

Minutes
Redevelopment Agency
Wednesday, May 2, 2007
5:00 pm - Town Hall
Town Manager's Conference Room

1. **Call to Order** - Chairman Lee Kuckro called the meeting to order at 5:04 pm.
2. **Roll Call/Attendance** - Members in attendance: Lee Kuckro - Chair, Dan Camilliere - Vice Chair, Joe Soja, Paul Thompson and Mike Zaleski. Also in attendance: Town Manager, Bonnie Therrien; and Town Planner/Economic Development Manager, Peter Gillespie.

Members absent: none.

3. **Public Comments** - No one from the public was present.
4. **Approval of Minutes** - [April 4, 2007](#) - Mr. Kuckro asked if there were corrections needed for the draft minutes, and none were requested. Mr. Camilliere motioned to approve the minutes, Mr. Soja seconded the motion and the vote showed all members in favor.
5. **Discussion of Agency Presentation to the Town Council, April 10, 2007** - Mr. Thompson and Mr. Zaleski both said that they thought the Town Council members asked good questions, had generally positive reactions, and seemed anxious to know which projects would move forward. Mr. Kuckro said that he did not get any sense from the Council members' reactions for how much funding the Council would put toward the redevelopment effort.

Mr. Gillespie said that the feedback he has received from Council members since the presentation was that they were pleased with the amount of work that the Agency has done to date, and that the presentation contained exactly the kind of information that the Council was looking for at this time. Mr. Gillespie also said that he did not get any feedback on the amount of funding the Council would provide. He felt that the Council seemed a little bit taken aback by the potentially large amount of money involved with redevelopment projects.

Mr. Gillespie said that he thought the next step would be to make presentations to the Planning and Zoning Commission and the Economic Development and Improvement Commission. Mr. Gillespie said that he would look into scheduling a special meeting at which the Agency could make both presentations at one meeting.

Mr. Kuckro said that next Bond Council meeting is May 10th, and that the Agency should prepare to ask the Bond Council how to frame a referendum question to properly address practical and legal issues, too much or too little wording, etc. Ms. Therrien said that she planned to attend the May 10th meeting, and that Agency members could e-mail to her questions that she could ask on their behalf. Ms. Therrien also said that other towns should be consulted on how they went about similar efforts. Ms. Therrien said that the last bonds that the town sold attracted 10 - 12 bids, so she expected no problems with attracting bids if there were any bonds to be sold stemming from the redevelopment referendum.

Mr. Gillespie said that the Town Manager was trying to schedule a meeting with the Deputy Commissioner of the Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development. The Commissioner of DECD could not meet because he is a resident of Wethersfield. The meeting with DECD was a suggestion of Stamford officials, as DECD sometimes partners with local communities to support redevelopment projects.

Mr. Kuckro asked what funding amounts should the Agency presume to be needed for the various projects. Mr. Gillespie suggested that they work for now with the amounts as presented to the Town Council. Mr. Kuckro said that it would be important impress upon the Council and the public that the Agency plans to spend only the minimum amount necessary, that is less than the amount approved, if possible.

6. **Discussion of Site Visit in Stamford on April 9, 2007** - Mr. Gillespie said that he met with the Stamford city planner and the community development director. They discussed some tax-financed projects including a massive project involving 60 acres adjacent to Interstate 95 and the Stamford transportation center. Mr. Gillespie said that the scale of the project was much larger than anything Wethersfield was contemplating, but that there are strategies that can be applied here. Mr. Gillespie said that the meeting was very useful, but the next such meeting with another town should be with one of size and needs comparable to Wethersfield. Mr. Gillespie also said that Stamford would be willing to make a presentation in Wethersfield about their projects, state involvement, etc., and that Stamford would also share information on things like standard language for agreements and tax increment financing.
7. **Discussion of Redevelopment Plan** - Mr. Gillespie said that a timeline is needed soon to guide and ensure success with the upcoming process. He also said that some planning could be done now, so that the Agency could proceed quickly after the referendum, assuming it passes. Mr. Gillespie said that he would prepare a draft schedule of milestones for the Agency to review at its next meeting, and that the draft would include two major parts: preparing the referendum, and developing and implementing a redevelopment plan in 2008.

Mr. Kuckro said that the draft schedule would help the Agency with timely coordination, as time was beginning to grow short. He also said that the Agency also needed to concentrate on developing a referendum question that would provide the Agency with a well-defined process so it was legal and transparent to the public, but also allowed the Agency enough flexibility to accomplish the Town Council's goals.

8. **Executive Session To Discuss Real Estate Matters** - Mr. Camilliere motioned to go into executive session at 5:25 p.m. to discuss real estate matters. Mr. Zaleski seconded the motion and the vote showed all members in favor. During the executive session, the Agency members discussed real estate negotiations, and no votes were taken. Mr. Camilliere motioned to come out of the executive session at 5:50 p.m. and return to the regular agenda, Mr. Zaleski seconded the motion and the vote showed all members in favor.
9. **Return to Regular Agenda: Next Steps** - Ms. Therrien said the referendum question must be set for the first meeting of the Town Council in September. That would mean that the date for the public hearing must be set at the first Town Council meeting in August; that the Redevelopment Agency must get its information on the matter submitted to the Town Council in July; and that the Redevelopment Agency's preparation must be completed in June. This would include a few weeks of extra time, if needed.

Mr. Thompson noted that extra time is good because vacations in the summer would likely lead to some slow-down in the process. For example, the Town Council usually has only one meeting in August. Ms. Therrien agreed, but said that the Town Council would likely be willing to hold a special meeting if needed due to the importance of the referendum issue.

Mr. Gillespie asked the Agency members for dates in May to hold the special joint meeting with the Planning and Zoning Commission and Economic Development and Improvement Commission discussed earlier. The consensus was a meeting on May 23rd or 24th, and Mr. Gillespie said he would get back to the members with a confirmed date.

10. **Next Meeting Date** - May 14, 2007 at 5:00 pm. (replaces May 16, 2007 regular meeting).
11. **Correspondence** - Mr. Gillespie said that there was no correspondence to report, but wanted to update the Agency on some pending state legislation. Bills SB-167 and HB-1054 had passed through their respective committees and had to do with redevelopment, eminent domain and property compensation. Mr. Gillespie said the general intent appeared to be clarifying redevelopment process rules, but was concerned that their content may be problematic to carry-out, if passed. Ms. Therrien said that she would check with Doug Gillette, Bond Counsel about providing comments on those bills to the legislature.
12. **Call to Adjourn** - Mr. Soja motioned to adjourn the meeting at 6:05 p.m, Mr. Camilliere seconded the motion, and the vote showed all members in favor.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kevin T. Sullivan
Agency Recording Secretary