

Town of Wethersfield
Economic Development & Improvement Commission
Regular Meeting
Thursday, April 13, 2006 - 12:00 Noon
Town Manager's Conference Room, Town Hall
MINUTES

1. Call To Order - Chair Rosania called the meeting to order at 12:03 P.M.
2. Attendance - Members in attendance: Chair Betty Rosania, Brian Silver, Joan Hughes, Joseph Cornelio, T. William Knapp, Ralph Keleher, Howard Greenblatt, Paul Montinieri, Chris Lyons and Cindy Jacobs.

Members absent: Frank Frago, Doug Sacks and Ken Rizzio.

Also in attendance: Bonnie Therrien - Town Manager, RaeAnn Palmer - Assistant to the Town Manager, Phil Knecht - Planning and Zoning Commission, Denise Bradley - Assistant Planner, Kathy Bagley - Director of Recreation and Parks and Christopher Shepard - Wethersfield Nature Center.

3. Old Business

- a. Farmer's Market Status - Bonnie Therrien mentioned that RaeAnn Palmer would be looking into the feasibility of submitting an application for a \$75,000 marketing grant which is due on May 1, 2006. Christopher Shepard of the Eleanor Buck Wolf Nature Center presented the Commission with the conclusions of his fact finding research. He outlined specific opportunities and constraints and discussed the need for active leadership to promote the program and time to coordinate it. With regards to setup, Commissioner Lyons questioned what the farmer's would be responsible for versus what will be supplied. Commissioner Greenblatt voiced concern over existing competition in the area and the need to define the scope of products to be showcased and to gear the farmer's market towards a niche that hasn't already been tapped.
- b. Silas Deane Highway Plan - Next Steps - Chair Rosania discussed the redevelopment of the Town Center as being the top priority followed by the North Gate, the intersection of Nott Street and the intersection of Wells Road. Bonnie Therrien noted that an RFP for the engineering portion of the Town Center is being prepared.
- c. RFP Marketing and PR Assistance/Tourism Commission - Commissioner Montinieri reported that the town had requested that the two finalists, Magee Marketing and Keiler & Company, submit detailed proposals. Magee Marketing declined to resubmit because they felt the scope of work was too broad for the budget that has been allocated. However, it was indicated that they would be willing to work on a project-to-project basis much like they had done for the Tourism Commission. Keiler & Company submitted an itemized proposal separating the assignment into three separate projects including revamping the town website, creating a new brochure and drafting a public relations plan. After a brief discussion, Commissioner Lyons made a motion to award Keiler & Company the job to carry out tasks #1 & 3 per their proposal dated April 13, 2006.
- d. Wethersfield Offers Program - Commissioner Lyons noted that nominal share costing from the property/business owners showcased in the advertisements would be solicited and that a 1/2 page ad in Wethersfield Life will cost approximately \$750.
- e. Display Board - Commissioner Montinieri reported that work on the display board has been completed and that he plans to pick it up within the next few days.
- f. STEAP - Bonnie Therrien noted that there will be a bond commission meeting in May.
- g. Budget 2005/2006 - Bonnie Therrien reported that a budget meeting will be held at 7:00 P.M. on Monday, April 17th at Wethersfield High School. Budget summaries are available in the Town

Manager's office.

- h. Business Success Stories Seminar - Commissioner Hughes noted that approximately 80 people attended the seminar and that the speakers revealed a lot about their businesses and offered good information. Commissioner Lyons commented that each speaker seemed to have been given the right amount of time and asked everyone to consider ideas for a topic for the next session. Commissioner Greenblatt suggested discussing the land use permitting process and the resources available through the EDIC.

4. New Business

- a. Budget 2006/2007 - No new information was reported.
- b. Double A Transportation Shuttle - Commissioner Montinieri reported on the three meetings he has had. He noted that they are looking at a design with a streetscape look and that he would begin to identify photos that could be used. Mr. Montinieri discussed the possibility of having the bus completed to show at the Memorial Day Parade.
- c. Silas Deane Highway Façade Program - Denise Bradley dispersed a draft copy of the program brochure. Commissioner Lyons questions how much funding will be available in the program. Commissioner Montinieri reported that there will be approximately \$200,000 available in total funds and a \$40,000 maximum per loan.
- d. Preserve America Grant - Next Steps - Bonnie Therrien noted that the funding should be dispersed within 4-6 weeks.
- e. Redevelopment Agency - Bonnie Therrien reported that a draft ordinance will be prepared and available for review and comment.

5. Reports of the Town Manager -

Town Manager's Report - Bonnie Therrien reported on two prospective interests on the Northeast Utilities property on Cumberland Avenue.

Town Council Liaison's Report - No report was given.

Planning & Zoning Commission Liason's Report - Phil Knecht reported on efforts to update the commission's operating procedures and to revise the commercial vehicle regulations.

Director of Planning and Economic Development's Report - Denise Bradley reported on the highlights from the Economic Development Report.

6. Chairman's Report - Chair Rosania reported on the positive publicity received regarding Karen Rossi's move into the back of Comstock Ferre and the business seminar.

7. Sub-Committee Reports -

Marketing and Communications - Commissioner Jacobs mentioned that she would like to join the marketing subcommittee. Commissioner Lyons noted that they meet at 10:00 A.M. on the 1st Friday of the month at Antiques on Main.

8. Minutes- Approval of March 2006 meeting minutes - Commissioner Montinieri made a motion to approve [the minutes of the March 9, 2006 meeting](#). Commissioner Greenblatt seconded that motion and all voted in favor.

9. Correspondence

- a. Monthly Economic Development Report
- b. Express Lab Service Memorandum
- c. Letter to Silas Deane Highway Property Owners

10. Adjournment - Commissioner Cornelio made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 1:20 P.M. Commissioner Montinieri seconded the motion and all voted in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Denise Bradley
Assistant Planner