



# TOWN OF MIDDLEBURY

## ECONOMIC AND INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

**Regular Meeting, Tuesday January 28, 2020, 6:30 p.m.  
Town Hall Conference Room**

**Present:** Commissioner Frank Mirovsky  
Commissioner Armando Paolino  
Commissioner Mark Petrucci  
Commissioner Ted Mannello  
Chairman Terrence McAuliffe

**Also Present:** Britt Heggland  
Travis Bennett

**Absent:** Commissioner David Cappelletti  
Commissioner Anthony Minchella

### **CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at about 6:30pm.  
Pledge of Allegiance was said by all.

### **ARCHITECTURE REVIEW – Horse Barn 147 Kissewaug Road**

Owner Britt Heggland used a lot plan and illustrations package to show the location of a 70-by-240-foot steel building set far back from the existing colonial house which will remain as her residence. A commercial business with a steel building is immediately to the north of her property. The proposed new building will consist of a barn to house 40 stalls and a connected open area to be an indoor riding arena. The siding will be slate blue and the roof will be ash gray from a color palette supplied to commissioners. The property is 17.1 acres and is surrounded by about 26 acres of unbuildable land in the airport protected zone. Also on the property will be a riding area and paddocks. The property is entered only from Kissewaug Road. In discussion, the commissioners agreed it was a good use of the property

At the conclusion of the review process, a MOTION was made by Ted Mannello, SECOND by Armando Paolino, unanimously approving the proposed building and site plans as presented to the commission.

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Frank Mirovsky MOTIONED to approve the Oct. 22, Nov. 26, and Dec. 17 minutes, SECOND by Mark Petrucci and unanimously voted.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **Discussion: Cost effectiveness of the current EIDC web site**

Chairman McAuliffe told commissioners he had investigated complaints of web visitors not finding the commission web site using popular search engines such as GOOGLE, BING, etc. He said that statistics for the site indicated a very poor amount of traffic, averaging 2.9 page-views per day over a five-month period (Illustration 1, "Summary Stats"). Worse, much of the traffic came from vendors and technology companies, not businesses looking for information about Middlebury.

The web site costs about \$200.00 per year and the relevant CERC information costs \$850.00 per year in membership costs to provide property information and demographics. McAuliffe said the property information had only been viewed by 17 unique visitors over the five-month period (Illustration 2, "Pages").

In discussion among the commissioners it was noted and agreed that most search requests for information on Middlebury businesses, properties, tax incentives, and related matters were met with a page from the **town** web site rather than the **commission** web site. McAuliffe told commissioners this was happening because the **town** web site repeated information contained in the **commission** web site. Despite efforts in search engine optimization, GOOGLE and BING would always rank the **town** web site higher because the **town** web site was a trusted source of such information.

McAuliffe told commissioners the results would dramatically improve if Economic Development information was completely removed from the **town** web site and a link to the **commission** web site was kept in the **town** site menus. The commissioners agreed that this recommendation be brought to First Selectman Ed St. John and webmaster Barbara Whitaker.

### **Discussion: Proposal to modify Tax Abatement Policy Section 2 – ELIGIBILITY**

Commissioners discussed a proposal by Chairman McAuliffe to modify the eligibility requirements of the Tax Abatement Policy to allow Personal Property improvements for all listed uses, not just manufacturing. McAuliffe said this could be attractive to businesses considering leases of space in existing buildings. The matter had been discussed at several prior EIDC meetings and McAuliffe said

three nearby towns, Newtown, Beacon Falls, and Monroe had recently modified their programs to include Personal Property for all uses. Newspaper articles discussing those changes said the increased eligibility was a selling point.

In discussion among commissioners there was uncertainty as to whether "build out" of empty buildings was considered real or personal property, and where the tax abatement would go in such circumstances. Similarly, for furniture and office equipment, there was doubt whether such things would meet the abatement threshold, except for medical equipment or specialized equipment. Commissioners were also reluctant to consider automobiles for tax abatement.

The commissioners agreed that Assessor Chris Kelsey be invited to the next meeting to discuss the matter.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

None discussed.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Frank Mirovsky MOTIONED to adjourn, SECOND by Mark Petrucci and unanimously voted at about 8:05 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Terrence McAuliffe

Chairman—Economic Development Commission

cc. Town Clerk, Barbara Whitaker, Chris Kelsey, Commission Members

Attachments:

1. Illustration – Summary Stats
2. Illustration - Pages
3. Letter of recommendation for Britt Heggland to Planning and Zoning commission

## Illustration 1



## Illustration 2

The screenshot displays the Statcounter website analytics dashboard for EIDC. The interface includes a left-hand navigation menu with sections for SUMMARY, PAGES, RECENT ACTIVITY, and REPORTS. The main content area is titled 'Pages' and shows a table of website pages with their unique visit counts. The table includes columns for the page name, unique visits, and a link to page analysis. The data is as follows:

Page	Unique Visits	
<b>Middlebury Connecticut Economic Development</b> <a href="http://middleburyeconomicdevelopment-ct.org/">middleburyeconomicdevelopment-ct.org/</a>	123	<a href="#">Page Analysis</a>
<b>Middlebury's Three Major Parks - Middlebury Connecticut</b> <a href="http://middleburyeconomicdevelopment-ct.org/middleburys-three-major-parks-and-more">middleburyeconomicdevelopment-ct.org/middleburys-three-major-parks-and-more</a>	108	<a href="#">Page Analysis</a>
<b>Doing Business Here - Middlebury Connecticut</b> <a href="http://middleburyeconomicdevelopment-ct.org/doing-business-here">middleburyeconomicdevelopment-ct.org/doing-business-here</a>	36	<a href="#">Page Analysis</a>
<b>Middlebury's Town Beach on Lake Quassapaug - Middlebury Connecticut</b> <a href="http://middleburyeconomicdevelopment-ct.org/middleburys-town-beach">middleburyeconomicdevelopment-ct.org/middleburys-town-beach</a>	34	<a href="#">Page Analysis</a>
<b>Economic Development Commission - Middlebury Connecticut</b> <a href="http://middleburyeconomicdevelopment-ct.org/economic-development-commission">middleburyeconomicdevelopment-ct.org/economic-development-commission</a>	32	<a href="#">Page Analysis</a>
<b>Tax Incentive Programs - Middlebury Connecticut</b> <a href="http://middleburyeconomicdevelopment-ct.org/tax-incentive-programs">middleburyeconomicdevelopment-ct.org/tax-incentive-programs</a>	20	<a href="#">Page Analysis</a>
<b>Properties - Middlebury Connecticut</b> <a href="http://middleburyeconomicdevelopment-ct.org/properties">middleburyeconomicdevelopment-ct.org/properties</a>	17	<a href="#">Page Analysis</a>
<b>Web Site Information - Middlebury Connecticut</b> <a href="http://middleburyeconomicdevelopment-ct.org/websiteinfo">middleburyeconomicdevelopment-ct.org/websiteinfo</a>	3	<a href="#">Page Analysis</a>

Additional interface elements include a 'Filters' button, an 'Export' button, a date range selector set to 'Entire Log (5 months)', a 'Page 1 of 1' indicator, a '200 Per Page' dropdown, and a 'Feedback' button on the right side.

## Attachment



# TOWN OF MIDDLEBURY

## Economic and Industrial Development Commission

### Architectural Review

### Design Plans for “Livery, boarding stables and riding academy” Britt Heggland, 147 Kissewaug Road, January 28, 2020

#### **Memo to: Terry Smith, Chairman, Planning and Zoning Commission.**

On Tuesday January 28, 2020, the Economic and Industrial Development Commission met to review the architectural design for the proposed construction of a horse barn to be used for livery, boarding stables, and a riding academy at 147 Kissewaug Road.

Owner Britt Heggland used a lot plan and illustrations package to show the location of the new 70-by-240-foot steel building set far back from the existing colonial house which will remain as her residence. A commercial business with a steel building is immediately to the north of her property. The proposed new building will consist of a barn to house 40 stalls and a connected open area to be an indoor riding arena. The siding will be slate blue and the roof will be ash gray from a color palette supplied to commissioners. The property is 17.1 acres and is surrounded by about 26 acres of unbuildable land in the airport protected zone. Also on the property will be a riding area and paddocks. The property is entered only from Kissewaug Road. In discussion, the commissioners agreed it was a good use of the property.

At the conclusion of the review process, a motion was made and the resulting vote by EIDC unanimously approved her proposed building design and site plan.

Submitted by:

Terry McAuliffe, Chairman

cc: Britt Heggland  
Terry Smith, Chairman Planning and Zoning Commission  
Commission Members