

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

MINUTES

September 23, 2009

Present: Commissioners: Genevieve Salvatore, Chair,
Susan Ashelford, John DePalma, Tessa Marquis,
Susan Patrick, Cyrus Settineri, Robert Stanton

Advisor: Robert Gregory

Guest: Gene Laporta, Principal, Platt Tech

Press: Brian McCready, NH Register

I. Chair Salvatore called the meeting to order at 8:07 a.m. A roll call of those in attendance was taken.

II. General Comments

Ms. Ashelford said that a local outlet of NPR did a story about neighborhood preservation and what towns are doing.

Mr. Settineri commended Ms. Patrick for her work on the blight issue.

III. The minutes of the August 26, 2009, meeting were approved as presented.

IV. Economic Development Report

Mr. Gregory presented his report noting Whole Foods recruitment process and City involvement, the purchase of Harrison's, and the New Haven CID visit to Milford.

V. Correspondence

The Chair noted that she had received a letter from the chair of the Planning and Zoning Commission.

VI. Committee Reports

A. Neighborhood Preservation

Ms. Patrick spoke in favor of the action on the issue and was pleased that the Board of Aldermen adopted an ordinance. There was a recommendation that the Health Director

develop a complaint form. She will follow-up and keep track of progress. Chair Salvatore complemented Ms. Patrick and her committee on accomplishing their goal.

B. Manufacturing Outreach Project

Ms. Marquis presented a package of material from various sources including CBIA, RGP, Area Development magazine, and others addressing many of the issues confronting manufacturing. (A copy is attached to these minutes.) One of the major concerns is an aging work force and the lack of trained replacements. Because of the economy, the retirement of these employees has been delayed giving us a window of 3 years for “knowledge transfer”. She said that it was important for everyone to address this problem.

Mr. Laporta arrived and discussed improvements in machinery and technology at Platt made possible by grants. He decried the lack of a state budget and the cuts that Platt will suffer. Mr. Laporta talked about the relationships he had established with companies like Sikorsky and colleges like Housatonic.

Ms. Marquis said that she had invited Jerry Clupper from the New Haven Manufacturers Association to be a guest but he had another commitment.

He said that there was a lack of building capacity at Platt. They were already at 113% of capacity. In spite of the difficulties Platt still turned out a quality product.

When questioned about adult ed Mr. Laporta said that Platt used to have a very active program. It was subject to elimination during another state budget crisis.

Everyone agreed that Platt Tech had an outstanding program and we were fortunate to have the school in this area.

C. Shop Local Campaign

Ms. Ashelford noted that “Local Proud” will have a Kickoff on September 28th at 9 a.m. on the steps of City Hall and all are invited. The Chair commended the group that worked on this promotion.

Due to the lateness of the hour, the Chair suspended the rest of the agenda. The meeting was adjourned at 9:15 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Robert B. Gregory