

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
Minutes of the Meeting of
March 26, 2008

PRESENT

Members: Chairman Robert Kapusta, Vice-Chairman John DePalma,
Robert Gregory, Tessa Marquis

Guest: Tom Cariglio – U.I.

Press: Frank Juliano – CT Post, Jim Tinley – New Haven Register

I. Call to Order

Chairman Kapusta called the meeting to order at 12:05 p.m.

II. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting

A motion was made and seconded to accept the minutes of February 27, 2008 as distributed.

PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

III. Standing Reports

A. Milford Chamber of Commerce – No Report

B. Milford Progress, Inc. – Mr. DePalma stated that MPI met on March 25, 2008. Lamplights on North Broad Street are expected to be installed soon from High Street west to the Raveis building. There is \$43,000 remaining in the fund that will cover the cost of these installations.

Mr. Sulkis, Ms. Lipton and the Mayor are going to be getting together to discuss the wording of the signage study report by the Wilbur Smith Company. MPI is requesting \$20,000 from the City for the next stage of the signage report that will cost about \$35,000. Work on the next phase will encompass the entire City, not just downtown. The Committee feels that with combining efforts there will be uniformity and they will save on costs and things can be expedited. The Mayor will convene a meeting with all parties represented.

C. Downtown Milford Business Association – No Report

D. Real Estate Trends & Developments – No Report

E. Building Permit Task Force – No Report

- IV. Devon, Downtown & General Economic Activity** – Mr. Gregory stated that Lillith's Loom has closed. He continued by saying that the old Devon power plant currently owned by NRG is working on a deal with U.I. to reactivate that power plant with modern technology. This would be a new venture to supply more power for the grid. Lowe's opened. El Torero lost their lease and they will be moving to West Haven.

The cleanup at 80 Wampus Lane is complete. The building has been actively leased for a number of years but there was contamination in the back of the building. The previous owner paid for the cleanup. A discussion continued briefly about this property.

V. Items & Matters of Continuing Interest

- A. Devon Revitalization Program – Mr. Gregory stated that they are ready to go out to bid on Phase III of the streetscape that will entail new sidewalks, street furniture and plantings from Kerema to Naugatuck Avenue. The only hold up right now is a final report from DOT on the plans for redesign of the traffic lights located close to Al Dente's. Part of the plan is to put the traffic signals on mast arms rather than hanging from wires. The State DOT has to sign off on the plans because it is a State road.
- B. Walnut Beach Redevelopment – Mr. Gregory reported that Walnut Beach has received a \$1M state grant. Required paperwork is in process. The grant will be used for the further development of Stowe Farm, streetscape and further improvements at Walnut Beach. Funding will be available for the Stowe Avenue and Naugatuck Avenue beach access projects.
- C. Correspondence – None
- D. Proposed Courthouse Expansion/Milford Post Office/Downtown Parking Structure – Mr. Gregory and Chairman Kapusta stated that the State has allocated \$225,000 towards further planning for the courthouse expansion but that money will go to the State Public Works Department. It is a difficult project because there are several different entities involved including the City of Milford, the U.S. Postal Service, the State Public Works Department and the State Judicial Department.
- E. Eisenhower Park – No Report
- F. Welcome Letter to New Businesses – Chairman Kapusta stated that the Mayor has indicated that he has some ideas on how he wants to handle the letter.
- G. Status of Signage Regulations – Wayfinding Signs – Mr. DePalma discussed earlier in this report.
- H. Available Business Sites – Mr. Gregory pointed out that the report was attached. 265 Old Gate Lane is the largest property that is available and

that has been the subject of considerable consternation for the City over the years. It is the former ATI property, purchased many years ago by a company out of New Jersey. The property was actively marketed for a long time by Colonial Realty but was never put back into productive use. The bankruptcy judge gave the owner a period of time to sell it and now it is moving back to the court.

VI. Old Business – None

VII. New Business – None

VIII. Guest Speaker – Tom Cariglio stated that he works for U.I. in the economic development department. Mr. Cariglio continued by saying that he visited the Commission last year regarding U.I.'s new company visitation program. U.I. began this program in West Haven and has currently implemented this program in Hamden. The way it works is that U.I. goes out to different businesses selected by the town accompanied with an economic development person from the town. They also could have someone from the Chamber or someone from the Commission or even possibly the Mayor himself accompanying them.

Mr. Cariglio continued by introducing a sample letter that they used for the City of West Haven. Milford would send it out to various businesses that had been targeted. Mr. Cariglio called the businesses in West Haven that received this letter and set up appointments to go to the businesses and do the outreach visits. There is a questionnaire and they have conversations surrounding these questions. All the businesses U.I. visited were very receptive. In the visit the business owners were asked about issues and referrals were made to various agencies or departments.

This program is called Executive Pulse (E-Pulse) that U.I. is giving to all of the towns. It is a web-based program and basically it is a tracking type of system for business retention and expansion. The information that is obtained at these meetings is inputted into the E-Pulse program so the town and U.I. can share it. Anyone can go back to the data for reference and you can put reminders in the system to go back to these companies and visit them after a year. Mr. Gregory stated that he would select the companies to be visited and would welcome input from the Commission. A discussion continued regarding the purpose and the effectiveness of this program.

A motion was made by Tessa Marquis and seconded by John DePalma to have EDC participate in the outreach program for approximately 25 companies.

PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

The meeting was adjourned at 12:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Donna Holden