

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
Minutes of the Meeting of
July 25, 2007

PRESENT

Attendees:

Mayor James Richetelli

Members: Chairman Robert Kapusta, Vice Chairman Kenneth Brannin,
Kathy Alagno, Robert Gregory, Cyrus Settineri, Peter Spalthoff,
Bob Stanton

Guest: Patricia Liptak – Animal Control Warden

Press: Frank Juliano, CT Post and Brian McCready, New Haven Register

I. Call to Order

Chairman Kapusta called the meeting to order at 12:00 p.m.

II. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting

A motion was made and seconded to accept the minutes of June 18, 2007 as distributed.

PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

III. Standing Reports

- A. Milford Chamber of Commerce – Ms. Alagno stated that the Chamber has just wrapped up the golf tournament that was held on July 9 at Mill River. The monies raised are funds for scholarships for students of members of the Chamber of Commerce. It appears that they did about the same as last year, which looks to keep the scholarship funding at about the same level of \$25,000 to \$30,000. The scholarship program has grown in the last ten years from \$500 to \$30,000 a year.
- B. Milford Progress, Inc. – Ms. Alagno stated that they are in the process of working on sign regulations for downtown. Milford Progress is waiting for a draft to come back to them from the consultant Wilbur Smith.
- C. Downtown Milford Business Association – Ms. Alagno stated that the downtown merchants are working in conjunction with the Oyster Festival for a new program called “Friday Night at the Oyster Festival”. The downtown merchants are trying to promote the downtown area with special store events for the evening. There are specific things that are

happening such as: flamenco dancers, tasting, live music, meet the artists and a pearl trail.

- D. Real Estate Trends & Developments – Mr. Spalthoff stated that nationally the housing market is down. The prices are still going up. Milford is still up about 10% on sales. The million dollar homes have gone up to almost 19% on the market. The sale prices are still holding true in Milford. An article came out on Richie Conine’s home as the highest ever sold in Milford.
- E. Building Permit Task Force – Mr. Settineri gave the floor to the Mayor. The Mayor passed out a memo to the EDC members and thanked Mr. Settineri and the Commission for their efforts on this issue. The Mayor proceeded to read the memo to the Commission. Actions that the Mayor was taking included:
- 1) Hiring an additional building inspector
 - 2) Putting in place a separate designated line at the Building Department for electrical, mechanical and plumbing permits
 - 3) Create afternoon permit hours from 1:00 – 3:00 p.m. on Wednesdays
 - 4) Have all-day field inspections on Wednesdays
 - 5) Change the phone system to allow improved communication with Department staff.

The Mayor’s office will monitor these changes and consider implementing additional changes in the future after the new inspector is on board.

IV. Devon, Downtown & General Economic Activity

Mr. Gregory stated that the activity for the month was reported in the enclosed report. Mr. Gregory announced that Milford is participating with five other communities in a site selector’s tour. Milford will be inviting site selector’s from around the country that make business locations for businesses to the area for a two-day event centered around the Pilot Pen Tennis Tournament. The City of West Haven is taking the lead on this project along with North Haven, New Haven, Hamden and Orange. Mr. Gregory also stated that the City is working with CERC, RGP and DECD.

They will be staying in Milford at the Hyatt Place. The details are being worked on. U.I. is a major sponsor. Each community has up to six sites that can be highlighted. Mr. Gregory stated that they are looking into a helicopter tour and a boat tour on the sound. The Pilot Pen Tennis Tournament is the main attraction.

V. Items & Matters of Continuing Interest

- A. Devon Revitalization Program – Mr. Gregory stated that Milone and MacBroom would be presenting a preliminary report on the drainage study

that was done for the flooding problems on Naugatuck Avenue. Phase III planning is underway. The parking study will be finalized. They have already presented a number of opportunities of parcels that might be available.

- B. Walnut Beach Redevelopment – Mr. Gregory reported that the major development at Walnut Beach is the continued development of Beach Shore Village. Shops continue to open that include the Walnut Beach Creamery and the Lazy Lobster.
- C. Correspondence – None
- D. Proposed Courthouse Expansion/Milford Post Office/Downtown Parking Structure – The Mayor stated that the report from SLAM was received. State Judicial did the report and the results were really of what the State needs, not what the City of Milford needs. The parking structure that will hopefully be built will be a 500 car parking structure. In addition, special care will need to be taken so that Harborside Middle School and the parking structure are properly separated for safety reasons. The Mayor is looking at a separate entrance, etc.
- E. Eisenhower Park – Mr. Stanton also gave the floor to the Mayor. The Mayor stated that the Committee finished the report and that he will be forwarding it to the Parks, Beach and Recreation Commission for their review and comments and then forwarded to the appropriate departments. The Mayor continued to say that the report is a planning tool. The report is broken out into three phases. He also continued a discussion on the U.I. power lines.

VI. Old Business - None

VII. New Business

Guest Speaker – Patricia Liptak – Animal Control Warden

Ms. Liptak said her background goes from being an animal rescue person, 30 years as a bartender, working at UPS as a chief teamster steward for 9 years and then was asked to become Animal Control Warden 20 years ago.

Ms. Liptak continued by saying that she is on the New England Board of Federation of Humane Societies. She is also on the Region 2 Task Force for Homeland Security Emergency Response Team for Connecticut. Ms. Liptak was asked to be on the task force to select an animal control officer for Bridgeport. Ms. Liptak was also to be an advisor for their new shelter.

In Milford, Ms. Liptak has 5 full-time employee positions and 4 part-time employee positions and 2 summer youths from employment and training. She also has some handicapped kids from that program. The only type of employee that Ms. Liptak will not hire is someone who was arrested for larceny.

Ms. Liptak continued by saying that they have an educational program. They have a safety program for pre-school, elementary school, summer camps and the scouts. Alternative Ed comes on Fridays and does community service. They also have the Foundation School that does work-study, a pet therapy program, a pet food bank and a mutual aid group with other shelters in this region that help each other.

Ms. Liptak also mentioned that she received a phone call from Selectman Zeoli in Orange because the district animal control had no one working there and they needed help with calls that were going into Orange. Ms. Liptak mentioned that the Orange Police Department was impressed with the service they received from the Milford shelter. The Mayor mentioned that there is talk about possibly combining the Milford and Orange shelters.

Ms. Liptak continued by saying that her biggest goal is to get an addition on the building. Milford is used as an example for the rest of the State. They all come to see the facility because it is so clean. Ms. Liptak commended her staff and the power washing system that is in place at the building. But they have outgrown the facility. Ms. Liptak continued saying that the shelter has raised about \$38,000 and the City has given them \$20,000 for the addition, but they need at least \$50-60,000 more. The Mayor said that the initial estimates of the cost of the building were much lower but because the site is on an old landfill they need a substantial foundation and that is where the additional cost comes from. The addition would consist of two stories; the top floor mostly for storage, the bottom floor for access from the inside of their building to other parts of the building and they also need an isolation area for sick animals. A conversation continued about possibly constructing a new building in Eisenhower Park and combining Milford and Orange.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:05 p.m.