



TOWN OF HAMDEN, CONNECTICUT
Economic & Community Development Department
2750 Dixwell Avenue
Hamden, Connecticut 06518

Dale Kroop, Director

Town of Hamden
Economic Development Commission

Minutes of the Meeting of **Tuesday, July 9, 2013** in the Third Floor Conference Room, Hamden Government Center, 2750 Dixwell Avenue, at 5:30PM

Mr. Sachetti, Mr. Zambrano, Mr. DelGrego, Mr. Diaz, Mr. Moses, Ms. Gretencord

1. Call to order

Mr. Sachetti called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.

2. Reading and Approval of minutes of June 11, 2013

Mr. Zambrano made a motion to approve the minutes of June 11, 2012. Mr. DelGrego seconded the motion. The vote was five in favor. Mr. Moses abstained.

3. Report of the Director

Mr. Kroop was not in attendance.

4. Old Business:

Updates – Mr. Sachetti presented the following updates:

Dixwell & Mather - plans for two 10,000 SF commercial buildings will be going to zoning in September; demolition of the existing building is scheduled for late fall or winter; the first new building is proposed for the corner and will be retail space. Mr. Zambrano expressed concern about what they will find when they knock down the factory.

A \$5 million dollar grant will be used to develop a business incubator at the old Hamden Middle School. It is scheduled for opening in 2014. A study was completed and there are no health concerns inside or outside of the building. The fields are all okay and were encapsulated many years ago. The Business Assistance Center will have a presence in the building.

There are proposals in for some restaurants, one of them at the old Chrysler dealership.

There is no news on Skiff Street or Tommy Kaye's

We hope to be able to vote tonight Burt Processing Lab's proposal to expand and add 20,000 SF to their facility.

Mr. Zambrano mentioned that we prefer to give our incentive money to manufacturers.

Mr. DelGrego said speaking of the incentives, he wondered if we had provided an incentive for the deli at Carlo's Hair Salon building on Whitney Avenue. No one recalled an incentive for this business, which is now closed.

Mr. Sachetti said we will be looking for speaker topics starting again in September and asked commissioners for suggestions. He also noted that work will begin soon on a new long range plan. The current long range plan runs out in January 2014. We will be soliciting some input and ideas

Mr. Sachetti said we are working to send out our first brochures to Spanish owned businesses using data bases developed by our Quinnipiac interns. Mr. Sachetti was not sure that the content of the brochures will be. Mr. Diaz wondered how many Spanish owned businesses are located in Hamden.

The next electronic newsletter will be coming out in the fall. The newsletters are jam packed with information.

Mr. Zambrano toured some of the residential units at the open house for the Mutual Housing Authority artists housing on Dixwell Avenue. Residents allowed visitors to walk through their units. He missed the part on the commercial space where the dentist will be going in. The units are open space concept with a large LR, DR and KIT space and one bedroom. There is a common area that can be used as a meeting room. The grounds looked fine. They did hold the barbeque and it was well attended. Mr. Sachetti said this is a project we would like to help market. The dentist has not closed on his loan yet. Mr Zambrano said a SCSU professor has a studio there. There is a lot of sharing of ideas among the residents.

5. New Business:

Review and Approval of Business Incentive Agreement – Burt Processing Equipment

20,000 SF expansion – Mr. Zambrano said we want to encourage this type of business. Prior to a quorum being available, it was decided to do an email vote to move this application along.

Mr. DelGrego suggested Mr. Kroop have a conversation with Burt, since this expansion is only two years from their last one. Burt is one of Hamden's most successful business. They have expanded in the past and hope to expand by 20,000 square feet in their current location. We want to have a conversation with the company with reference to their intent to remain in Hamden.

They have been approved for the following benefits:

- a.. Tax Deferral for three years of 70%, 60%, 50% for real estate, and 70% for two years for personal property. If they are eligible for the Urban Jobs Program through the State, those benefits will replace Hamden's.
- b. Property Improvement Grant – approved for \$5,000
- c. Building Permit Waiver of 25% not including plumbing, electric and HVAC

Mr. Moses suggested looking at their growth projection for the next two or three years. He wondered what their time line would be . There is a payback provision if they don't adhere to the terms of the grants that we provide. They have to remain viable and in Hamden for five years, or there are some payback provisions.

Mr. DelGrego said we ran into that problem with the grocery store at State and Ridge, and the owner continued to pay taxes on the property. Mr. Sachetti is not sure if the 20,000 sf expansion

would max them out at their current location. Mr. Zambrano suggested Mr. Kroop have a conversation regarding their plans for the future and report back to us.

When the quorum was satisfied, Mr. Sachetti called for a vote on the application presented by Burt Processing Equipment for Tax Deferral, Property Improvement Grant and Building Permit Waiver.

Mr. Zambrano made a motion to approve the Business Incentives for Burt Processing Equipment as noted above. Mr. DelGrego seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in favor.

Mr. Moses asked if financials are a regular part of what we request from applicants. Mr. Zambrano said no, and that he had asked the question in the past. Mr. Moses said their projections would answer some of our questions. Mr. Sachetti said we would look at financials for the micro loan program, but not for these grant funds. We could ask for a business plan. Mr. Zambrano mentioned that they would not be eligible for the tax abatements until the project is complete, and a bank would scrutinize their financials if they were borrowing \$800,000. Mr. Sachetti felt some good points were raised.

Mr. DelGrego said the dialog between Zoning and this Commission needs to be better. He mentioned two houses on Whitney Avenue that were demolished recently and wonders what is going on there. He assumes Quinnipiac purchased these properties. These are two old houses opposite the cemetery, once of which was remediated.

Mr. Rolnick is not in attendance so we don't have information on the Economic Development Corporation.

Commissioners reviewed the Budget, which was included in the packet and is attached. Tri Con is due to be paid up in September; It is doubtful that Moe's Southwest Grill will be using the funds because they are already doing their thing; Mr. DelGrego said Rite-Quote looks like they are flourishing; Hamden Dental is due to close soon. Unused funds will be returned to the pool.

Commissioners reviewed the monthly report on the micro loan program. It was suggested that perhaps Mr. Pearce should reach out to Clean Gear to see what is going on. Lilly's Preschool and DeSorbo's Bakery are current. Lenox is behind 31-60 days. Mr. Sachetti reported that there are applications pending, and the dental office Highwood Square will be moving forward soon

7. Adjournment

Mr. Sachetti thanked commissioners for coming so we could vote on the Burt Laboratory's incentive plan.

Mr. DelGrego made a motion to adjourn. Ms. Gretencord seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in favor. The meeting adjourned at 6:20 p.m.

Submitted by: _____
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