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East Haven Town Council Public Hearings

The Hearing Committee of the East Haven Town Council held certain Public Hearings, Tuesday, September 5, 2023 at 7:00 p.m., at the East Haven Community Center, 91 Taylor Avenue, East Haven for the purpose of holding a public hearing(s) on the following items:

Chairman Deko called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.
Roll call - 12 present 3 Absent (Glassman, Santino, and Stacey)

Staff Present: James Keeley Finance Director, Michelle Benivegna Director of Administration and Management, Jennifer Coppola Assistant Town Attorney, Danelle Feeley Benefits Coordinator, Jonathan Bodwell Town Engineer, and Michael Luzzi Town Attorney.

Vice Chairman Pacelli made a statement that he does not feel it is appropriate for him to vote since this project affects his property.

Public Hearing #1 (Continued from 8/1/2023 meeting.)

Councilwoman Lesco read the notice of public hearing as follows: to consider and act upon an ordinance entitled "Stormwater Management and Drainage Easement at 35 Wheelbarrow Lane, East Haven, Connecticut for The Bluffs, LLC Development to be located at 31 and 100 Sperry Lane, 161 Foxon Road, East Haven, Connecticut" authorizing the approval of an easement proposed at the property of the Town of East Haven at 35 Wheelbarrow Lane, East Haven for The Bluffs, LLC multi-family elderly housing and assisted living facilities development to be located at 31 and 100 Sperry Lane, 161 Foxon Road, East Haven and authorizing Mayor Joseph A. Carfora to execute the Stormwater Management and Drainage Easement with all revisions as recommended by the Town Engineer and Town Attorney.

Chairman Deko recognized Attorney Coppola, Jonathan Bodwell, Town Engineer, who represent the town and Attorney Bernard Pellegrino for the applicant of the Sperry Lane project.

Attorney Coppola gave hand-outs and maps with regard to the easement.

Jonathan Bodwell explained that the existing pipes will be upgraded in their current location. His professional opinion is that there wouldn't be a problem with what is proposed, it is the best option.

Attorney Coppola indicated there was a small error with regard to metes and bounds, which has been corrected. Mr. Bodwell required an insurance provision be included.

Chairman Deko recognized Councilwoman Martin who asked if this is the only portion of the drainage system to be enlarged.

Jonathan Bodwell stated that what is proposed and will be done.

Chairman Deko recognized Councilman Paul Thompson asked if there will be blasting because he believes that area appears to be about a 50 ft. vertical drop.

Jonathan Bodwell stated that it is possible there might be some blasting, the alternative to this plan is to cross Rte. 80 into the Farm River, which he does not recommend.

Attorney Michael Luzzi indicated that the alternate plan is not a viable plan.

Attorney Pellegrino stated, using the easement is the most environmentally sensitive plan. It is not as disruptive to the residents using a system that is already in place.

Councilwoman Cesare asked for confirmation that it's a possibility they might have to blast.

Attorney Coppola indicated that the easement is in the stipulated judgment. The developer will still do all the test pits and keep in mind blasting has changed in recent years, it is much more confined and precise.

Jonathan Bodwell stated that the pipe is existing within that easement any blasting would take place on the applicant's property.

Attorney Coppola stated that the Board of Education will submit a timeline for blasting as to not disrupt students at the surrounding schools. They will need approval from the BOE chief officer with his written approval.

Attorney Luzzi stated that extensive protection to our schools is in place.

Attorney Pellegrino stated that the timeline would be adjusted for the school session.

Chairman Deko recognized Kathleen Bowery, 12 Arthur Road who spoke in opposition to the entire project and how the blasting will disrupt the neighbors for 5 months 5 days a week. This will affect the quality of life for all that live in the vicinity.

Chairman Deko closed the public hearing.

Councilwoman Susan Stacey arrived at 7:20 p.m.

Public Hearing #2

Councilwoman Lesco read the following: to consider and act upon an ordinance entitled "An Ordinance to Adopt an Economic Development Incentive Policies Program."

Chairman Deko recognized Michelle Benivegna, Director of Administration and Management, requesting approval of this Economic Development Ordinance to offer tax incentives to improve the town's tax base.

Attorney Luzzi indicated that we currently do not have an ordinance for Economic Development, the town needs this implemented in order to compete with other towns.

Michelle Benivegna explained all aspects of the proposed ordinance that will be available in her office.

Councilwoman Martin asked if the incentive stays with the applicant/owner/lessee, what happens if the property/business is sold.

Vice Chairman Pacelli suggested they table this in order to get a better understanding to digest the ordinance.

Chairman Deko recognized Anthony Campasano, 48 Hughes Street who asked why the town would give away tax money. He is opposed to this ordinance.

Chairman Deko closed the public hearing.

Public Hearing #3

Councilwoman Lesco read the following: An ordinance entitled “An Ordinance Transferring to Account 01-167-0910 in the amount of \$553,844.00 from Contingency 01-885-0689 \$150,000, Street and Traffic Lights 01-885-02e5 \$228,844, Retirement Lump Sum 01-167-0972 \$120,000, Unemployment 01-167-0965 \$20,000, and Labor Negotiations Increase 01-167-0970 \$35,000.”

Chairman Deko recognized Danelle Feeley, Benefits Coordinator who explained that the state pension fund increased their rates after the town budget was approved. In addition, some of the town employee contracts were ratified after the approval, especially for the police department special duty. For those reasons the town needs to cover the increases.

No public comment

Chairman Deko closed the public hearing at 7:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Roberta A. DeLuca
Town Council Clerk

Hearing Committee

Councilwoman Lesco moved that the Hearing Committee of the East Haven Town Council recommend to the Full Council adoption of the aforementioned ordinances and to adjourn the public hearing portion.

Councilwoman Cesare second the motion.

Roll call-all in favor. None opposed. No abstentions.

Public Hearing closed at 7:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Roberta A. DeLuca
Town Council Clerk