

# **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION**

## **MINUTES**

**June 24, 2009**

Present:

Commissioners: Genevieve Salvatore, Chair, (Arrived at 8:30 a.m.), Susan Ashelford, Tessa Marquis, Susan Patrick, Bob Stanton, John DePalma, Cyrus Settineri  
Advisors: Kathleen Alagno and Robert Gregory  
Press: Frank Juliano, CT Post  
Guests: Ginny Koslowski, President and CEO– Greater New Haven Convention and Visitors Bureau and Lynda Smith Tellier, Board member

- I. Vice Chair Tessa Marquis called the meeting to order at 8:15 a.m. Roll call indicated the members present as listed above.
- II. The minutes of May 27, 2009, were accepted as presented.
- III. Economic Development Report

Mr. Gregory referred to page 3 noting the GenConn project at the Devon power plant. Especially notable was the story from the New Haven Independent that reported a Brookings Institute Study that showed the Milford-New Haven metro area as one of two nationally to add jobs during the first quarter of this year.

#### IV. Committee Reports

##### A. Neighborhood Preservation

Ms. Patrick reported that she had researched the City ordinances and found adequate regulations that address blight. But there is no reporting mechanism and no system of tracking complaints. The description of a blighted building was vague. Most other communities had a committee of involved department heads that dealt with the issue of blight.

Chair Salvatore arrived at this point and assumed the chair of the meeting.

After discussion, it was decided to have the Committee prepare regulation language that would address the missing

elements of Milford's anti-blight laws using other community's regulations as a guide and present the recommendation for change to the Board of Aldermen.

Ms. Patrick noted that the owners of Harrison's were permitting the Walnut Beach Festival Art work winners to be displayed in their windows. Her plan is to have displays in various empty storefronts to keep them attractive while empty.

B. The Manufacturing Outreach Project was tabled.

At this point the Chair brought the issue of the Milford Diner to the floor. She indicated that she had been negotiating with Bill DeSilva, owner of the diner, on behalf of a group that included Commissioner Susan Ashelford, for use of the diner as an information center and place for community meetings. The group would form as a non-profit and seek a \$1 a year deal for two years to give them time to fund raise.

C. Shop Local Campaign

Ms. Ashelford said that the slogan of "Local Proud" had been developed. A stylized "M" with a changing background featuring different aspects of Milford. Banners would be displayed at participating merchants. There would be a modest "buy-in" of \$25 or \$30. There was discussion about forming a non-profit corporation to handle the financial and liability issues. Ms. Marquis stressed the need to coordinate with the Chamber and other groups. Mr. Gregory volunteered to serve as a coordinator.

D. Kimball Report

Mr. Settineri reported that he had talked to Mr. Studer and the Committee had a number of meetings and visits to other communities. No timetable had been set for recommendations to go to Board of Aldermen. Mr. Studer told him that they had identified a number of issues. Chair Salvatore said that she had talked to Mr. Oliver and that they would be coming forward with their own concrete objectives. It was noted that the minutes of the KRIT Committee are online.

At this point, the Chair suspended the rest of the agenda to have the Greater New Haven Convention and Visitors (CVB) presentation.

Ms. Koslowski gave a presentation of the Greater New Haven CVB. (Copy attached) She expressed concern about state funding for the organization in the next fiscal year. She is seeking out other sources of income.

Occupancy in the region has maintained its occupancy share.

Discussion was held regarding “branding”. According to Ms. Koslowski financing is an issue. She said that a strategic plan would be the first step.

Ms. Alagno said that people come to the New Haven region for Yale. It is Milford’s job to attract people who visit Yale to visit Milford.

Discussion was held regarding the importance of tourism.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:45 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Robert B. Gregory