

## **BLOOMFIELD TOWN COUNCIL**

### **LAND USE & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SUBCOMMITTEE**

There was a special meeting of the above referenced subcommittee held on Monday, May 17, 2016 at 7:30 p.m. in the Town Manager's Office, Bloomfield Town Hall, 800 Bloomfield Avenue, Bloomfield, CT.

**Committee members present were:** Deputy Mayor Schulman, Councilors Washington, Rivers, Hypolite, Neuwirth and DeLorenzo

**Also present were:** Philip K. Schenck, Jr., Town Manager, India Rodgers, Clerk of Council, Jose Giner, Director of Planning & Economic Development and Wayne Casper, Director of Facilities – Bloomfield Public Schools

**Guest were:** Mr. John Sarbone and Mr. Jack Schafer – Green Point Energy

The meeting was called to order at 7:34 p.m.

#### **Update on Bloomfield Development Projects**

Mr. Jose Giner, Director of Planning and Economic Development gave a brief report regarding a status update on Bloomfield development projects and potential businesses in town. Mr. Giner outlined the following updates:

- There is a new dental office in the Copaco Shopping Plaza in the old Blockbuster location.
- The department received another building permit for four unit townhouse located at Brighton Park.
- A medical fit out at 2 Northwestern Drive was received from Hartford Healthcare.
- Deringer Ney submitted interior trades applications.
- At 580 Cottage Grove Road, a \$1.2 million surgical center fit out has been issued.
- The new blower building at MDC Reservoir 6 was received.
- At 1289 Blue Hills Avenue, \$200,000 of school remodeling was issued for CREC.
- Niagara Bottling began work on their bottling plant. They also submitted plans for their interior fit.
- The Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission approved the application for the CREC Two Rivers High School project and re-subdivision located at 29 Griffin Road North, with several conditions.
- Staff reviewed the plans submitted for solar carports, solar array and geothermal wells at Seabury. The Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission requested an application and request letter for submission.
- Staff reviewed the latest site plans for the Center Apartments project on Jerome Avenue.
- Staff also reviewed plan revisions for the proposed elderly multi-family (Calamar) project at 1146 Blue Hills Avenue.
- A plot plan for a new Habitat for Humanity house at 89 East Morningside Avenue was reviewed.
- Staff attended a pre-construction for Seabury B & C additions.
- Staff met with representatives for O'Reilly Auto Parts regarding a new facility proposed for Blue Hills Avenue.
- The Town Manager, Goman & York and Mr. Giner conducted a business visitation with Serv Pro on Peters Road.

Mayor Schulman inquired about specific business industries of focus for the town. There was some brief discussion regarding attracting specific industries to town. In addition, he also inquired about any possible opportunities to utilize the new and revised Tax Increment financing to attract businesses to town.

Mayor Schulman recommended to have Goman & York, Economic Development firm to explore ideas of the “compartmentalizing theory”, type of industries should Bloomfield attract and Tax Increment financing data.

Councilor Hypolite inquired about expansion of the Grand List regarding goals for economic development. He also expressed concerns regarding the cost effectiveness of the duties with Goman & York.

### **Discussion and Possible Action of Solar Panel – Board of Education**

Mr. John Sarbone and Mr. Jack Schafer from Green Point Energy gave a status update regarding the solar panel project at the Board of Education.

The goal of this initiative is to identify a renewable saving opportunity for the Town of Bloomfield resulting in sustainable energy cost reductions.

Green Point Energy has identified 1133 Blue Hills Avenue as a site which can accommodate in total 2.4 megawatts of solar power. The site is open and undeveloped with 5 acres, suitable for a 2.4 megawatt ground mounted solar array, net metered PV power plant and distribution of generated power to five buildings.

The Purchase Plan Agreement was reviewed and discussed in depth regarding detailed financing, legacy, consideration, contractual obligations and regulatory conditions. This plan will be for 20 years. The town is currently paying 17.1 cents a kilowatt, which would be reduced to 13.6 cents a kilowatt fixed estimated at \$2,188,000. These estimated costs are based on current usage. There is an option after 10 years to buy the unit at fair market value. The projected revenue is in the savings for the life of the panels.

The Board of Education is in favor of moving forward with this project. Due to the long term contract, the opinion of the Town Council was warranted.

Councilor DeLorenzo inquired about the timeframe for project completion as the distribution of power among municipal buildings. It was noted that this project should be completed by mid-December 2016. However, the application submission deadline in June 2016 to the CT Green Bank, who will own the panels. Mr. Casper explained that the Green Point proposal would benefit usage at additional town buildings including the administration offices at the Board of Education.

Mr. Philip Schenck, Jr., Town Manager inquired about an analysis of all school buildings and the five acre lot rear of the Administrative offices to the Board of Education. It was noted that both the Board of Education need to have a consensus on the various variables included in this analysis.

Councilor Hypolite inquired about other large projects completed by Green Point Energy. Mr. Sarbone stated that the company is Connecticut based with approximately 21 employees. Most of their major projects have been in other towns out of state.

Deputy Mayor Schulman asked about potential employment opportunities for Bloomfield residents. It was noted that the company has done awareness program in the school. He also requested additional information for a cost benefit analysis of the five acre lot for solar array structure or development.

**It was moved by Councilor Rivers, seconded by Councilor Washington to recommend to the full Council to approve and progress with this project, subject to all terms and conditions.**

**VOTE:            AYE: S. Schulman, P. DeLorenzo, J. Neuwirth, L. Rivers, J. Washington**  
**NAY: None**  
**ABSTAIN: W. Hypolite**

**The motion passes 5-0-1.**

Councilor Hypolite and Washington inquired about other alternative land uses for the site, recommendation from CEEC, company references. He expressed concerns about liability issues and more due diligence for transparency.

Mr. Schenck, Jr. stated that this is an excellent project for the community, lower electric bills for the town as a whole and it is environmentally appropriate.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

Mr. Giner mentioned a memo received from the Economic Development Commission (EDC) regarding the location of the Prosser Public Library. The EDC is in support of keeping the library in the center of town.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

Mr. Giner have reviewed several examples of tax abatement policies in other states. There are three recommendations to include with a tax abatement policy: cost benefit analysis, environmental and traffic studies. A joint meeting will be scheduled in the near future to discuss an abatement policy with inclusions of: cost benefit analysis, environmental and traffic studies.

### **Adjournment**

**It was moved by Councilor Hypolite, seconded by Councilor Rivers and voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 9:23 p.m.**