C. Conklin, S. Roberts, J. Ganswindt, N. Prevost, E. Swenson, K. Hand. **OPPOSED:** None; **ABSTAINING:** None; **APPROVED:** 7-0-0

VII. OLD BUSINESS

- A. FY ’22-’23 Budget – Commissioners discussed the budget and determined that no increases in the operating budget were needed this year aside from those required by contractual obligations. They anticipate some American Rescue Plan Act funds will be made available to support businesses especially by marketing the town as a destination to support the travel, tourism and recreation businesses. Commissioners discussed submitting a Capital Budget request to hire a consultant to create a town-wide Wayfinding Plan and purchase recommended signage

MOTION to approve a FY’23 budget without any increases aside from those required by contractual obligation and submit either a Capital Budget request for \$30,000 to hire a consultant to create a Wayfinding Plan and purchase recommended signage or, if hiring a consultant is not an appropriate Capital Budget item, to submit a request for \$3,000 to purchase a Welcome to Old Saybrook sign to be placed at the I-95 Exit 67 off-ramp; **MADE** by N. Prevost; **SECONDED** by J. Ganswindt; **VOTING IN FAVOR:** D. Prendergast, C. Conklin, S. Roberts, J. Ganswindt, N. Prevost, E. Swenson, K. Hand. **OPPOSED:** None; **ABSTAINING:** None; **APPROVED:** 7-0-0

- B. New Signs at Exit 67 off ramp – This was discussed and voted on as part of the budget discussion.

VIII. ADVISORY GROUP REPORTS

- A. Business Recognition Advisory Group- N. Prevost reported that he and D. Cole will have a report in January.

- B. Façade Improvement/Revolving Loan Fund/Development Fund – K. Hand. The town is going to apply for a grant from the CT Communities Challenge Grant Program to create a Façade Improvement/Building Improvement Grant Fund to support building improvements in the town center including the development of residential housing with an affordable component.
- C. ARPA Advisory Group – No report.

IX. NEW BUSINESS

- A. Potential Projects for ARPA Funding – Commissioners discussed the list of potential projects presented by S. Beckman. Additional ideas: EV Chargers at the Main Street Parking Lot; Broadband throughout town by partnering with a provider (similar to the East Hartford model); a Pedestrian/Bike Bridge from the Train Station to the north side of the RR tracks on Williams Lane; and purchasing/leasing the pad location currently available at 196-210 Main Street (Willbrook Shopping Center owned by B. Childress) to create a building with information kiosks, a Trolley stop and bathroom. Priority projects identified: 4 Seasons of Promotion; \$ayBucks eGift Cards for visitors; Welcome Flags on Main Street and electronic touch information kiosks at the Train Station, Saybrook Point, the Town Green, Max's Place; a business support program. S. Beckman will contact K. Hand to discuss ideas for incentivizing residential development above street-level retail in the Town Center. Also discussed was creating a Christmas Market on the Green during December and offering collapsible but sturdy "huts" for participants.
- B. Ballfield Lighting Committee – C. Conklin reminded Commissioners about the potential for business traffic created by sports games held in the evening at the high school.

X. COMMENTS FROM THE CHAIR – None

XI. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION to adjourn the meeting at 9:10 P.M. until the next regularly scheduled hybrid meeting of the Economic Development Commission on January 13, 2022 at 7:00pm, Town Hall, 302 Main Street, second floor conference room; **MADE** by N. Prevost; **SECONDED** by J. Ganswindt; **VOTING IN FAVOR:** D. Prendergast, C. Conklin, S. Roberts, J. Ganswindt, N. Prevost, E. Swenson, K. Hand. **OPPOSED:** None; **ABSTAINING:** None; **APPROVED:** 7-0-0

Respectfully submitted,

Susie Beckman, Economic Development Director
Acting Recording Clerk