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City of Milford

PressRelease

Mayor Selects New Permitting and Land Use Director

Milford, CT, August 2, 2010: Mayor James L. Richetelli, Jr.

announced the appointment of Jocelyn Mathiasen as the City's new Director of Permitting and Land Use, a position created by the City to improve customer service and efficiency in its permitting functions.

"We are very excited to have Jocelyn on board," said Mayor Richetelli. "She has a real commitment to excellence in local government as well as an ability to lead people through difficult transitions."

Ms. Mathiasen oversaw a highly successful reform of the permitting processes in Bellevue, Washington, a Seattle area city with a population of 120,000. More recently, she served as Special

Projects Coordinator at the Capitol Region Council of Governments in Hartford. There, she has also worked closely with towns and cities to improve and streamline permitting operations, implementing new technology to make the permit review process transparent and customer-friendly.

Ms. Mathiasen characterizes herself as a leader in “reinventing government” for municipalities. “Traditionally, regulators have seen a conflict between being customer-friendly and being effective at their jobs,” she said. “In fact, it is possible to do both.”

Permitting, she says, is an area where this is particularly important – and challenging. “Impressions of local government are strongly influenced by direct interactions with the city, such as getting permits. If the process is cumbersome, inefficient and difficult, then that is how you will view government as a whole.”

On the other hand, Mathiasen said it is vital not to lose sight of the important work that these departments do, making sure that wetlands are protected, land uses are appropriate, and that construction is safe. “We are not asking staff to compromise the

technical integrity of their work. The work they do is vital to protect the city's residents and businesses, as well as its character and environment. We must not lose sight of that."

The decision to create the new Director position emerged from the Kimball Report, an assessment of Milford's permitting processes and the work of the Kimball Report Implementation Team (KRIT).

Ms. Mathiasen will succeed Douglas M. Novak, who has served as interim director since November 2009. "I'd like to thank Doug Novak for his hard work and dedication as interim director," said Mayor Richetelli. "He has laid a strong foundation for this important reform effort." Mr. Novak will spend time with Ms. Mathiasen, to ensure a smooth and successful transition.

The City received 46 resumes for the position. A screening committee of municipal professionals from outside of Milford narrowed the field and interviewed eleven candidates. The committee sent five finalists to Mayor Richetelli and he selected Ms. Mathiasen from this very qualified group.

Ms. Mathiasen's official start date will be August 16, 2010. She will be spending the week of August 9 with Mr. Novak and the City staff.