



**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, September 13, 2016 at 5:30 p.m. in the third floor conference room, Hamden Government Center. The following issues were discussed:

Commissioners in Attendance: Mr. Rodriguez, Mr. Diaz, Mr. DeNicola, Mr. Zambrano, Mr. Moses, Mr. Sachetti, Mr. Good, Ms. Gretencord,

Commissioners Excused: Mr. Rolnick, Mr. DelGrego, Ms. Sacco

Guests: Ms. Civitello and Ms. Traester of the West Woods Civic Association

Others in Attendance: Economic & Community Development Director Mr. Kroop, ECD Secretary Ms. Regan Commission Clerk Ms. Tobin

1. Call to Order

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

2. Review Minutes of August 9, 2016

**Mr. Zambrano made a motion to approve the minutes of the August 9, 2016 meeting. Mr. Diaz seconded the motion. The vote was seven in favor, one abstention.**

3. Report of the Director

The financial report shows payment made to Carleton Industries at the completion of their project. Three Brothers is almost complete. Hamden Auto and another are not under construction to date.

Lenox is one month behind. We have \$196,000 in unencumbered funds. There is \$33,631 in accounts receivable.

Carleton Industries moved from leased space on Marne space to Rossotto Drive. They will hold a grand opening in October. They have subleased a portion of their Marne Street space to a man who will open a Halloween venue with a ride through the building during which riders see scary sights. If successful, he would like to expand into the remainder of the space and have other Holiday themes. Mr. Kroop said the proprietor has a good business plan. He worked with Richard Pearce for about eight months.

4. Old Businesses

## 5. New Businesses

Mr. Kroop mentioned several conferences, one he just attended New England Economic Development Conference, in which he was actively involved. Mr. Kroop submitted the Newhall Redevelopment Program for a competition, which included the middle school, parks, community center, etc. Hamden received first place for municipality of over 50,000 people. Mr. Kroop will be doing a press release on this.

Mr. Kroop announced that our CDBG manager has left the Town's employ. Mr. Kroop met Ms. Regan who worked as a temp on this program 12 years ago, so he called her when Gail moved to the Mayor's Office. She is familiar with the program and is helping with it. Mr. Kroop isn't sure how or when the position will be filled. Ms. Regan has been approved to go into the HUD websites. They have to do their annual action plan in May or June, and the comprehensive reporting plan is due at the end of September. Mr. Kroop hired a consultant to do the CAPER. Mayor's Jackson and Leng served in that position in the past.

Mr. Diaz said his job has been eliminated and he will no longer have a position after the end of the month. He is hoping it won't take him too long to rebound. He will be sending his resume to commissioners in case they hear of anything that opens up that he might be qualified for.

Mr. Kroop has three applications for business incentives, one of which just came in today. The other two have passed the tax incentive committee. Mr. Kroop distributed the information on the two that have been approved by the Tax Incentive Committee.

MIKRO Restaurant on Whitney Avenue is planning to move and has a lease agreement with the owner of the Depot behind Dunkin Donuts at Whitney and Sherman Avenues, known as 0 Depot. He will expand one of the buildings. The owner Mike, used to own the Monster Grill. Mr. Kroop isn't sure if it has gone to zoning yet. It is an expansion of his current business. The application will have to come in from the property owner. The total investment will be \$800,000. Mr. Kroop didn't recommend a grant. He recommended a tax abatement for three consecutive years of 50%., He is also recommending a building permit waiver of 25%. Part of the money is for site work. MIKRO had sales of \$1.3 million. Mr. Good asked what Mr. Kroop thought the abatement was in real money. Mr. Kroop estimated it would amount to about \$9,000 per year .

Mr. Moses mentioned an earlier conversation during which Mr. Kroop was asked to provide the dollar figure for tax abatements and permit waivers. He feels it is important to know how much the Town is giving up.

**Mr. Moses made a motion that henceforth when we offer a tax abatement, the dollar value of the abatement and waivers should be presented to the Commission.** There was additional discussion. **Ms. Gretencord seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in favor.** Mr. Kroop said that in the tax incentive committee, you decide what is really going to help the situation. Better incentives are usually given for job creations, manufacturing, etc. Mr. Sachetti has been on the tax incentive committee for about 18 years.

Mr. Zambrano made a motion to approve the MIKRO application. Mr. DeNicola said in this project the benefit is to the tenant, which is who we want to incentivise.

**Mr. Moses mad a motion to table the MIKRO and the Sherman Heights Bakery business incentive applications. Mr. Zambrano seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in favor.**

6. Project Updates: Redevelopment, Openings, Etc.

Two ribbon cuttings are coming up: Thursday September 15<sup>th</sup> at noon, Silver City Vapors (next to Ray and Mike's Deli); and on Wednesday, October 5<sup>th</sup>, at 3:00 p.m., Classic Cuts, a barber shop next door to Ixtapa.

Other openings were held recently for Salad Palace on Putnam Avenue, Bobcat Pizza on Whitney Avenue.

There was a reminder that next week is Restaurant Week in Hamden.

The former owner of Taste is now the chef at Park Central. His former partner at Taste is the manager there.

Mr. Kroop said there is still a steady stream of business openings.

Mr. Kroop said an ordinance was passed to allow package stores to move certain distance in the same shopping center in which they are located. There will be a chain of events happening in Hamden Mart. The Mart package store will be taking half of the former Toys "R" Us space and Aldi's will take the other half. Bon Ton will give up their space in 2017, and another department store will take the majority of that space. Another retailer will be moving into the former liquor store space next to Walmart.

Marshall's will sublease part of their space (6-7000 sf) next year.

3000 sf is available next to Plato's, which has been a tremendous success. All of our plaza's are pretty well set.

Putnam Place is talking to a an interested party and it would be a total home run if this private vocational school decides to locate there. It would be bringing 50 teachers and 2-300 students over the course of a 12 hour period. Putnam Place has about 130,000 sf of space, the the school would take about 60,000 sf..

Centerville Lumber property has been sold and will be subdivided into three parcels. Cafe Bravo Restaurant, Amity Physical Therapy, and a Residence Inn will occupy the site. The sale has closed and plans have been approved at Zoning, but approval of an easement to Worth Avenue is not resolved to date.

Mr. Kroop's employment contract comes due mid November, and we will discuss that further. He has been advocating for more staff.

Chamber Choice awards coming up November 17<sup>th</sup>, a Thursday evening.

Through REX development, there will be lots of brownfield money for commercial properties. Mr. Kroop has a couple of projects in mind. The funds are usually project specific. REX development

actually pays the bills, but in other cases, we are now eligible for direct funds such as the incubator project, because we have developed our credibility.

Mr. Moses asked about the incubator project and the number of expected occupants. Mr. Kroop responded 20-30. He said the next phase is starting as we speak, roof, asbestos work, site work, construction fence. The oil tank, lead, mold is the next phase. The final phase will finished later in 2017. Mr. Kroop is engaging colleges and universities because schools are developing entrepreneurial classes. Quinnipiac University has a high tech incubator. Mr. Moses said we should be working with Mr. Pearce to identify potential tenants, so when the building is complete the tenants will be ready to move in.

Ms. Civitello mentioned that at the West Woods Civic Association meeting last night, there was discussion on the historic homes that Quinnipiac is planning to demolish. The Historical Society filed an appeal giving a 90 day leeway, hoping to save the homes from the pre-revolutionary period through the 1800s. Six houses have been demolished, and they will be taxed as vacant land. There has been speculation about their putting a theater or another educational building on Whitney Avenue, which would be non taxable. They are trying to schedule a meeting with Quinnipiac.

#### 7. Adjournment

**Mr. Moses made a motion to adjourn. Mr. DeNicola seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in favor. The meeting adjourned at 6:45 p.m.**

Submitted by: \_\_\_\_\_  
Gerry Tobin, Commission Clerk

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