

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

MINUTES of the Meeting of October 22, 2014

Present: Commissioners: Robert Kapusta, Chairman, John O'Neil, Vice Chairman, Suzanne Cahill, John DePalma, Greg Harla, and Michael Lynch

Advisors: Julie Nash and Kathy Alagno

Absent: Victor Ferrante

- I. **CALL TO ORDER** – Chair Kapusta called the meeting to order at 12:05 p.m.
- II. **APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES** – A motion was made by Suzanne Cahill and seconded by John O'Neil to approve the minutes of September 24 as presented. A motion was also made by Suzanne Cahill and seconded by Michael Lynch to schedule the next meeting for Wednesday, December 10, 2014.

APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY

- III. **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT** – No Report.
- IV. **PUBLIC COMMENTS** – None
- V. **CORRESPONDENCE** – None
- VI. **GUEST SPEAKER – GINNY KOZLOWSKI – CEO OF THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION OF NEW HAVEN AND REX DEVELOPMENT**

Chair Kapusta introduced Ms. Ginny Kozlowski and stated that she is the CEO of the Economic Development Corporation of New Haven and REX Development. She actively works to recruit and grow businesses in the Greater New Haven Region. Ms. Kozlowski distributed a power point presentation to the commission regarding the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy. This is a federally approved program that makes every town in the fifteen town region eligible for EDA funding and this is their third update. They were established in 1996 as an economic development offshoot of the South Central Regional Council of Government. They work on creating more partnership and synergies within the fifteen towns. There are 169 towns in the State of Connecticut and no county system and this is a challenge when trying to compare to the rest of the country. There is

direct business contact and they were the first to be recognized under the Jodie Rell administration. Some of the success stories around EDA is funding for the bulkhead in West Haven. West Haven is now in the process of turning the property into a 200 shopping outlet center, which is substantial for job creation. Ms. Kozlowski also stated that they used funding from the EDA for a bulkhead in New Haven. They are also funded through the Environmental Protection Agency and have taken a number of dirty sights and put them back as a reuse. There are 570,000 in population from Milford to Madison to Meriden. The per capita income is \$32,849 and the median age is 39 and climbing. The median age in Bethany, Woodbridge and Madison is 47 and higher, which is a challenge because the City is not attracting younger people into the region even with the many university's graduating thousands of students on an annual basis. A plus for Milford is the fact that we do have a diverse economy. Milford has manufacturing, education and a culmination of food services.

Ms. Kozlowski continued stating that in terms of higher education, the educational programs in the region are expanding with the University of New Haven acquiring the Hubbell site. Quinnipiac opened its Med School in 2013. They will be up to 120 students per class and they will be producing primary care doctors. Yale is adding two new colleges, which will take their current undergraduate enrollment from 5,400 to just over 6,000. Gateway opened a new downtown campus in New Haven. In terms of healthcare, Yale New Haven acquired St. Raphael's in 2012. They are now up to over 150 locations throughout the State and are currently in negotiations to expand beyond the State borders. They receive over 100,000 applications into their system throughout a year. A discussion continued on the challenges regarding funding for the medical field for research and biotech and employment numbers. There are six goals that need to be addressed; Infrastructure, Regional Marketing & Communication, Business Development and Retention, Workforce Enhancement and Housing, Real Estate Land Use and Sustainability, and Funding and Implementation of the CEDS. The question is: What does Milford need to do to make this City look attractive to potential residents?? Tell the stories that are positive about Milford to attract new residents. The City needs to work with new tools that are local for programs and incentives for businesses.

VII. STANDING ITEMS/COMMITTEE REPORTS

- A. DOWNTOWN PARKING & LIAISON TO P&Z BOARD – Mr. O'Neil stated that there is a question of how many signs should be added to the signs already installed. Mr. O'Neil commented that he is open to anyone's suggestions. The slats on the Wayfinding signs

are being made larger so that they are easier to see. They are trying to get one sign to be the template for the other signs.

- B. CHAMBER – Ms. Alagno commented that they just wrapped up Restaurant Week and it was a huge success. Everyone was extremely pleased with the outcome. They created come back coupons if they could not get in on the Restaurant Week. The Chamber will be having a 60th Anniversary Celebration on November 22 at Great River with a diamond raffle.
- C. 375TH ANNIVERSARY OF MILFORD/ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY – Ms. Nash commented that the 375th committee buried the time capsule. Norwalk Vault who donated the vessel is potentially moving their business to Milford. Hobby Lobby opened. Summit Screw is a new manufacturing company and is moving forward to acquire equipment. On the tourism side, Pastor Boynton opened the Spirits of Milford Ghost Walk and it was hugely attended. November 8 is the next 375th Anniversary event that is called Red, White, and Blues that will be a Salute to Veterans. November 9th is the Veterans Day Parade and between 12 p.m. and 1 p.m. the West Point U.S. Military Paratroopers will parachute into the area. There will be another SBA and crowd funding event held this year. Jenna from the Zoom Foundation has started a Young Professionals group. The train trestle event is moving forward and there will be a reception on November 20. Bike racks are in and will be installed soon.
- D. PERMIT & LAND USE PROCESS REPORT – No Report. Chair Kapusta asked Michael Lynch to be Co-Chair. A motion was made by John DePalma and seconded by Greg Harla to be Co-Chair of this report.

APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY

- E. VISITATION REPORT – Mr. DePalma visited the Cumberland Farms facility across from Gusto's and they were extremely pleased to have Mr. DePalma visit. They are a privately owned business by one family. They have ten pumps and the facility is extremely clean. This facility was built in 45 days for 2,500 square feet. Mr. DePalma stated that Cumberland Farms is an asset to Milford and to the State for the tax revenue this business will bring in.
- F. TOURISM – Ms. Cahill was asked to do a brochure for the CT Welcome Center located in Darien, CT. She needs a sponsor and talk about content.

VIII. OLD BUSINESS – None

IX. NEW BUSINESS – None

X. FOR THE GOOD OF THE CITY – Chair Kapusta was pleased to hear the positive comments from Ms. Kozlowski about the Milford educational system. Ms. Cahill acknowledged that Bob Gregory is receiving the Living Treasure Award.

The meeting was adjourned at 1 p.m. A motion was unanimously carried to finalize the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,
Donna E. Holden