



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

Dale Kroop, Director

Minutes: The Economic Development Commission, Town of Hamden, held a Regular Meeting on Tuesday, June 14, 2016 at 5:30 p.m. in the third floor conference room, Hamden Government Center. The following issues were discussed:

Commissioners in Attendance: Anthony Sachetti, Ken Good, Jennifer Sacco, Anthony DelGrego, Bob Zambrano, Steve Rolnick, David DeNicola

Commissioners Excused: Steve Diaz, Armando Rodriguez, Rachel Gretencord

Commissioner Absent: Donald Moses

Others in Attendance: Cindy Civitello - Westwoods Civic Association, Dale Kroop – Director of Economic and Community Development, Gerry Tobin – Commission Clerk

Mr. Kroop introduced Chanele Davis, a Quinnipiac Fellow working in his office. Ms. Davis said she is a rising senior majoring in political science and on a fast track MBA program.

1. Call to Order

Mr. Sachetti called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

2. Review Minutes of May 10, 2016

Mr. DelGrego made a motion to approve the minutes of the May 20th meeting. Ms. Sacco seconded the motion. The vote was five in favor and two abstained.

3. Report of the Director

Mr. Kroop referred to the last page of the handout which shows the three year plan. Precision Grinding has been paid out but we are holding the check for presentation at the ribbon cutting. A date will be forthcoming. There is a balance of \$194,832.83, which has to last until the end of June of 2018. There are no incentives pending.

The previous page is the loan activity report. Lenox Builders is paid up to date. 20 Augur Street LLC is at 30 days, but Mr. Kroop is not concerned. There is \$34,609.80 remaining in loan fund.

Mr. Kroop said that his son's friend will be working in his office starting on Thursday for a few hours a day a couple of days a week. He is a high school student who wants to be a business major in college, and will be doing technical things for him, some spread sheets and some menial tasks, and will work until the first week in August.

Mr. Pearce completed his series of three workshops at the Library. They went very well and people got a lot out of it. There were 10-15 attendees at each session. The speakers were very good. Commissioners requested that Mr. Pearce attend a meeting to update the commission on occasion, and Mr. Kroop said he would invite him to the July meeting. Mr. Pearce will probably plan another series in the fall.

On Wednesday, June 22nd, Mr. Kroop will host the next solopreneurs meeting. He will have two speakers, one from the state and one from the federal government to discuss registration for state and government contracts.

Mr. Kroop met with residential real estate brokers regarding the perception of Hamden. They complained about taxes and Hamden Public School system. They felt that test scores were not good, and have been discouraging relocation buyers. Mr. Kroop said we have good teachers and good programs and kids can find them. Mr. Kroop met with Superintendent of Schools Jody Groeler who pledged staff support (Karen Kaplan and Chris Melillo, Assistant Superintendent). Ms. Kaplan met with the Realtors®, and out of that came a really interesting partnership. There was a tour of the middle school for the agents. MS. Kaplan created a “did you know” flyer which mentioned that Hamden High School has the highest number of AP programs in the area and a successful DECA program. The next step is to talk to relo people, then do some U-tube videos on STEM programs, robotics, etc. Mr. Kroop will talking about partnering with other organizations regarding videos. There was discussion on university retention rates. Quinnipiac's is low, but Southern's is 80%.

We have down payment assistance under our HUD program, which is a small program. Mr. Good mentioned that Yale gives people money to buy in certain areas.

Mr. Kroop mentioned the videos on the Town website. He finished filming last week and that will be out in the fall.

4. Old Businesses

5. New Businesses

Discussion – Remote Participation at Meetings

Mr. Sachetti said he does not want to allow remote participation at Economic Development meetings. This will be discussed further at the July meeting.

Mr. Kroop reported that the town engineer hiring is imminent. We are down to two candidates. Acting Town Engineer Fuller is having surgery and will be out for three months. There is no news on the hiring of the town planner.

Mark Candido is now working for Newtown Savings Bank along with two other former Bankwell employees.

Northeast Economic Development Association consists of all New England States and other states from Maine to Maryland, including New York and Pennsylvania. They will be holding their annual conference in New Haven from September 11th to 13th, with a main focus on transportation.

On Monday the 27th, the Legislative Council will be meeting and one item on the agenda will be the amendment of an Ordinance that says you cannot have a package store within 1500 feet of another

package store. The state regulates how many liquor stores can be in each town on a per capita basis. Someone else wanted to go into the space where Cork and Barrel moved across the street. In the Ordinance, if an existing package store wants to move its location within 1500 from another package store, as long as they don't move more than 500 feet from their initial location. When the package store went into the Hamden Mart, there was a big debate because it was within 1500 feet of Skiff Street, Liquor Land and North Mart. It is measured front door to front door, literally on a single plane.

There is a proposal for the Toys “R” Us space by a national chain that people will be pleased with, but they only want half of the space. For the remaining space, they want to move the mart package store from its current location to the far side of the Toys “R” Us space toward Kohl's. He has asked the approval of the ordinance within 800 feet as long as they leave a buffer. The package store moves 750' and will still be 500' away from any other package store. The Ordinance will allow the mart liquor store to move. The national chain will not come if the liquor store can not move. A national clothing chain will replace the liquor store in its original location.

Mr. Zambrano made a motion to go into Executive Session at 5:57 p.m. to discuss the details of the liquor store move and the national chain that proposes to move into the Toys “R” Us space. Mr. Rolnick seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in favor.

At 6:08 p.m. Mr. Rolnick made a motion to go out of Executive Session. Mr. Zambrano seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in favor.

Plato's Closet will be opening soon, and is currently open to receive items.

Mayor Leng and Mr. Kroop have been trying to reach and work with the owners of Putnam Place, but they remain unresponsive.

Marshall's is planning to give up some space in the Hamden Plaza for another retail user.

The former middle school redevelopment plan is on tonight's Planning & Zoning Agenda with a chance that it will pass. The plan is to develop 88 housing units and give the fields back to the Town for its use. It is located right next to the Business Incubator. This is a \$15 to \$18 million dollar project.

The zero energy house will be finished this fall. There was discussion on the extra insulation, solar panels, and other energy savers, as well as finding a qualified buyer for this property.

Subito will be at the Centerville Lumber property by the end of this year, and the Hotel will probably be built next year. Amity Physical Therapy will own the actual Centerville Lumber building.

6. Project Updates: Redevelopment, Openings, Etc.

Hair Flo has taken over the Joya Day Spa space and will have their grand opening on June 29th.

The Clarion Hotel is under new ownership and their grand reopening will take place on June 30th. The Carriage House across the street is being rehabilitated. The Schaefer Family sold both properties.

Wooden Tap has opened a patio on the side near Hamden High School.

Ms. Regan said she has joined the membership committee of Hamden Regional Chamber and Women in Business which raises money for scholarships for high school students.

Economic Development's Constant Comment is now emailing 4700. We currently pay for up to 5000.

7. Adjournment

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

Submitted by: _____
Gerry Tobin, Commission Clerk

Tel (203) 287-7033

Fax (203) 287-7035

e-mail: dkroop@hamden.com