

Economic Development & Improvement Commission
Regular Meeting – Thursday May 14, 2009 – 12:00 Noon
Town Manager’s Conference Room, First Floor, Town Hall

MINUTES

1. Call To Order – Chairman Greenblatt called the meeting to order at 12:01 p.m.
2. Attendance and Quorum (6 members required)

Members in attendance: Chair Howard Greenblatt, Chris Lyons, Dorcas McHugh, Bill Knapp, Joan Hughes, Doug Sacks, Betty Standish, John Adamian, Betty Rosania, Jonah Evenson, Jay Amoruso and Rene Ortega.

Members absent: Brian Silver, Rick Willard and Ken Rizzio.

Also in attendance: Bonnie Therrien – Town Manager; Peter Gillespie – Economic Development Manager/Town Planner and Denise Bradley – Assistant Planner.

3. Old Business

- a. Farmer’s Market – Doug Sacks noted a recent article in the Wethersfield Life and receiving lots of positive feedback. He mentioned that Liberty Bank was interested in participating and that maybe there is a way to come up with a signage opportunity of sponsorship. Commissioner Sacks also discussed the need for funding for two banners, a few A-frame signs and for selling old fashioned soda with a Wethersfield Farmer’s Market label from Avery’s in New Britain. He noted that the first event will be held on May 28th from 4-7 p.m. and asked for support in spreading the word, connecting with local vendors and volunteering time.

- b. Façade Improvement Request – Wolcott Center – 685 Wolcott Hill Road – Peter Gillespie detailed the cost overruns of the project. He noted that the applicant is requesting additional funding and to change the terms of the loan. Bill Knapp noted that the end result of the project is remarkable and made a motion to approve the request. John Adamian seconded the motion and all voted in favor.

4. New Business

- a. Budget 2009/2010 – Paul Montinieri noted that the budget had passed and noted that excluding planned retirements, that there were no layoffs in Town Hall or the Board of Education. He remarked that the union’s unification was unprecedented. Mr. Montinieri also noted that the EDIC and Tourism had taken a large reduction but that the sentiment of the council is to continue to support EDIC initiatives.

- b. Business Visitation Program – Peter described the program and its expectations to several of the new Commissioners. He noted an annual goal of completing 100 visitations and that so far the program is

behind schedule. He reiterated the importance of getting out into the local business community and asked the EDIC to keep this as a priority.

c. Shop Local – Peter Gillespie reported that this issue has been discussed with the Marketing Subcommittee last week and that this may be done in conjunction with the new business directory. Copies of the draft letter and survey form are available for review.

d. Wayfinding Signage Status Report – Peter Gillespie reported that the Request for Proposals was issued and that he is waiting for the deadline for responses. He noted that approximately 30 firms were contacted directly and it is also available on the website and was posted in a Legal Notice.

4. Reports -

Town Manager's Report – Bonnie Therrien reported on the following:

- Finishing Streetscape Project
- Paving and Landscaping Town Hall/Library Parking Lot
- Wilkus referendum
- Wethersfield Mill Rate compared to surrounding towns

Town Council Liaison's Report – Paul Montinieri reported on the following:

- Budget process
- Wilkus acquisition
- Town Manager Search
- Loss of secretarial support funding

Planning & Zoning Commission Liaison's Report – No report was given.

Tourism Commission Liaison's Report – No report was given.

Redevelopment Agency Liaison Report – No report was given.

Chamber of Commerce Liaison's Report – No report was given.

Director of Planning and Economic Development's Report – Peter Gillespie reported on the highlights of the Monthly Economic Development Report.

6. Chairman's Report – Howard Greenblatt reported on the success of the Chamber of Commerce's annual meeting.

7. Sub-Committee Reports -

Marketing and Communications – Doug Sacks reported on the Shop Local and Farmer's Market.

Financial Strategies – No report was given.

8. Minutes- April 9, 2009 Meeting – Betty Standish noted that she had been marked absent in error. Bill Knapp made a motion to approve the minutes as corrected. Joan Hughes seconded the motion and all voted in favor; with Dorcas McHugh abstaining.

9. Next Meeting – June 11, 2009

10. Correspondence

- a. Monthly Report
- b. Budget Report
- c. Letter To Berlin Turnpike Businesses

11. Adjournment – Bill Knapp made a motion to adjourn at 1:30 P.M. Chris Lyons seconded the motion and all voted in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Denise Bradley, Assistant Planner