

**Economic Development Commission
Minutes
September 13, 2010**

Members Present: Richard Nunn, Chairman
Tom Collette
Gary Fappiano
Mark Gingras
Rosemarie Preneta
Jim Wolfe

Members Absent: Joseph Mirra, Vice-Chairman

Others Present: Don Roe
Doreen DeSarro
John LeTourneau

Chairman Dick Nunn called the regular meeting of the Economic Development Commission to order at 6:35 p.m.

1. **Approval of Special Meeting Minutes dated August 2, 2010** – Mark Gingras made a motion to approve the August 2, 2010 minutes with no changes; Jim Wolfe seconded the motion. By unanimous vote, the motion carried.
2. **Review of Expenditure Report 10-11** – Nothing to report concerning the August report.
3. **Staff Reports: Marketing Program and WCI/ Downtown**– Doreen DeSarro distributed and reviewed the marketing reports for June and July/August.
 - June 2010 report:

Doreen passed around the Record-Journal page showing the merchants' ads which ran in June; 33 ads were placed in the newspaper. She also mentioned that Wallingford got very good press from the Hartford Business Journal in an article about Route 5, past and present. A draft of the "Results of EDC Marketing Activities for 2009-10" was included with this report. The highlight was the announcement about Fastenal purchasing a 175,000-sf property that had been vacant for 9 years; Fastenal will move its CT subsidiary, Holo-Krome, to the Wallingford location, and bring 100 jobs to the Town.

Jim Wolfe said he liked the report but felt that the report should reflect that the marketing activities are all items that Doreen has, personally, worked on – before the Commission knows about them. A discussion ensued about how best to show Doreen's work in this yearly report. Don Roe said that Doreen DeSarro felt that the report should be consistent with all the former reports so that data could be compare for the last 14 years. The Commission recommended that a cover letter be attached to the copy sent to the Town Council so that Council is aware of which items Doreen handled. John LeTourneau said a cover letter would be a good idea and suggested that it be signed by Don. *Don will draft the cover letter.*

- **July & August 2010 Marketing Report:**
Doreen reviewed the report which included a marketing schedule for the 1st and 2nd quarters of 2010-11. By January the Marketing Schedule for 2010-11 should be completed.

After Doreen's report on WCI, Gary Fappiano commented that the gardeners' market held on Saturday morning is incredible! Others who've attended agreed.

Dick Nunn recently met Tom Marano and found him to be very interesting; *he asked staff to arrange for Tom to be a speaker at an upcoming EDC meeting.*

4. **Subcommittee Reports**

- **P&Z Liaison** – Jim Wolfe told the EDC that Joe Mirra is doing fine. The Planning & Zoning Commission will be holding a workshop on September 27. Jim said the subcommittee met tonight to discuss a proposal to include IX in the I-5 regulations. Some questions were raised, which Jim will bring up at the workshop. Unless directed otherwise by the Commission, Joe will continue to say that the EDC's views on new regulations have not changed—if it looks like an office and acts like an office, the EDC will not object. The EDC said its views have not changed on this issue.
The other item discussed at tonight's Subcommittee meeting was an application before ZBA concerning division of a 9.89 acre parcel of land into two lots of 5 acres and 4.89 acres leaving one lot .11 of an acre shy of a legal lot. A developer wants to build a 25,000-sf building but does not want the entire 9.89 acers. Jim wanted to know how the EDC felt about this application. **Mark Gingras made a motion that the EDC support the proposal to allow the subdivision of the parcel into two lots; Tom Collette seconded the motion. By unanimous approval, the motion carried.**
Dick Nunn pointed out that the three starred items under the "Dates to Remember" are events in which the Commissioners might participate. Mark Gingras, Dick Nunn and Doreen DeSarro plan to attend the UI Economic Development Conference on September 29. Doreen and Don Roe plan to attend the NeTec Conference on November 1. The Commissioners signed up to help Doreen at the EDC's booth on November 17 for the Greater New Haven Chamber Business Expo.
- **Retention/Incentives** – Gary Fappiano reported that the Subcommittee has reviewed a list of new or expanding companies that will get a letter from the EDC.
Gary remarked that he felt the Retention/Incentives Subcommittee should work more closely with the Marketing Subcommittee on some items and plans to attend some of the Marketing Subcommittee's upcoming meetings.
Gary recently talked to a downtown businessman who is questioning the rules concerning outside tables at a restaurant—uptown restaurants are allowed outside tables but his request was denied. Gary wondered if there was a way to help this downtown business. Dick Nunn said that he felt the ultimate decision would rest with the Town Council. While the Council can become involved, John LeTourneau said that the issue first goes to Planning & Zoning. P&Z staff look to follow the rules as adopted. Rosemarie Preneta asked why the uptown restaurants are allowed tables on the sidewalks and not downtown restaurants. John LeTourneau said it has to do with the width of the sidewalk. Members wondered if this could be allowed as a special case. Tom Collette proposed a sunset law for some rules--give a business a set amount of time to try something without rewriting our regulations; members felt this idea has merit. Don Roe pointed out that businesses in the downtown area have several resources for assistance, WCI being one of them. Gary will talk to WCI.
- **Marketing** – Before asking for the Subcommittee report, Dick Nunn read a letter he received from the Mayor concerning the EDC question concerning information signage at exit ramps.
Mark Gingras distributed a draft of the results of the Business Survey. The Subcommittee recommended using the answers to three of the questions. Dick Nunn wondered if the EDC

needed time to look at the draft and perhaps comment at the October meeting. Tom Collette asked the members to read through it now and make a decision tonight. Mark said that although this is the end of the survey it is the beginning of the marketing portion of it; the Subcommittee will next use the results of the survey to assist in developing the Marketing Program. Tom added that they will look to plan for short term, mid term and the long term. The Commission discussed the format of the report on the business survey, including why those three questions/answers were used. The Subcommittee said the basis for the survey was to ask companies (primarily those who had recently relocated into Town) why they chose Wallingford. Those answers would assist with marketing the Town – negatives don't help with marketing. Gary Fappiano asked that the negatives mentioned in the survey be sent to the Retention/Incentives Subcommittee; they might be able to help. The EDC agreed with the Marketing Subcommittee's recommendation to submit the findings of the Business Survey to the Town Council as drafted.

- **Workforce Alliance** – Don Roe reminded the EDC that Workforce Alliance will conduct a workshop at the Public Library on September 15.

5. Regional Matters

- **Central CT Alliance for Economic Development** – Doreen DeSarro and Don Roe will meet with these towns on September 14.
- **New Haven Manufacturers Association** – Don Roe distributed the Fall/Winter Program Schedule and noted a Manufacturing Work Summit on October 7 at Covidien that might be of interest. *Don will forward the e-mail about this event to all Commissioners.*
- **Quinnipiac Chamber of Commerce** – The Annual Athena Awards luncheon is on October 15; Don asked that any Commissioners interested in attending the luncheon call the office so reservations can be made.
- **REX** – Dick Nunn distributed information about REX, the successor of the Regional Growth Partnership. When asked about the cost of dues, Don Roe said he did not have the exact figure but estimated them to be \$12,000-\$13,000 per year, which is less than those charged by RGP. Don and Doreen DeSarro are attending a charette at REX where the direction of that organization will be discussed.
- **Workforce Alliance** – No report.

There being no further business, Tom Collette made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:15 p.m.; Jim Wolfe seconded the motion. By unanimous vote, the motion carried.

Sincerely,

Lynn M. Wolff