

Economic Development & Improvement Commission
Regular Meeting – Thursday February 9, 2012 – 12:00 Noon
Town Manager’s Conference Room, First Floor, Town Hall

MINUTES

1. Call To Order – Chris Lyons called the meeting to order at 12:00 p.m.
2. Attendance and Quorum (6 members required) - Chairman Chris Lyons, Ron Backer, Bill Knapp, Doug Sacks, Howard Greenblatt, Betty Standish, Vincent Fabi, Dorcas McHugh, Joan Hughes, Betty Rosania, Jeff Bridges-Town Manager, Peter Gillespie-Director of Planning/Economic Development Manager, Ellyn Laramie – Chamber of Commerce and Denise Bradley-Assistant Planner.
3. Old Business
 - a. Farmers’ Market – Stephanie Jarm updated the EDIC on the highlights of the 2011 season and discussed plans for the opening this spring including seeking a new location and incorporating the use of credit/debit card payments.
 - b. Vacant Property Updates – Peter Gillespie reported on the following:
 - 176 Cumberland Avenue
 - 125 Silas Deane Highway
 - 1177 Silas Deane Highway
 - 1000 Silas Deane Highway
 - c. Shops Local Alliance – Vincent Fabi reported that the Committee is looking into the costs and logistics of joining the American Independent Business Alliance (AMIBA). A meeting will be held to discuss the findings.
 - d. Breakfast Meeting – Peter Gillespie indicated that the next breakfast meeting should be geared for Shops Local Alliance topics.
4. New Business
 - a. Façade Improvement Program – Status Report – Peter Gillespie distributed a status report on the summary of program accounting. Mr. Gillespie described the funding request from Around the Clock Telemessaging Corp located at 433 Silas Deane Highway and noted that the Financial Strategies Sub-Committee recommended not funding the proposal. A brief discussion ensued and Betty Standish made a motion to approve the recommendation of the Finance Sub-Committee. Betty Rosania seconded the motion and all voted in favor.
 - b. Budget – Peter Gillespie reported that it is the beginning of the budget season and that he will be submitting an almost identical budget as last year. He is not recommending any significant changes and noted that he has asked for additional funding for the Façade Loan Program.
 - c. Website – Peter Gillespie noted that the RFP is being prepared to revamp the town website including the Tourism and EDIC pages. Dorcas McHugh indicated that an extension may be required for the grant funding received by the Tourism Commission.
 - d. Business Visitation – A brief discussion ensued regarding the importance or restarting this initiative. Peter Gillespie passed around a sign-up sheet with the names of the recent Longevity and Welcome Award recipients.

5. Other Business – There was no other business to report.
6. Reports - Town Manager's Report – Jeff Bridges reported on the following:
 - Municipal aid to remain at current levels
 - Paving program
 - CRRA contract negotiation
 - BOE budget
 - 4/24 Republican primary
 - WHS ReferendumTown Council Liaison's Report – No report was given.
Planning & Zoning Commission Liaison's Report – Nothing additional to report.
Tourism Commission Liaison's Report – Dorcas McHugh noted that the Commission was grateful of the allocation for the photo contest. She added that she is concerned regarding the delay in the website update.
Redevelopment Agency Liaison Report – No report was given.
Chamber of Commerce Liaison's Report – Ellyn Laramie noted that there will be a Business after Hours on February 23rd from 5-7 p.m. at Mila Fabrics and New England Patio and Hearth.
Director of Planning and Economic Development's Report – Peter Gillespie reported on the following:
 - Lane Bryant will be opening in the Wethersfield Shopping Center
 - POCD workshop highlights
 - Lucky Lou's expanded patio hours was approved by the PZC
7. Chairman's Report – Chairman Lyons noted that he appreciates the recent attendance and encouraged everyone who hasn't already done so to join one of the EDIC sub-committees.
8. Sub-Committee Reports - Marketing and Communications – Nothing additional to report.
Financial Strategies – Nothing additional to report.
9. Minutes – January 12, 2012 Meeting – Betty Rosania noted that she was in attendance at the last meeting and asked that the minutes be revised to reflect that. Chris Lyons made a motion to approve the minutes as corrected. Dorcas McHugh seconded the motion and all voted in favor. Bill Knapp and Howard Greenblatt abstained from voting.
10. Next Meeting – March 8, 2012
11. Correspondence – There was no correspondence.
12. Adjournment – The meeting adjourned at 1:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Denise Bradley, Assistant Planner