

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

MINUTES of the Meeting of June 26, 2013

Present: Commissioners: Robert Kapusta, Chairman, Suzanne Cahill,
John DePalma, Victor Ferrante, Greg Harla, and John O'Neil
Kathy Alagno & Robert Gregory, Advisors
Guests: Dan Kiley & Vincent Averaimo
Absent: Commissioners Robert Stanton

- I. Call to Order - Mr. Kapusta called the meeting to order at 12:05 p.m.
- II. Minutes – A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes of May 22, 2013, as presented.

APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY

- III. Public Comments - None
- IV. Correspondence – Copies of correspondence attached. Kathy Alagno commented that the Chamber submitted a grant to work with Integrated Building Services. The Chamber has received a denial on the grant due to the fact that C-PACE had decided to hire their own consultant. Therefore, Ms. Alagno resubmitted the grant and she is still waiting for the results.
- V. Economic Development Activity – Mr. Gregory reported that Sonic will be coming to the former Arby's. Scoot and Paddle and the Walnut and Myrtle Beach Art Gallery have opened. There is a new Director of Permitting and Land Use and his name is Joe Griffin. He was in charge of UCONN 2000. Discussion was held on the responsibilities of the new Director. Mr. Gregory also reported that he will be retiring after 21 years with the City. Thomas Ivers will be the Interim Director. A motion was made and seconded to have a thank you letter sent to Mr. Gregory for his years of service. The report is attached.

APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY

- VI. Guest Speaker – Dan Kiley, General Manager, Westfield Connecticut Shopping Mall – he stated that the expansion of the mall is a huge economic development prospect. Mr. Kiley started by saying he has been with Westfield for two years. His first career was with McDonald's for 20 years primarily in operations. He began in upstate New York and Albany and expanded to the New England area. He worked his way up to National Training Director for the West Coast before he left McDonald's. His position today with Westfield Mall maps his previous experience with McDonald's. Mr. Kiley attended

Norwich University in Vermont. Westfield Malls are a family run business. The majority of all of the Westfield Mall establishments are in Australia, New Zealand and the U.S. The first U.S. center for Westfield Mall was Trumbull back in the 80's and the remaining centers in Connecticut were established in the 90's. The concentration is split between the West Coast and the East Coast.

There are two major openings for Westfield Mall and one is 500,000 square feet of retail space at the base of the new One Trade Towers opening in 2015. The other is in London which was the gateway to the summer Olympics Arena. All attending the Olympics went through Westfield Mall to attend this event. Westfield's goal is to operate premiere properties with a mix of regional community centers. A discussion was held on buying and selling of acquisitions for Westfield Malls. Westfield Malls are shifting towards joint venture partnerships. Mr. Kiley also mentioned that they are giving back to the school community. Westfield Mall is supplying materials and helping Orange Avenue revitalize their nature trail for the fall school year. A discussion continued regarding the pros and cons of the downtown business area.

John DePalma asked Mr. Kiley to give a brief overview of the security and safety at Westfield Mall. Mr. Kiley said that there are only six Westfield employees that run the mall and the rest are outsourced contract employees including the security. PSE who is the Mall's security provider is a national company and they have levels of protection right from guarding and securing a warehouse job site to executive protection. They are a full service company. Most recently they did the security for Michael Jordan's wedding. Mr. Kiley takes a zero tolerance to any kind of violent activity at the Mall. They are looking to promote the business to the shoppers not to the people who are using the mall as a recreational venue because they have nothing else to do. They utilize the Milford Police Department and figure out how to increase and enhance the safety and security across the property. They do this with physical presence, cameras and monitoring facebook and constantly troll for any reference for Westfield Mall. The Milford Police Department does their canine training at the mall, they work with a robot and they will be having a regional swat training session at the mall as well.

Mr. Kapusta said the Mayor has asked the EDC to get involved with the Adopt-A-Spot program and the other agenda items will be skipped over to have Mr. Averaimo speak on this issue. Mr. Averaimo stated that the wayfinding and the Adopt-A-Spot programs are essentially being interchangeably used with the wayfinding project as well as the Adopt-A-Spot program through Milford Pride. Milford Pride is an instance in which a business or individual adopts a spot strategically located in town and gets some signage but also maintains the landscape around the property which includes but not be limited to shrubbery, grass or plantings. They are charged with the task of

maintaining that piece of property for a nominal fee of about \$150 per year. The purpose of the Mayor bringing this to the attention of the EDC is that sometimes you have some individuals that adopt the spot but then don't maintain the property and it ends up looking unkept. There has been an ongoing wayfinding signage through MPI that has been started and then it had stalled. Mr. Averaimo reported that it is up and running again moving slowly but some significant progress in the last two months. Mr. Averaimo stated that back in January when he became Chair of MPI he had open discussions with the Mayor, MPI and EDC and how they could get this project moving again. Since February there was discussion of two issues that were holding up this project. The first issue was making sure that they did not encroach on private property and the second was whether signs were put on state property or city property. With the assistance of Chair Kapusta they were able to uncover that city property is exempt from planning and zoning regulations, therefore, they are not under any requirement legally to obtain permits. This decreases the potential cost to place these signs. The question was does this apply to state property. Several statutes maintain that they were not required to pull a state permit for wayfinding signage. A discussion continued regarding compliance on these issues and a plan of action. Mr. Averaimo stated that he will be meeting with Raymond Macaluso on July 3 to determine figures for this project.

Mr. Kapusta suspended the remainder of the agenda.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:16 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Donna E. Holden