

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

Meeting of February 24, 2016

Unofficial Minutes due to lack of quorum – For information only

Present: Commissioners: John O'Neil, Chairman; Michael Lynch; John DePalma;
Julie Nash, Advisor

Also present: Heide Lang, owner The Fig Cooking School; Paige Miglio, Executive
Director Milford Arts Council

Absent: Greg Harla; Suzanne Cahill; Victor Ferrante; George Hunihan

No official actions taken due to lack of quorum.

Commissioner O'Neil suggested using the meeting for Ms. Lang's presentation and to receive Mr. Griffith's DPLU report.

PRESENTATION - Ms. Lang, owner of The Fig Cooking School in Hamden, discussed her plans to expand her business and expressed her interest in the property known as Stowe Barn. She spoke of her vision to continue efforts to preserve the Barn and make the Walnut Beach area a year-round destination by offering various types of classes and hold events that support local and City-wide communities both culturally and economically. In addition to cooking classes, her plans include activities such as drawing workshops, art shows, poetry readings, health fairs, silent auctions, corporate team building programs and wine tastings. She also presented ideas for providing community service opportunities and spoke of the potential to host a television program on-site. She believes her plans for the Barn will boost the real estate market in Walnut Beach and surrounding areas, positively influencing home values and addressed concerns regarding Affordable Housing (AH) by agreeing to a covenant that would protect the property from future AH development. Ms. Lang also offered to attend the next EDC meeting to answer any questions.

Chairman O'Neil expressed his support for the project and suggested sending Ms. Lang's presentation to this Commission for their comment and review.

PERMIT & LAND USE - Mr. Griffith reported they received an application from new owners of M&M Farms building and are expecting their attendance at March's Planning & Zoning meeting. They are also issuing partial CO's for some tenants at the Smiles site and Mustang Sally's is submitting revised drawings. Mr. Griffith commented on their efforts to improve the overall process in DPLU, Inland/Wetlands and Planning & Zoning Departments. They are seeking funding approval for a full time concierge who will greet visitors, provide directions to City departments within Parsons and also serve as a clerk for the Building Department to review documentation, enter information into the system and get the process started; he expects this will reduce delays and increase turnaround. He also reported the position for Chief Building Inspector has been posted.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY - Director Nash reported on an upcoming CEDAS Economic Development Forum; she will send information to this Commission for review and asked members to decide on EDC's participation.

NEW BUSINESS - Ms. Miglio, Executive Director of Milford Arts Council, reported on recent improvements funded by the State of CT, Milford Progress Inc, Stonebridge Restaurant and merchants from Downtown Milford Business Association. They are working on a list of projects to help promote the Arts in the City of Milford including a photo exposition that will be open to the public. She commented on the success of the photography display on the Metro North train platforms; that she has received many compliments from local residents as well as riders passing through the Milford station.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:36 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Dee Diamond
Recorder