

Town of Wethersfield
Economic Development & Improvement Commission
Regular Meeting
Thursday, November 9, 2006 - 12:00 Noon
Town Manager's Conference Room, Town Hall
MINUTES

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

Members in attendance: Chair Betty Rosania, Brian Silver, Frank Frago, Doug Sacks, Joan Hughes, Joe Cornelio, Howard Greenblatt, Bill Knapp, Paul Montinieri and Cindy Jacobs.

Members absent: Ralph Keleher, Ken Rizzio and Chris Lyons

Also in attendance: Bonnie Therrien - Town Manager, Phil Knecht - Planning and Zoning Commission Liaison, Andy Adil - Town Council Liaison, Peter Gillespie - Director of Planning and Economic Development and Denise Bradley - Assistant Planner.

3. Old Business

- a. Silas Deane Highway Revitalization - Bonnie Therrien discussed the highlights of a meeting held with the Department of Transportation. She noted that she would like to see the construction plans of the Church Street and Silas Deane Highway intersection be approved before spring. Ms. Therrien said that she would like the Façade Grant Program to continue to be promoted. She suggested finding a company like HEDCo to administer the program to free up some of the Town Planner's time. Ms. Therrien noted that both Newington and Berlin have instituted similar processes and requested that the possibility of contracting out this work be investigated.
- b. Marketing and PR Assistance - Keiler - Paul Montinieri noted that a meeting was held on November 9th with staff from Keiler to discuss a marketing and public relations plan. Other topics were discussed were the Silas Deane Revitalization Plan, Tourism and Redevelopment. Peter Gillespie noted that a meeting would take place next week to review the website development.
- c. STEAP - Peter Gillespie reminded the Commission that the Town has now received three (3) separate grant awards as follows:
 - \$500,000 for the Silas Deane Highway
 - \$500,000 for the Silas Deane Highway
 - \$200,000 to support the Loan Program

4. New Business

- a. Double A Transportation Shuttle - Paul Montinieri noted that advertising options for the shuttle were being discussed and that the fee schedule would be finalized. Chair Rosania requested information on the use of the shuttle and noted that she would like the word on its availability to continue to be spread.
- b. Silas Deane Highway Façade Program - Peter Gillespie noted that several meetings with property owners have taken place and that the façade grant program is in need of additional promotion. Mr. Gillespie said he would meet with the Town Attorney to discuss options for streamlining the application, review and approval process.
- c. Preserve America Grant - Next Steps - Peter Gillespie reported that John Milner and Associates was interviewed for the second time on October 19th. The next steps include contract negotiations and

Town Council approval. Mr. Gillespie said he anticipates a December kick-off.

- d. Redevelopment Agency - Peter Gillespie reported that the Agency has met twice. The Agency listened to presentations by the Town of Windsor and the City of New London. The Redevelopment Agency will continue to meet every other week to discuss possible development sites. The next meeting will be held on November 21st.
- e. 2006 Business Survey - Frank Frago noted that all of the seventy-seven (77) completed survey responses had been tabulated. Mr. Frago pointed out that the level of response constituted fewer than 10% of the total distribution and was lower than in previous years. Peter Gillespie commented that the survey results will be used in order to identify the opportunities and issues facing the business community. He noted that the survey would be followed up with targeted business visitations.
- f. Salute To Business Event - Chair Rosania noted that she had confirmed the December 7th date, the cost of \$18 per person and the menu items with Mike Seaver of the Wethersfield Country Club.
- g. 2007 Meeting Schedule - A discussion ensued regarding the necessity of holding the December 2006 meeting. Frank Frago commented that unless there was pressing business on the agenda, he would like to see the meeting cancelled.

5. Reports of the Town Manager -

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

- Community forums to discuss the upcoming budget will be held in January.
- Continuing to pursue an update on the status of the Northeast Utilities property.
- The Fun Zone property has been painted and the awning taken down.

Town Council Liaison's Report - Andy Adil reported on the following:

- Successful election/use of new voting machines.
- Russ Morin being elected to serve as a State Representative.
- Progress of the Redevelopment Agency.
- Fireside Chat with the Town Council and the Board of Education.
- Continuing aesthetic improvements to Cottone Field.

Planning & Zoning Commission Liaison's Report - Phil Knecht reported on the following:

- Hometown Developers, LLC Seeking Site Plan and Design Review to construct twenty-two (22) age restricted housing units at 91 Nott Street.
- Omnipoint Communications, Inc. Seeking Site Plan and Design Review to install a telecommunications antenna on an existing tower with associated equipment cabinets at its base at 23 Keleher Court.
- John Tartaglia Seeking Site Plan and Design Review for a modification to Application No. 1519-06-Z, in accordance with Section 10.1.D.5.d. of the Wethersfield Zoning Regulations at 295 Ridge Road.

Tourism Commission Liaison's Report - No report was presented.

Director of Planning and Economic Development's Report - Peter Gillespie reported on the following:

- Potential for a change in ownership at Comstock Ferre.
- Potential interest in the purchase of the former Porch & Patio.
- 61 Arrow Road complex nearly full occupancy.
- Tenant negotiations with Colvest for a hardware store.

6. Chairman's Report - Chair Rosania stressed the importance of member attendance and noted that the

Commission is only as good as its members and the members only as good as their attendance. Ms. Rosania questioned whether all the subcommittees would continue to be necessary with the formation of the Redevelopment Agency.

7. Sub-Committee Reports -

Marketing and Communications - No report was presented.

Financial Strategies - No report was presented.

Development Initiatives - Frank Frago made a motion to eliminate the Development Subcommittee due to the recent creation of the Redevelopment Agency. Howard Greenblatt seconded the motion and all voted in favor.

8. Minutes- Approval of [October 26, 2006 minutes](#) - Frank Frago motioned to approve the minutes as submitted. Chair Rosania noted a grammatical error on the second page, Section f. Salute to Business Event, in which the last Business Recognition Award recipient in the column should be spelled Crown & Kringle. Ms. Rosania stated that the meeting minutes serve as a general reflection of the town and that the review process should be tightened up. Frank Frago accepted the revised motion. Joe Cornelio seconded the motion. With Bill Knapp abstaining, the motion passed.

9. Correspondence - There was no correspondence.

10. Adjournment - Bill Knapp motioned to adjourn the meeting at 1:50 p.m. Frank Frago seconded the motion and all voted in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Denise Bradley, Assistant Planner