



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, August 9, 2016 at 5:30 p.m. in the third floor conference room, Hamden Government Center. The following issues were discussed:

Commissioners in Attendance: Mr. Sachetti, Mr. Good, Mr. Diaz, Mr. DelGrego, Mr. Zambrano, Mr. Rolnick, Ms. Sacco, Ms. Gretencord

Commissioners Absent: Mr. Rodriguez, Mr. Moses, Mr. DeNicola,

Others in Attendance: Mr. Kroop, Ms. Regan, Ms. Tobin

1. Call to Order

Mr. Sachetti called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

2. Review Minutes of July 12, 2016

Mr. Good made a motion to approve the minutes of the July 12, 2016 meeting. Mr. Zambrano seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in favor.

3. Report of the Director

Mr. Kroop referred to the second to last page of tonight's package and said Carleton Industries has completed its work and are moving into their building. They are moving from 18,000 sf of rented space on Marne Street to a building they purchased on Raccio Park Drive consisting of 25,000 sf.

Three Brothers is under construction, and they are doing nice work. There was an unsightly old tree in front of their property and they received permission from the DOT to remove it.

Utility Communications is moving along nicely.

The last page of the package shows loan payments are up to date.

Mr. Kroop has an application for the tax incentive program and is expecting another one.

The Quinnipiac Public Service Fellow has finished her term in Mr. Kroop's office. She did press releases, research and got a lot of good experience. His high school student is doing well and is doing movies to a sound track for the web site. He is in the office for two more weeks.

Mr. Kroop said going forward into the fall there are a number of conferences and meetings coming up.

The RWA is doing an educational conference in November and he wants to be involved in that. He is also getting many calls from members of various industry clusters. He will be setting an agenda for those and is waiting until after Labor Day. He will probably cover all clusters starting in the fall. There have been some inquiries from the high school and colleges asking for tours of manufacturing facilities, and he hopes to schedule those.

The City of New Haven is hosting the Northeast Economic Development Association conference, which Mr. Kroop will be attending. This conference is heavily attended and will take place from Sunday evening to part of Tuesday. Mr. Kroop submitted an application for program of the year, for the Newhall remediation, and it won the category. The award will be presented at a dinner on Monday night. The conference is September 11th through the 13th.

On November 6th and 7th at the Javitz Center in New York, the Council of Shopping Centers will meet. Donald Trump was an excellent speaker at last year's conference. Rudy Giuliani is scheduled to speak this year. This is a great deal making event and gives Mr. Kroop a chance to get face time with national retailers and their brokers.

Mr. DelGrego mentioned that on September 16th from 11-3 there will be an economic development power lunch in North Haven for Realtors®. Mr. Kroop will check with Mr. Freda.

CGI Videos makes videos for municipalities all over the country for free. They do a decent job. Mayor Leng does the intro and the subjects are residential market, relocation, and two random subjects. They pay for their work by going to local businesses and offer them a palette of options and will make a video for the businesses. They track results for you. He has received the first cut and it looks really good. The videos are used for marketing to site selectors. Once the Mayor gives his approval, it will be placed on the web site.

Mr. Kroop doesn't know what Quinnipiac University is doing with the houses they have purchased on Whitney Avenue. Mr. DelGrego wondered if there is anything we can do to help the businesses in that area.

The Chamber is moving into the office park next to the cemetery in Mt. Carmel, which is owned by Paul Kaplan.

Hamden Restaurant Week is scheduled from September 19th to the 25th.

Openings: Plato's Closet has been packed since they opened. They limit clothing to certain sizes and are very particular about what they take.

Newtown savings bank had their opening at Hamden Center II.

Bankwell is going out of their way to be cooperative.

Home Health Specialties. This business was started by three women who were in our health care cluster. They were in an office near the Irish Museum, and have now leased a nice suite in Press Cuzzo's building and have expanded.

Mr. Zambrano asked about non residents staying at Whitney Center. There was a brief discussion.

Salad Palace is opening on August 24th on Putnam Avenue near Whitney.

The opening of Bobcat's Pizza is coming up soon.

Ali Baba, a new restaurant near the Keefe Center has opened and is really good.

Retail Updates:

Where Bally's used to be, the space has been gutted to make it more presentable. They have been trying to lease this space for a few years.

Hamden Mart Package Store – The Legislative Council passed the Ordinance change allowing it to move to the former Toys “R” Us space. Some package store owners complained, but he has assured them that their businesses won't be affected by the 300' move. The comment period is over. The package store will move into half of the space and Aldi's will take the other half.

Bon Ton will probably be replaced with another retail business.

Putnam Place going back and forth with their leasing agent. They have 140,000 sf of vacant space. Mr. Kroop is talking to a 50,000 sf tenant tomorrow. If this works out it will draw a lot of people.

Carleton Industries space on Marne Street, owned by Anthony Cuomo – 10-12,000 square feet of the 18,000 square feet available will be leased by the “halloween guy”. He used to build a haunted houses for charities. He wants to do this as a permanent business. He was approved so he will be starting to build a structure within a structure soon. There is a possibility that he will eventually expand to the remaining space. This is a sublease from Carleton.

Mr. Kroop is looking at tax lien properties and brownfield properties for development. He used the example of a polluted property with tax liens of \$600,000 which investors purchased, cleaned up the site, built 42 apartments, and now pay Town \$66,000 per year in taxes. He also mentioned the Columbia Building. A purchaser came along and paid the Town \$5,000, will close out all liens, clean up the site, pave the property and use it to park his trucks, putting this parcel back on the tax rolls. Another dilapidated property on Whitney Avenue near Walgreen's was just purchased by a landscaper who will keep equipment on the property. He is working with the buyer of the old Quonset hut on State Street near Number One Fish Market. Taxes accumulated and there were many requirements for the cleanup. The buyer will tear it down and refurbish the site.

The “zero energy house” will be done by the end of December. It is located at the corner of Morse and Newhall Streets and it looks great. Mr. Kroop might have a buyer already, but the application deadline is not until September 15th.

Bids are in for the next phase of construction for the Hamden Business Incubator. This phase is to replace the roof and other items. A ground breaking will be scheduled.

The Middle School development is going through the financing phase. This facility costs the Town about \$225,000 year to maintain. The planned housing project will provide a positive cash revenue for the Town of several thousand dollars a year.

Everyone loves the constant comment emails. Dr. Henry's building was suggested a good update. 50,000 sf on Putnam might create 50 jobs in Hamden that didn't exist before.

4. Adjournment

Ms. Gretencord made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Zambrano seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in favor. The meeting adjourned at 6:23 p.m.

Submitted by: _____
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