

Minutes of the Hamden Economic Development Commission
February 8, 2011

Present: B. Zambrano, Acting Chairperson, T. DelGrego, S. Borrelli, S. Diaz, N. Schatz,
A. Inzero, D. DeNicola, D. Giannini

Not Present: T. Sacchetti, S. Rolnick, D. Moses

Also Present: D. Kroop, G. Vasil, L. Creane, D. Kops

1. Call to Order

B. Zambrano, Acting Chairperson called the meeting to order at 5:30 PM.

2. Reading and Approval of the Minutes from the previous meeting

B. Zambrano, Acting Chairperson asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the January 9, 2011 meeting, T. DelGrego made a motion to approve the minutes from the January 9, 2011 meeting, N. Schatz seconded, passed unanimously.

3. Report of the Director

- Long Range Plan: Dale passed out the committee list to the Commissioners and stated if they would like to be on a different committee to let him know. A discussion ensued on the Plan.
- Grand List: Dale stated that residential values decrease by 10.35% and it represents 78.55% of the tax base, the commercial value list is up by 6.45% and has increased to 21.45% of the tax revenue, personal property down 3.85% and automobiles are up 3.67%.
- B. Zambrano and S. Rolnick were re-appointed for 5 more years to 2016.
- 3-year budget not much changed we made a small grant pay out to TDR Realty for the building at the corner of George St and Dixwell Ave for a medical practice. We have one micro-loan that is non-performing and we are working on getting it paid off. We've had two default loans since the program started. D. Giannini asked if the money left over from the Highwood Square project would be used for streetscape, Dale stated yes that we would make that area uniform to what has already been done.

4. Old Business: Planning & Zoning Sign Regulations

L. Creane, Town Planner and D. Kops, Asst. Town Planner spoke to the Commission regarding their concerns about the new sign regulations. They addressed the three major concerns of the Commission regarding:

(1) Square Feet Calculations: They stated that the size of a sign depends on the size of the store front, under the new zoning regulations a business is allowed 1 square foot of sign to 1 linear of building. Signs for existing shopping center are grandfathered in under the old regulations and new shopping centers will fall under the new. A discussion ensued on the old regulations verses the new.

(2) Enforcement of Sign Regulations: According to the regulations anything in a window is consider a sign. D. Kops discussed inside window signs verses outside signs. Inside signs are counted as signs. Advertising a product name inside of a window is considered signage but they can't enforce all the violations in Town because they don't have the staff to be out there everyday. A discussion ensued on if P & Z can't enforce all the regulations because of lack of staff, why have them.

(3) Changes in Future Signage: L. Creane discussed the new sign regulations. Everything has to be

uniformed in size on multi-use buildings. A-frames are now allowed and they all have to be the same dimensions. D. Giannini asked for an explanation on the Village District. D. Kops discussed the Village District as an amendment to the Zoning Regulations, which is a small portion of the new regulations. The Village District consultant position was posted, there were interviews and one was chosen to oversee the Spring Glen Village District. The Commissioners will comment when given a chance for clarification about the new regulations.

5. New Business: Tax Incentive review and approval

Hoffman Press Inc. will purchase 130 Welton St. (the old Columbia Print building) they will invest \$650,000 in rehabilitation. They are a family run business, they have been located in New Haven for 104 years and they will hire 11 more people. The Mayor's Tax Incentive Committee approved them for 100% tax abatement for two consecutive years on the increased grand list improvements only, a \$5,000 grant and 50% building permit waiver (not including plumbing, electric and HVAC). B. Zambrano, Acting Chairperson asked for a motion to approve the benefits as approved by the Mayor's Tax Incentive Committee, A. Inzero moved to accept the benefits as stated above, N. Schatz seconded, passed unanimously.

6. Project Updates: Redevelopment, Openings, Etc.

- Chamber grand openings: Brian Guitars will be 2-28 at noon they are near the UPS Store on Whitney Avenue and Jamaican Jerkfish is 2-25 at noon in the Hamden Plaza.
- Aspen Dental moved to the old Sears building and Dr. Dental moved into their old site in the Plaza.
- Cumin's Indian Restaurant opened
- Men's Warehouse will open early summer
- Package store swap on hold
- The Hamden Chamber Business Expo date has changed to Saturday April 16 due to the school system canceling April vacation.
- Dale passed out our "report card" and projects worked on reports for the Commissioners to review. He will be meeting with the Council to discuss our budget and this is what he will be giving them to see what we do. It was mentioned that he should add the Whitney Center project to the list of projects worked on.
- There has been a lot of offers on the Centerville Lumber site.

7. Adjournment

With no other business to discuss B. Zambrano, Acting Chairperson asked for a motion to adjourn at 6:40 PM. A. Inzero moved to adjourn at 6:40 PM, T. DelGrego seconded, passed unanimously.