

Economic Development & Improvement Commission
Regular Meeting
Thursday, October 13, 2005 - 12:00 Noon
*** Wethersfield Chamber of Commerce**
860B Silas Deane Highway
MINUTES

1. Call To Order - Chair Rosania called the meeting to order at 12:10 P.M.
2. Attendance - Members in attendance: Chair Betty Rosania, Paul Montineri, Frank Frago, Joan Hughes, Chris Lyons, Cindy Jacobs, Doug Sacks and Ken Rizzio.

Also in attendance - Phil Knecht - Planning and Zoning Commission, Bonnie Therrien - Town Manager, Peter Gillespie - Economic Development Manager/Town Planner, and Denise Bradley - Assistant Planner.

3. Old Business

- a. Real Estate Breakfast - Chris Lyons noted that the event would be held on October 25, 2005 at the Wethersfield Country Club at 8:00 A.M.
- b. Loan Program - Ken Rizzio reported that the three approved loans would take effect and funds dispersed after the mortgage documents were reviewed by the Town Attorney and signed. Additionally, Mr. Rizzio discussed that the owner of the Old Town Tavern expressed interest in applying for a loan which if approved would make use of much of the remaining balance of the program fund. A discussion ensued over the Atlantic Inn's request for loan funding and the Commission expressed consensus that a loan request for the Atlantic Inn could not be approved due to delinquent taxes on the property. Peter Gillespie commented that he had spoken with the Town Attorney who also was of the opinion that it was not in the Town's best interest to proceed in funding the loan. Mr. Gillespie also informed that Committee that John Kulesza, owner of the Atlantic Inn, has threatened to file a lawsuit. A brief discussion ensued regarding the proposed site improvements to the Old Town Tavern occurring in the rear of the property and whether the Town should provide funding to a project not visible from the street.
- c. Business Visitation Program - Peter Gillespie discussed the need to set up a special meeting in an effort to regroup and recruit additional participants. Chair Rosania described her conversations with the owner of Speedy Printing and four local banks as being very positive adding that they were pleased with the services in Wethersfield. Cindy Jacobs expressed that she would be willing to participate in the program after the start of the year.
- d. Farmer's Market - Bonnie Therrien noted that a meeting would be set for mid- to late November to get feedback and to set a Spring 2006 start goal.
- e. Bus Tour - Peter Gillespie commented on the possibility of commencing a van tour after the election and when more site specific recommendations for the Silas Deane Highway are received from Fuss & O'Neill.
- f. Silas Deane Highway Plan - Peter Gillespie noted that there were approximately 30-35 people that attended the public information session held on October 6th. He described the discussion that occurred as containing primarily beautification and traffic calming measures. Fuss & O'Neill has begun their preliminary market assessment work but not yet come to any specific conclusions. Mr. Gillespie noted that while Fuss & O'Neill's presentation of opportunities and constraints were just their initial findings, that they seemed generally well received.

4. New Business

- a. RFP Marketing Assistance/Tourism Commission - Chris Lyons discussed that the goal of completing

preliminary footwork and gathering hard data is to enable the consultant to hit the ground running. He reported that the RFP may go out in early November. Peter Gillespie discussed presenting the RFP at the next Commission meeting with the intent to select the firm at the beginning of the year.

- b. Salute To Business - Peter Gillespie noted that a long list of potential recipients had been compiled at the Marketing Sub-Committee meeting held on September 16th. The event is scheduled for December 14th at the Wethersfield Country Club.
- c. Business Directory - Peter Gillespie discussed how the Wethersfield Library had coordinated a local business directory in the past that served as a great resource but has not been updated recently. Mr. Gillespie commented on the potential of forming a committee to include the library, the Chamber of Commerce and the EDIC to develop something for next year.

5. Reports of the Town Manager -

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

- a. Puritan Furniture took out a demolition permit to remove the steel structure from the property.
- b. The Town of Wethersfield has received one bid on the Olsen House and is awaiting a use proposal.
- c. The Toll Brothers proposal for the Hartford Drive-In site hearing before the Newington Planning and Zoning Commission was pushed back.
- d. Todd Andrews will be leaving the Hartford Metro Alliance on November 1st.

Town Council Liaison's Report - No one from the Council was present.

Planning & Zoning Commission Liason's Report - Peter Gillespie reported on the following:

- a. The application seeking a Change of Zone for property on the easterly side of Back Lane and also at the end of Old Reservoir Road was approved but has subsequently been appealed by the neighbors.
- b. The application to convert an existing building located at 295 Ridge Road into twelve (12) apartment units was approved.
- c. The application to construct a Dunkin' Donuts at 416 Silas Deane Highway was approved.
- d. The application to construct a Tim Horton's restaurant at 486 Silas Deane Highway was approved.

6. Chairman's Report - Chair Rosania discussed her presentation of the Economic Development Report to the Town Council. Chair Rosania mentioned a comment made by Councilman Andy Adil at the September 8th EDIC meeting with regards to member attendance at Business After Hours events. She asked Peter Gillespie what the intent of the event was. Mr. Gillespie described the event as being a networking opportunity and a show of support to the local businesses.
7. Minutes- Approval of [September 2005 meeting minutes](#) - Frank Frago motioned to approve the minutes. Paul Montineri seconded and all voted in favor.
8. Correspondence
 - a. Monthly Economic Development Report, September 2005
 - b. 2005 Ct Commercial Real Estate Conference - Nov 10
 - c. 2005 Nominations For Salute To Business
 - d. 2005 Ct Governors Conference on Culture and Tourism - Nov 16/17
9. Adjournment - Chair Rosania adjourned the meeting at 1:45 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted

Denise Bradley, Assistant Planner