

TOWN OF HAMDEN, CONNECTICUT
Economic and Community Development Department
2750 Dixwell Avenue
Hamden, CT 06518
Dale Kroop, Director

Town of Hamden
Economic Development Commission Meeting Minutes
August 10, 2010

Commissioners in Attendance: Chairman Anthony Sacchetti Jr., Anthony J. Inzero, Steven Rolnick, Nathan Schatz, Dolores Giannini, Anthony J. DelGrego, Robert Zambrano.

Not Present: David Denicola, Donald Moses

Others in Attendance: Dale Kroop, Rose Lion

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Sacchetti called the meeting to order at 5:30.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the July 13, 2010 meeting were reviewed. Chairman Sacchetti motioned to approve the minutes. There was a brief discussion to clarify which publications ranked Hamden in the top 100 places to live. Mr. Kroop explained that two years ago Fortune Small Business Magazine named Hamden 33rd best place to Live and Launch a Small Business and that Hamden was also recently named Hamden 87th best town to live in America by CNN Money Magazine. Commissioner Zambrano seconded the motion to accept the minutes with the clarification (amendment) of the publications. The motion passed unanimously.

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR

Mr. Kroop provided a financial report. Mr Kroop provided written information to the commissioners pertaining to the current status of micro-loans and the grant program. This information was reviewed and updated. Mr. Kroop indicated that the personal property of the former owner of the building located at Cherry Ann Street and Dixwell Avenue has a lien

OLD BUSINESS

1. Mr. Kroop reported that here are currently two vacancies on this commission and that he would like to give consideration to all interested parties. Mr. Kroop stated that the Hamden Chamber of Commerce did a “blast” to publicize publicize the vacancies and received a few responses one of which Mr. Kroop deemed a good possibility for commissioner, namely a Mr. Steven Diaz.

Ms. Giannini mentioned that she had heard someone speak on a panel recently who she thought would be a good candidate and that she would provide the individual's name at the next meeting. It was stated that the requirement to be a commissioner is that of Hamden residency.

2. There was a discussion regarding the current zoning regulations related to signage, specifically business signs. Mr Kroop would like the Economic Development Commission to make recommendations to the Planning and Zoning commission for amendments to current signage regulations and/or how requirements are calculated for signs in stores and in shopping centers. Mr. Kroop referenced the Pathmark Plaza as a location where business owners followed one another in putting up too many banners and indicated that he has visited the businesses and clarified correct procedures to the owners. Mr. Kroop then referenced Omnivision, a Hamden optometry business which is currently engaged in a dispute over what has been deemed "illegal signage" by the Hamden Zoning Department. Omnivision requested a "variance" to be able use certain signs. A discussion the followed regarding descriptions of "temporary signs" vs. "product signs", and the need to revise and modify definitions and regulations of said signs. Mr. Rolnick stated that the point of regulations is aesthetics and all signs can be in one category. Ms Giannini questioned why only Omnivision's signs are deemed illegal and not that of other businesses using the same type of signs. All commissioners present agreed that clarification is needed and that the Economic Development Commission will take a position on and perhaps form a sub-committee to explore this issue. Mr. Rolnick suggested that Hamden Chamber Director Nancy Dudchik discuss this topic with local business owners and report to ED commission. Mr. Kroop suggested that a member of the Planning and Zoning Commission be invited to a future EDC meeting for discussion. All present agreed that this is an extremely important issue both in attracting businesses to Hamden and retaining businesses.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Mr. Kroop reviewed the loan request from Desktop Publishing Supplies, Inc. located on Raccio Park Road which is a publishing, printing and internet business. Mr. Kroop is recommending approval of a \$32,000.00 loan over 5 years at prime rate. The commissioners discussed strength and history of the company. Chairman Sacchetti motioned to approve the loan. Commissioner Zambrano seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. Mr. Kroop stated hat there are more applications coming in
2. Elm City Neon which is located on Treadwell Street has applied for en extension on its business incentive. The business is owned by Mr. Fred Caplan and has purchased land on State Street for re-location and ownership. This business has

already had one extension. The business has zoning approval and in the process of obtaining financing. There was a brief discussion of details. The EDC decided to grant Mr. Kaplan an extension contingent upon his providing bank approval and a building permit by the deadline of September 30th.

UPDATES

Mr. Kroop updated the EDC on Whitney Center which held its "Topping Off" Ceremony last week during which the last beam is moved into place and celebrated. Their construction is ahead of schedule and their "Phase 1" which includes 85 apartments will be complete by 2012.

Mr. Kroop reported on his visit to the new DOT Bus Garage. The facility will move from James Street in New Haven to State Street in Hamden. The tour was very impressive. The facility is very large, in fact the largest building in Hamden and three hundred people will be employed there.

Mr. Kroop also reported the following;

The Daddio Farm road project is progressing. The utilities are in. Water and sewer lines still remain to be placed. Possible businesses for this location are Specialty Wire, The Campo Building, and also a fire station headquarters.

Highwood Square is expected to be completed by the end of this year. There is also a lot of other new construction in Highwood.

Newhall Remediation began today, August 10, 2010. Digging will begin on August 23, 2010.

A medical type of business will be moving into the former Sears building. The name of the business will be announced next week.

There is a new Wine Store in Spring Glen on the corner of Central Street and Whitney Avenue.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Sacchetti motioned to adjourn the meeting at 6:36. The motion passed unanimously.

Submitted by Commission Clerk (substitute) Rose Lion