

Town of Wethersfield
Economic Development and Improvement Commission
Meeting Minutes
September 9, 2004

Members Present

Joe Cornelio, Frank Frago, Phil Knecht - P&Z liaison, Chris Lyons, Paul Montinieri, Betty Rosania Cindy Jacobs, ken Rizzio. Also present were, Julie Montinieri, Bonnie Therrien, Peter Gillespie and Rae Ann Palmer.

The meeting was called to order at 12:02 PM by Chairperson Betty Rosania.

Minutes

The [minutes of the August meeting](#) were reviewed. The approval of the minutes were moved by Frank Frago and seconded by Phil Knecht. Vote was affirmative.

Chair Report

Chair Rosania urged all members to be ambassadors for the community and spread the good news about the activity occurring in Town.

A planning meeting had been held with the Chamber of Commerce regarding the December Salute To Business and a revised agenda was being discussed which will include recognition of long standing businesses in Town. The event is planned for December 8.

An issue had been raised by a Council member that the 12 noon meeting time was not a good time for a public meeting and that the Town should not be paying for lunches. A discussion ensued regarding the pros and cons of the 12 noon meeting time. Frank Frago noted that the Commission used to meet at 5 and always had problems getting a quorum. The concensus was to keep the meeting time at 12.

Frank Frago made a motion to have all members pay for their own lunch, Chris Lyons seconded the motion with all members voting in favor.

Chair Rosania noted that Jon Vining may have to resign and the Council has created 3 additional slots on the Commission and new members need to be recruited who have time and committment. A member from Old Wethersfield, Silas Deane and the Berlin Turnpike should be recruited.

Chair Rosania encouraged member to visit the businesses on the BV lists.

Marketing and Communications Subcommittee Report

Chris Lyons distributed a proposed budget for his committee which included requests for funds for advertising, marketing, business welcome signs. It was agreed that all committees would prepare budgets for the next meeting.

Mr. Lyons noted that a realtors breakfast will be held in October at the Country Club and the available space list will be distributed.

Paul Montinieri agreed to join the Committee.

Finance Subcommittee Report

Ken Rizzio noted that a good meeting was held with the bankers regarding the loan program 2 banks could not attend.

The banks want more information on the program, however, he believes it will be difficult to raise the funds. Betty Rosania suggested focusing on a few banks such as People's as a top priority.

Development Subcommittee Report

Peter Gillespie reported that a targeted area seems to be evolving between the Committee and the Silas Deane Highway Committee. Cindy Jacobs noted that she was not aware of the last meeting.

Agriculture Committee

Cindy Jacobs stated that a meeting would be held tomorrow with a representative from the USDA to discuss possible technical assistance and a more detailed report could be provided at the next meeting.

Town Manager's Report

Bonnie Therrien reported on the progress on the renovated football field and noted that a referendum in November would ask for funding for Town Hall Renovations and road and sidewalk improvements and citizens needed to be educated about the issues and needs.

Town Manager Therrien also noted that she had been contacted by a large number of citizens regarding the purchase of the Stop and Shop Plaza by Ocean State Job Lot and she was concerned by the negative comments and the lack of understanding that the Town cannot control the sale of properties in the market place.

Council had approved the additional membership for the EDIC.

PZC Liason Report

Phil Knecht reported that Mila Fabric would be renovating a building (Sobol Property) on the Silas Dane Highway that had been vacant for many years.

Town Council Liason's Report

Julie Montinieri reported on the upcoming meeting on the Metro Patterns report and encouraged all members to attend. Additionally, work is progressing on criteria for open space acquisition.

The Council is reviewing changes to the Town Ordinance regarding microwave use in Motels.

Town Planner/Economic Development Manager's Report

Mr. Gillespie distributed his monthly report and noted that the PZC had approved the renovation of the 61 Arrow Road Industrial building which will create new space for business starts.

The SDH Committee will present a preliminary report to the Council at the October 4 meeting.

September 29 Economic Development Forum at the Community Center all are encouraged to attend.

47 completed Bus Visitation surveys had been received and Chris Lyons is preparing a coordinated report for the next meeting.

Secretary will start next week.

The Salute to Business date has been changed to December 8 at the Keeney Center.

Cornfest

Chairperson Rosania noted that it has been difficult to man the booth at Cornfest and that maybe we should not request

one this year. Frank Frago motioned that EDIC contribute the \$400, however, no booth would be needed, Chris Lyons seconded the motion and the vote showed all members in favor.

Strategic Planning Committee

Rae-Ann Palmer noted that in the next few weeks a draft report from the Committee would be distributed for public comment and many of the recommendations focused on Economic Development.

New Business

Cindy Jacobs noted the potential need for a residential welcome packet that could be used to promote and attract residents to Town and distributed by local realtors.

Frank Frago noted that the Annual Business survey was being mailed out and is due back by October 15.

Motion was made and passed to adjourn at 1:12 PM.

Respectfully Submitted

Peter D. Gillespie, Economic Development Manager