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**Town of Wethersfield**  
**Economic Development & Improvement Commission**  
**Regular Meeting**  
**Thursday, April 12, 2007 - 12:00 Noon**  
**Town Manager's Conference Room, Town Hall**  
**MINUTES**

1. Call To Order The meeting was called to order at 12:06 p.m. by Acting Chair Howard Greenblatt.
2. Attendance and Quorum (6 members required) - Members in attendance - Acting Chair Howard Greenblatt, Ralph Keleher, Joan Hughes, William Knapp, Anthony Homicki, Doug Sacks, Joe Cornelio, Adam Jeamel, Tom Deane, Chris Lyons and Brian Silver.

Also in attendance - Paul Montinieri, Town Council, Bonnie Therrien, Town Manager and Peter Gillespie, Town Planner/Economic Development Manager.

3. Old Business
  - a. Status Church Street/SDH Streetscape Project - Peter Gillespie reported that on March 29th a meeting was held with the design engineers from DeCarlo and Doll to discuss outstanding matters regarding the Conn Dot's review of the plans. Additionally a set of plans is going to be mailed to the abutting property owners this week regarding potential impacts to their properties. Mr. Gillespie stated that due to the impending renovations to Town Hall the project may have to be constructed in 2 phases so as to avoid conflicts with the project. Mr. Sacks inquired if the Town could request that Supreme Limo improve their operations as part of the streetscape improvements.
  - b. Marketing and PR Plan - Keiler - It was suggested that a presentation on this plan should be made to Town Council. The implementation of the plan is on hold pending approval of next year's budget.
  - c. Website Update Status - Bonnie Therrien reported that Council has approved \$9,000 to retain some professional assistance to assist the IT Department with the switch over to the new web site design.
  - d. Breakfast Meeting With Top Taxpayers - Howard Greenblatt stated that the attendance was lower than anticipated and the Commission should review means to improve the attendance levels. Peter Gillespie stated that the Chamber might be interested in assisting. Howard Greenblatt suggested partnering with other Chambers and Economic Development Commissions. Paul Montinieri noted that there are considerable costs associated with hosting the event at the Country Club and it may be better to have local small businesses host the breakfast meetings in the future.

4. New Business
  - a. Preserve America - Status - Peter Gillespie reported that a public meeting is scheduled for May 3 in the evening with residents and again on May 21.

Doug Sacks inquired about the status of the Comstock Ferre and the delays involved with the permit process with the HDC and whether the EDIC needs to get more involved. Howard Greenblatt expressed his concerns that the Town may be creating a bad reputation for future developers.
  - b. Redevelopment Agency - Peter Gillespie reported that the Agency will be providing a status report to Town Council on Tuesday the 10th and would like to meet with the PZC and EDIC in the near future. The Agency hopes to make contact with private property owners in the near future. A visit to

the Redevelopment staff and Mayor of Stamford was just held to learn about their recent success stories. Bonnie Therrien stated that a November Referendum may be held. Ralph Keleher stated that he will be attending future Redevelopment Agency meetings.

- c. Business Visitation Program - Peter Gillespie encouraged the members to sign up for business visits and he reminded the members that a list has been circulated. Doug Sacks mentioned that he had completed 2 visits and asked Mr. Gillespie to follow up with the owners of the Black Cup.
- d. Budget 2007/2008 - Bonnie Therrien reminded the members about the budget public hearing to be held next Monday night at the High School. The proposed budget contains a 1/2 mill increase which equates \$101 increase for the average taxpayer. Bonnie Therrien encouraged members to attend to support the budget request. Howard Greenblatt stated that the budget priorities include funding for an economic development brochure, electronic marketing, web site marketing, media relations and ad placement. Bonnie Therrien stated that the Town Council would like the EDIC to spend more funding on marketing.
- e. Meeting with Tourism District Staff - Howard Greenblatt summarized the need for a follow up meeting with the Convention Center staff.

#### 5. Reports of the Town Manager -

a. Town Manager's Report - The Town Manager reported on the following:

- 1. Phase 2 of the Town Hall renovations will likely be awarded to Kronenberg and Sons and the work should take about 15 months to complete.
- 2. Blight enforcement is underway along the Silas Deane Highway and a significant clean up has occurred in the Price Rite Plaza.
- 3. Doug Sacks asked if the Morris Farms could be added to the blight list.
- 4. The Northeast Utilities lease at the building on Cumberland Avenue ends in May and the disposition of the future ownership of the property may be resolved shortly.
- 5. It was suggested that the Silas Robbins B & B on Broad Street should be recognized for a beautification award this year.
- 6. MDC presented the possible costs for the upcoming storm water separation project and the Council expressed the concern about the proposed costs.

b. Town Council Liaison's Report - Paul Montinieri reported that he feels that the Town Council supports the EDIC budget and the need to market the Town to developers. The Redevelopment Agency's presentation was well received by the Council and Mr. Montinieri stated that a referendum might be possible this Fall if the Town can focus on a likely success story.

c. Planning & Zoning Commission Liason's Report - Peter Gillespie reported that Famous Footwear has contacted the Town about moving into the Wethersfield Shopping Center and Brooks Pharmacy will be converting to a Rite Aid. The Comstock Ferre project is still going through the HDC review process.

d. Tourism Commission Liason's Report - Paul Montinieri stated that these items have already been covered by previous agenda discussions.

e. Director of Planning and Economic Development's Report - Mr. Gillespie inquired as to the Commission's interest in renting a booth at the June 7 Business Expo at the Convention Center. The costs would be \$695. Mr. Gillespie will pursue this and let the Tourism Commission partner.

6. Chairman's Report - Mr. Greenblatt reported that Betty Rosania is back in Town but was unable to attend the meeting due to a minor setback with her foot. Mr. Greenblatt encouraged all of the new members to participate in the work of the Subcommittees and the business visitations.

#### 7. Sub-Committee Reports

a. Marketing and Communications - Mr. Sacks stated that the subcommittees work has already been

reported earlier in the meeting.

- b. Financial Strategies - Mr. Gillespie reported that one additional application has been received which still needs design review approval.
8. Minutes- Approval of [March 2007 meeting minutes](#) - Bill Knapp motioned to approve the minutes as presented, Joe Cornelio seconded the motion and the vote showed all members in favor.
9. Next Meeting - May 10, 2007
10. Correspondence - Mr. Greenblatt referred to an opportunity for some training for economic development scheduled for May 15. Town Manager Therrien noted that she has received numerous inquiries about the AT&T boxes that have recently been installed on the base of telephone poles throughout Town and stated that the Town has no say in these as they are regulated by the State DPUC under the Telecommunications Act. Local Town Managers' will be submitting a letter in opposition to these and a lawsuit has been filed.
11. Adjournment - Bill Knapp motioned to adjourn the meeting at 1:12 p.m., Chris Lyons seconded the motion and the vote showed all members in favor.

Respectfully Submitted

Peter D. Gillespie  
Town Planner/Economic Development Manager