

TOWN OF WETHERSFIELD ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND IMPROVEMENT COMMISSION

Minutes of the meeting of October 9, 2003 At Village Tavern

Members present: Tony Camilliere
Frank Frago
Joan Hughes
Betty Rosania
Jon Vining

Also present: Peter Gillespie, Dir., Planning & Economic Dev.
Phil Knecht, Planning & Zoning liaison
Joe Cornelio, resident
Marie Massaro, P&ED, EDIC Secretary

Chairman Tony Camilliere convened the meeting at 12:10 p.m. He asked members for a vote on the meeting [minutes of the September 11](#) and [September 25](#) meetings. Betty Rosania made a motion to approve, seconded by Frank Frago. The minutes were approved unanimously.

Tony asked the subcommittees to provide an update on their initial meetings and preparations for the October 15th Economic Development Summit.

Betty Rosania spoke on behalf of the Marketing/Communications subcommittee, noting that Chris Lyons was unable to attend. Joan Hughes, Chris Lyons, and she met to develop goals. Betty distributed results of this initial meeting and welcomed comments from the group. She said they'd like to kick-off some of their initiatives by November 15th, and need \$5,000 to implement it. Betty noted this is a very minimal amount.

Tony stated he would like to table discussion of the Silas Deane Highway funding until the next meeting, when more members are present. He moved the agenda on to the Summit.

Peter Gillespie stated that each subcommittee should appoint a representative to lead the roundtable discussion at the summit. The role would be to focus discussion on key ideas, prioritize, and report back to the full group. Betty said she assumed the head of each subcommittee would handle that role. She also said she was concerned about the lack of press coverage promoting the summit.

Peter Gillespie noted that Charlie Ford asked to be on the agenda, and he's been included.

Betty stated the inventory of properties is crucial, and wondered if November 1 was a realistic completion date. Peter stated he had spent time with the GIS person and the Assessor; the inventory is done but in pretty rudimentary format. Betty said she'd prefer to push back the M/C committee's November 15 kick-off date until the inventory is more polished; Peter agreed that December 1 is more realistic. Betty thanked Peter for the terrific work.

Frank Frago asked if it's realistic for the M/C subcommittee to meet with every business in town in a year; Betty stated there are 478 businesses if you delete one-person operations. Frank noted that in the survey, respondents overwhelming stated they don't want to meet with town officials. Betty responded that they won't meet; they'll greet, approaching it one block at a time. Frank encouraged the subcommittee to make every attempt to meet with the owner, which often requires an appointment, not a drop-in visit.

Phil Knecht asked what type of work had been done with the media to promote the Summit; Peter stated that a press release had been sent to local media.

Tony asked for an update from the Development group; Jon Vining noted they have not been able to meet yet. Tony then asked for an update from the Finance subcommittee. Frank said they had met and developed five areas to discuss at the Summit roundtable, including incentive programs, express loans, grants and improvement districts.

Peter reviewed the list of groups to present at the Summit, and noted that Anne Kuckro from Tourism will be out of town; Carol Sparveri from Culture and the Arts is in Florida. Frank revisited the issue of publicity for the Summit. Peter said press releases had gone to cable TV and the local papers. *Wethersfield Life* had a brief mention of it, and Joan Hughes said it appeared on the Channel 15 events scroll.

Betty Rosania noted that the *Hartford Business Journal* is an effective publication and would cover this if invited. She also mentioned the M/C subcommittee would like to expand the Salute To Business and include past leaders whose contributions have gone unrecognized (e.g. people who donated land to what eventually become Mill Woods).

Tony asked all subcommittees to firm up their plans for the summit, including areas of focus and making sure each subcommittee had someone taking notes. The meeting adjourned at 1:40 p.m.