

Economic Development Committee



Chairperson Councilman Vincent Loffredo
Members Councilman Anthony Gennaro
Councilman Edward McKeon
Councilman Phillip Pessina
Councilwoman Jeanette Blackwell

Staff Bobbye Knoll Peterson, Acting Director of DECD

REGULAR MEETING Minutes

DATE: Tuesday February 14th 2023

TIME: 7:15 p.m.

Meeting was held online via WebEx and in person, Room 208, Municipal Building.

In attendance: Councilman Vincent Loffredo, Councilman Anthony Gennaro, Councilman Edward McKeon

Staff in Attendance: Bobbye Knoll Peterson, Acting Director of DECD via WebEx
Brian Gartner, ECD Staff
Marek Kozikowski, Director of Land Use

Public In attendance: Nancy Stamler, Sara Mendillo (Middlesex Chamber of Commerce)

1. **Call to Order:** Chairman V. Loffredo called the meeting to order @ 7:15pm.
2. **Approval of Minutes**
 1. Minutes of the January 11th 2023 Regular Meeting – Moved by Councilman McKeon, seconded by Councilman Loffredo, and passed unanimously.
 2. Minutes of the January 31st 2023 Special Meeting – Moved by Councilman McKeon, seconded by Councilman Loffredo, and passed unanimously.
3. **Public Session:** None
4. **New Business**
 1. **5 Year lease for farming on City owned open space at East Street & South Plumb Rd.**
 1. Director Kozikowski informs the committee of the following.
Land was advertised via RFP, outreach to local farmers, and an advert in the newspaper. One application was received from Fair Weather Farms.
Fair Weather Farms is based out of Rocky Hill, and is currently cultivating 450 acres in the area.
The property is 39 acres total. 19 is already cleared for farming. The proposed lease is for the 19 acres, and no additional clearing is to take place. No structures are allowed to be constructed, and no long term storage of equipment is permitted.
If passed by the committee this evening this will proceed to an E-24 review by the Planning and Zoning Commission, and then onto the Common Council for approval on the March agenda.
Councilman Loffredo does express concern about this parcel being utilized for Agro-Entertainment use.
Moved by Councilman McKeon, seconded by Councilman Gennaro, and passed unanimously.

5. Old Business

1. 21st Century Bond
 1. No changes have been made in the last month, no additional expenditures.
2. Arcade Redevelopment
 1. The project is moving forward without the “Attention to Detail” parcel for now.

Negotiations continue on the “Attention to Detail” site. The price he wants to sell the property for is not one the city can agree to—the difference between the city’s assessed value of the property and the asking price is too large.

Additional parking is being worked into the design.

The priority is to make sure the city is getting what it needs.

VHB to commence soil testing on the parcel.
3. Riverfront Master Plan
 1. The project now rests more with Land Use than with Economic and Community Development.
4. 80 Harbor Drive
 1. Internal meeting scheduled for 2/15/22 @ 11am for a project update.
 2. Delay with the sprinkler system which may cause us to miss the proposed May opening date.
5. R. M. Keating
 1. Acting Director Peterson provides an update. Arrangements have been made with several tenants and they are honoring them. Several tenants will be served with a final notice.
 2. Councilman Loffredo requests a detailed update from the ECD office.
6. Grant Earmarks
 1. Acting Director Peterson provides an update.

Joe Samolis has been working with the department as a consultant while the Acting Director has been out on Medical leave. He has been assisting with the redevelopment of the former Schliens property. The State Historic Preservation Office has concerns about the project. While it is in a historic district the building itself is not historic.
7. Dripps Road possible sale to Nancy Stamler
 1. The committee requests N. Stamler’s intentions in writing and signed.
 2. There are outstanding obligations of \$168,316.48 on the property in question. \$69960.72 in taxes and \$98,335.76 in interest.
 3. No action is taken at this time.

Adjournment: A motion to adjourn @ 7:51pm passed unanimously.