

Minutes of the Hamden Economic Development Commission Meeting
February 14 , 2012

Present: T. Sacchetti, Chairperson, B. Zambrano, T. DelGrego, S. Diaz, S. Rolnick, S. Borrelli,
D. DeNicola, D. Moses, D. Giannini, A. Inzero

Not Present: N. Schatz

Also Present: D. Kroop, G. Vasil, M. Van, resident, L. Courtney, resident

1. Call to Order

T. Sacchetti, Chairperson called the meeting to order @ 5:31 PM.

2. Reading & Approval of the minutes from the previous meeting

T. Sacchetti, Chairperson asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the January 10, 2012 meeting. B. Zambrano made a motion to approve the minutes from the January 10, 2012 meeting, T. DelGrego seconded, passed unanimously.

3. Report of the Director

- ▲ The new 3-year Plan and Budget was passed by the Council unanimously. The finance director was leaving so we approached her for the interest and loan payments to be added to our new budget. They did so and the budget was adjusted accordingly. Approximately 5 years ago the finance department took \$50,000 plus out of an account that was set aside from a grant we had from 1992 for our small loan program and put it into the general fund. We are now trying to get it back so we can use it for our micro-loan program. A discussion ensued on the new Plan.
- ▲ Our Town Attorney is working on a letter to send to the lawn business that defaulted on their loan. A discussion ensued on the process. The Council approved the three new tax incentive agreements.
- ▲ Ann DeMatteo did a great story on one of our tax incentive businesses Airline Accessory's on Putnam Avenue. Once their project is completed the assessor will reevaluate the property again.
- ▲ Dale would like to do a tour of businesses with the corporation members, economic development commissioners, the council members and the state agencies we work with. T. DelGrego mentioned that we should do a podcast of the tour. D. Giannini said that we should rotate moths with the commissioners to tour the businesses. Dale used 400 Goodrich Street as an example of what he would like everyone to see. Dale will do some research to see if he can get a bus or van to do this.
- ▲ The State created the Neighborhood Revitalization Zone (NRZ) in the late 1990's where businesses and home owners could receive money and tax breaks to rehab in Highwood and the State Street areas. Many years ago the Highwood group had their own agenda and their projects fell through. The Newhall remediation project is moving along and most of the people are happy with what is being done. Dale has already spoken to the Mayor's office about reconstructing the NRZ committee. The new committee should be 51% residents in the area. We will have a kick off meeting soon. Dale mentioned that someone from the Commission should be on the committee. T. Sacchetti volunteered to be on the committee. T. Sacchetti mentioned that we should be able to get grant for projects. D. Giannini mentioned that past administrations had no master plan and at the time concentrated on housing and not businesses.
- ▲ Dale stated that we use to receive over \$500,000 for the CDBG programs and we were able to do a lot with in the targeted areas. This year we are only receiving \$300,000 plus and we will have to cut a lot of the programs, it's going to be a tough year for the CDBG program.

D. Giannini asked about the Enterprise Zone (EZ) that was started in 1983 under Mayor Villano. Dale stated that it is still in use and the boundary lines are just outside of the NRZ. The industrial park had a 30 year contingency clause that stated no retail sales were allowed and that will expire next year. That could change the the outline of use for the business park.

4. Old Business – None

5. New Business – None

6. Project Updates: Redevelopment, Openings, Etc.

- ▲ Edge Fitness will open late summer, early fall.
- ▲ There is nothing new with the Toys R Us site.
- ▲ Jake's Wayback Burger is open.
- ▲ A daycare will open in the old Colonial Tymes site in the spring.
- ▲ At the corner of Dixwell & Mather Fruit Delights opened. The people who own that building also own the building where Edible Arrangements is. A discussion ensued on the new store.
- ▲ Nothing new on the other corner of Dixwell & Mather the building is listed for \$1.3 million.
- ▲ A discussion ensued on the Westwoods Road project
- ▲ The new lower Dixwell Avenue streetscape project will restart in March the Council finally approved it.
- ▲ The Corporation is busy with brownfield project, the middle school, & Rochford Field, Millrock Park. Rochford Field and Millrock Park will be dug up and resurfaced.
- ▲ The Lucien DeMeo building on Putnam Ave has already been approved for a 32 unit housing project. It is listed with Allen Fisher Real Estate Agency for \$1.8 Million. A discussion ensued on the site.
- ▲ Lee Partyka is expanding the show room mostly for their Mazda dealership.
- ▲ On January 10th Planning & Zoning had their signage meeting. We suggested that they raise the signage coverage to 50%. There where a lot of Civic Assoc. there but they didn't speak, some businesses spoke on the signage regulation and the coverage of their windows. A discussion ensued on the issue.
- ▲ A town dentist is looking to move his practice to the corner of Todd & Whitney. His application was already summited with Dean Fiske before the new regulations where approved, but the deal fell through. The new regulations state that there is no medical use north of Westwoods Road because there are no sewers in that area. Dale will do some research to find out why. A discussion ensued on the issue.

7. Adjournment

With no other business to discuss T. Sacchetti, Chairperson asked for a motion to adjourn at 6:20 PM. T. DelGrego moved to adjourn at 6:20 PM, D. DeNicola seconded, passed unanimously.