

**Town of East Haddam  
Redevelopment Agency  
Municipal Office Complex  
March 13, 2025**

**1. Call to Order**

Chair William DiCristofaro called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. in Meeting Room 1 of the Municipal Office Complex. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Attendance

Redevelopment Agency Members Present: William DiCristofaro, Randy Dill, James Curtin, Jacquelin Nowell, John Cotter, Cameron Hendry, Thomas Sevigny, Andrew Lord, Jeff Miller, Caitlin Taylor, and Harvey Thomas (BOF Liaison).

Absent Members:

Other(s) Present: Jim Damicis - Camoin, Torey Conroy - Camoin, and Amy Vaillancourt - VHB.

**2. Approval of Minutes**

a. Regular Meeting of February 13, 2025

**Motion:** To approve the meeting minutes.

Nowell/Sevigny

Passed unanimously.

**3. Committee Reports**

**A. Executive**

A meeting was held with Jeff Walter, President of the Goodspeed Musicals Board of Trustees. Goodspeed expressed strong interest in collaborating on the master plan due to the significant real estate they own in the area. Ongoing efforts to establish communication with the Sons of the American Revolution have proven difficult, but Jim Curtin will continue his efforts to schedule a meeting. Additionally, the agency will schedule a meeting with Mary Ellen Klinck this month to discuss key redevelopment matters.

**B. Environmental**

Amy Vaillancourt reviewed Phase One Environmental Assessments were completed on ten properties within the redevelopment area, categorizing them based on redevelopment potential and environmental concerns. Properties at 1 & 7 Main Street and 10 & 24 Lumberyard Road were identified as priority sites for further assessment due to contamination risks.

24 Lumberyard Road building is in poor condition, with four feet of standing water found in the basement. Petroleum contamination from historical auto repair operations is a major concern, and a property transfer act filing requirement has not been completed by Goodspeed.

**C. Finance**

Tax Increment Financing (TIF) Policy:

The Agency discussed key adjustments to the policy and the approval process for developer applications with Jim Damicis and Torey Conroy from Camoin. The minimum private investment threshold suggestion was to reduce from \$5 million to \$2 million based on feedback, with a \$2,500 application fee set. Developers would be responsible for legal fees and third-party costs incurred by the town. There was a suggestion for an approval process that includes an initial 60-day review period, with a 90-day maximum if additional time is needed. Applications would be reviewed concurrently with Planning & Zoning and other regulatory approvals.

The Agency emphasized the need to establish a clear and defined process for evaluating developer applications, particularly with Tax Increment Financing (TIF) and credit enhancement agreements (CEAs). This process should run alongside the development of the TIF policy, incorporating steps like planning and zoning approvals, public hearings, and collaboration with relevant departments. The Agency suggested forming a committee to streamline and clarify the process, ensuring that developers have a clear understanding of the steps involved.

The importance of a master plan was highlighted as the foundation for evaluating developer proposals. A "pre-flight checklist" should be developed to guide developers through the necessary steps to ensure proposals align with the master plan. Additionally, the Agency discussed how to handle multiple proposals that conform to the master plan and who would have the authority to select the final proposal for recommendation to the town meeting.

The RFP process was also discussed, stressing the need for clarity in stating the existence of a TIF policy and the potential for creating a TIF district and CEAs. Developers should indicate whether they plan to utilize financial benefits from the TIF district in their proposals. This approach aims to maintain transparency and ensure proposals align with the town's goals.

The Agency also discussed the next steps for finalizing the TIF policy. The Redevelopment Agency is expected to provide final feedback by the following week, which will be submitted via email. Afterward, a work session with the Board of Selectmen will be scheduled to review the policy. A public meeting will follow to allow the public to provide feedback and learn more about the policy.

The Redevelopment Agency's budget was reviewed by the Board of Selectmen, who expressed concerns about the significant increase, particularly regarding the master plan allocation. They recommended reallocating these funds to long-term capital instead of operating expenses. The budget was approved, but the Board of Finance is conducting further review. Since Mr. DiCristofaro cannot attend a requested workshop, Mr. Thomas will explain that the increase is due to reallocating funds for the master plan and that using grant money would free up capital funds for other projects.

#### **D. Community Engagement**

A property stakeholder map was distributed to track landowners and key contacts in the redevelopment area. Additionally, a newspaper article was published in the East Haddam News to provide public updates.

## **E. Legal**

No updates.

### **4. Old Business**

#### **A. Master Plan Development**

The RFP for the master plan has been released, with a submission deadline of April 15, 2025. The selection process will be completed by June 2025.

#### **New Business**

Mr. DiCristofaro shared an update regarding creating a centralized repository for all documents related to the agency's work. A OneDrive folder was set up, and invitations were sent to everyone for access. The goal is to store all relevant files in this secure cloud-based folder to streamline document sharing and avoid multiple email exchanges. The RFP and a list of stakeholders have already been uploaded, and more documents will follow. Mr. DiCristofaro encouraged everyone to utilize the folder for their work and to use the email address rachair@east.org for communication moving forward, as this would be the preferred method.

He also discussed a recent productive meeting with Jeff Walter and shared insights from an earlier session. The conversation focused on potential flooding issues affecting the Village Center, particularly around the rehearsal studio located on Route 82. The studio is in a flood-prone area and may need to be relocated to avoid future damage.

Mr. DiCristofaro emphasized the importance of collaboration with stakeholders like Goodspeed, which owns significant real estate in the area. Goodspeed has a vested interest in the development and is open to working together on the master plan. He stressed the need to remain open-minded about the scope of properties and the broader area, as Goodspeed's involvement could help align and support the successful execution of the master plan.

### **6. Bills**

**Motion:** To approve the Camoin Associates invoice dated March 5, 2025, in the amount of \$3,541 for ongoing TIF policy development  
Cotter/Lord  
Passed unanimously.

### **7. Next Scheduled Meeting**

**Motion:** To cancel the March 25, 2025 meeting.

Lord/Sevigny  
Passed unanimously.

**8. Public Comment**-There was none.

**9. Adjournment**

**Motion:** To adjourn the meeting at 8:44 p.m.

Lord/Sevigny

Passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

E. Ruth Ziobron

Recording Secretary