

Town of Wethersfield
Economic Development & Improvement Commission
Regular Meeting – Thursday June 14, 2007 – 12:00 Noon
Town Manager’s Conference Room, Town Hall
MINUTES

1. Call To Order – Chair Betty Rosania called the meeting to order at 12:00 p.m.
2. Attendance and Quorum (6 members required)

Members in attendance: Chair Betty Rosania, Howard Greenblatt, Brian Silver, Doug Sacks, Joan Hughes, Tony Homicki, Tom Dean, Joe Cornelio and Chris Monroe.

Members absent: Frank Frago, Ken Rizzio, Chris Lyons and Bill Knapp.

Also in attendance: Bonnie Therrien – Town Manager, Paul Montinieri – Town Council, Phil Knecht – Planning and Zoning Commission Liaison, Lee Kuckro – Chair Redevelopment Agency, Peter Gillespie – Director of Planning and Economic Development and Denise Bradley - Assistant Planner.

3. Old Business

- a. Status Report – Redevelopment Agency – Chair Lee Kuckro reported that the Redevelopment Agency has been meeting since October 11, 2006 to discuss the redevelopment of underutilized properties. Mr. Kuckro noted that the Agency has narrowed its scope down to approximately thirteen (13), generally multi-parcel, areas. The Redevelopment Agency has recommended that the Town Council consider holding a Bond Referendum this Fall for the purpose of creating a fund that could be used by the Town to assist in the redevelopment of the Town’s commercial business corridors. Bonnie Therrien reported that on August 6, the Town Council will hold a public hearing on the proposed referendum question. She noted that those of you that support increasing the tax base and improving business opportunities can advocate support of the referendum until the question is set.

- b. Status Church Street/SDH Streetscape Project – Bonnie Therrien reported that the bid will open after July 4th. She anticipates that the bids will exceed the approximated \$800,000 proposed budget and said that either more funding will be necessary or certain parts of the proposal may be scaled back.

- c. Website Update Status – Bonnie Therrien reported that the updates are still on schedule to be completed by June 30th.

- d. Preserve America – Status – Peter Gillespie reported that the Steering Committee is meeting on June 14th to discuss the initial recommendations from the consultants. Mr. Gillespie noted that there would be a public forum held on June 20th at the Silas Deane Middle School Auditorium at 7:00 p.m.

e. Comstock Ferre Status – Peter Gillespie reported that the Historic District Commission approved the proposal with stipulations. The project will now head to the Planning and Zoning Commission for review.

f. Business Visitation Program – Doug Sacks reported that he had begun visiting some businesses. He noted that in many cases he has been asked to leave the surveys to be picked up later and when he has tried to pick them up, they have still not been completed. Mr. Sacks added that he has not had any negative experience conducting a visitation.

4. New Business

a. 1260 Silas Deane Highway Project Status – Bonnie Therrien reported that the proposal was approved by the Inland Wetlands & Watercourses Agency at a Special Meeting on June 6th. Peter Gillespie noted that application will be on the June 19th, Planning and Zoning Commission Agenda.

b. Greater Hartford Guest Guide 2008 – Peter Gillespie reported that the Chamber of Commerce had provided a list of suggested businesses. He noted that the deadline is fast approaching and the intent is to have a Wethersfield insert in the publication.

c. Communications and Public Relations – Chair Betty Rosania reported that a meeting took place with Keiler to discuss the lack of media coverage in Wethersfield. She questioned whether staff could be responsible for reporting on important issues and projects such as the Redevelopment Agency Referendum, the Comstock Ferre proposal and the Silas Robbins House renovations.

d. Budget 2007/2008 – Bonnie Therrien reported that \$17,000 has been cut from the EDIC budget. A discussion ensued about ways to recuperate the funds. It was noted that a meeting would be set up with representatives of EDIC and Tourism to discuss the matter.

e. Meeting Start Times – A brief discussion ensued regarding the EDIC meeting start time. There was a show of consensus that the regular start time works the best for the majority of Commission members and that the Commission would be willing to accommodate a night meeting if the need arose.

5. Reports of the Town Manager -

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

- Phase II on Town Hall Renovations has commenced.
- State Special Session should be complete by June 19th.
- Issues between the building & land owners of the Northeast Utilities property have been resolved.
- Wethersfield received a \$25,000 grant for horse & buggy rides. The committee has just recently met for the 1st time.

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

- Council unanimously passed the three (3) EDIC related resolutions.
- The Redevelopment Agency funding is high on the target list for support.

Planning & Zoning Commission Liaison's Report – Peter Gillespie reported on the highlights of the June 5, 2007 meeting.

Tourism Commission Liaison's Report – Joan Hughes reported on the highlights of the May 29, 2007 meeting.

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

6. Chairman's Report – Betty Rosania noted that she had nothing additional to report.
7. Sub-Committee Reports - Marketing and Communications – There was nothing to report.
Financial Strategies – There was nothing to report.
8. Minutes- Approval of May 2007 meeting minutes – Tony Homicki made a motion to approve the May 10, 2007 meeting minutes as submitted. Doug Sacks seconded the motion and all voted in favor.
9. Next Meeting – July 12, 2007
10. Correspondence
11. Adjournment – Tony Homicki made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 1:50 p.m. Brian Silver seconded the motion and all voted in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Denise Bradley, Assistant Planner