

Town of Newtown, CT

3 Primrose Street, Newtown, CT

12-20-11

The Economic Development Commission held a regular meeting on Tuesday, December 20, 2011 in meeting room 3 of the Municipal Center located at 3 Primrose Street, Newtown, CT 06470.

The meeting was called to order by co - chairman, Margaret Oliger at 7:12 pm.

Present: Co - chairman, Margaret Oliger, Co – Chairman, Donald Sharpe, Secretary, Joe Humeston, Vice – Chairman, Walter Motyka, Joe Tarshis, Jean Leonard

Absent: Tom Murtha, Elana Bertram

Also Present: Elizabeth Stocker, Director of Economic and Community Development, Robert Rau

Acceptance of Minutes:

Mr. Sharpe made a motion to accept the minutes of the November 15, 2011 and November 21, 2011 meeting minutes as submitted. Mr. Motyka seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

Public Participation and Invited Guests:

The invited guests from Axel Plastics, Jason Axel and Steve Abbott, did not attend the meeting. There was still a discussion regarding Axel Plastics where Mr. Motyka raised his concerns about the chemicals used by Axel and how they would be disposed of, he wanted to know their intention. Their chemical usage and disposal was looked into by the fire, land use, and health departments. After some discussion it was decided that if they are still interested they are invited to join the EDC at another meeting to discuss their business coming to Newtown if that is still on their agenda. Mr. Sharpe stated it would be helpful to have a discussion about their wants to ensure that the commission's support of Axel is well-placed.

Reports:

Director of Economic & Community Development – Report and Budget Update

Report attached after minutes.

Ms. Stocker stated there will be a joint meeting between ACOE and DEEP in January about Tech Park. They put in an extension request with DEEP about their comments on a deficient application. Ms. Stocker informed the Commission that Andy Gorosko from *The Newtown Bee* has comments about the process and will more than likely publish an article. Ms. Stocker encouraged the Commission members to attend the meeting in January; the date has not been set yet.

Ms. Stocker emphasized to the Commission how active the development activity has been since the last meeting in November.

Ms. Stocker spoke about a new grant being created by the EPA for assessment and clean – up of brownfields. A similar application has been put through for the single family houses on the Fairfield Hills Campus to demolish and clean up the area and make it into open space.

Ms. Stocker informed the Commission that the budget has been submitted to the finance director and First Selectman.

Ms. Stocker encouraged the Commission members to attend the Reinventing Connecticut session being held in Danbury on January 12.

Roundtable Discussion – Ongoing Activities

Ms. Oliger and Mr. Sharpe spoke about the Chamber of Commerce / EDC breakfast event they attended. Ms. Oliger stated it was not well attended but she is interested in potentially co – sponsoring future events with the Chamber and combine the educational element and social element that the events tend to have. Mr. Sharpe made a point that there is a small group involved with the Chamber and more interest seems to be created in social events rather than educational events. Mr. Motyka made the suggestion of inviting outside people from around town like entrepreneurs and representatives from agencies like the EPA. Ms. Stocker spoke about meetings held in the past targeting agricultural businesses to an event, to make them aware of their value. Ms. Oliger is going to look into what other types of events similar commissions hold in nearby towns for some event ideas.

Mr. Tarshis spoke of the Best of Newtown and how he is working on creating a website and gathering volunteers for various committees involved with the event. He is creating a form for participating businesses to fill out and send back indicating their wish to be involved. Mr. Tarshis is sending out emails to the committees indicating what their focus should be at the present time. He said that 50 – 75% of the businesses he has been visiting indicated they would like to be involved with the event. It will coincide with the Rooster Run, a 5K race.

Mr. Motyka spoke about feedback he received from the “Road Map” meeting. Participants took home their “road maps” to further look over the received information. Mr. Motyka asked Ms. Stocker for a copy of the Planning and Zoning articles so he can match them with the “Road Map” and make it easier for anyone using the “Road Map”, they will know exactly what needs to be done in terms of permits and laying out the process.

Mr. Sharpe stated that a letter is going out to the town officials and heads of the Commissions will include the pamphlet “signs” as an example of what the EDC is trying to do to make it easier for local businesses.

Mr. Sharpe also spoke about another letter to town officials, boards, and commissions about the EDC’s wish to be involved in development going on around town. The EDC would like feedback on their involvement and would like to be involved in an as needed basis.

On another note, Mr. Sharpe stated the EDC will have to go before the three legislative bodies in defense of the new budget.

Ms. Stocker referenced the handout she gave to all members about Branding Western Connecticut. It held the summaries of two focus groups in the Western Connecticut area which indicated the need for entertainment and public transportation. It also concluded that family is one of the main things keeping people in the area.

Mr. Humeston attended a SHOP (Sandy Hook Organization for Prosperity) meeting where Andrew Sachs spoke about Deals Around Town to help businesses engage in activities. This program is intended to help develop business in different pockets of Newtown. Mr. Humeston will be inviting Mr. Sachs to attend a future EDC meeting, potentially February 21.

Mr. Humeston also stated he will be meeting with Michael Burton, president of SHOP, in regards to any concerns he may have and how the EDC could be of assistance in developing business in Sandy Hook.

Officers for 2012:

Mr. Motyka motioned that the current officers (Co-chair, Margaret Oliger, Co – Chair, Donald Sharpe, Vice – Chair, Walter Motyka, Secretary, Joe Humeston) remain as the officers for the 2012 year. The motion was seconded by Mr. Tarshis. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Sharpe volunteered to fill – in for Mr. Humeston who will be unable to attend the February and March EDC meetings.

Calendar for 2012:

The meetings for 2012 will remain on the third Tuesday of each month; the calendar follows the minutes and report from Ms. Stocker.

Mr. Motyka motioned that the calendar for 2012 be accepted as presented with the meetings remaining on the third Tuesday of each month. The motion was seconded by Mr. Sharpe. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Tarshis spoke about some concerns some business owners have in town about their dumpster enclosures and how the enclosures have been broken in the past over the winter months because of snow build up. He will speak to the owners about shoveling and taking care of the enclosures or possibly moving the dumpsters to a less visible spot where an enclosure will not be needed.

Adjournment:

Mr. Sharpe made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:00 pm. The motion was seconded by Mr. Humeston. The motion was carried unanimously.

The next regular meeting will occur on Tuesday, January 17, 2012 at 7:00 pm at the Newtown Municipal Center.

Submitted, Jessica Smith, clerk.

**REPORT BY ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR
FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION**

December 2011

1. **Tech Park:** The ACOE & DEEP permits are in process and written comments have been received. SBA is organizing a meeting with all parties-an early Jan meeting is expected. Bob Rau has been copied on all correspondence & the First Selectman has been briefed. The monthly ad in the NE REJ for the Tech Park continue to run.

2. The Tech Park, Fairfield Hills, Batchelder continue to be **advertised** on Loop Net, Co Star & CERC Site Finder. I listed several privately owned commercial properties for the property owners and brokers who have asked to be listed on CERC Site Finder under the EDC.

3. **EDC web site** updates are ongoing. MaryJane is working on the Commission profiles. We have to add the new strategic plan and an enews archive utilizing Constant Contact, the sign pamphlets and the permitting road map.

4. **Commercial development activity** - Several inquiries came in over the past month as follows:

- Rock climbing business seeking 6,000 sf building (potential Turnberry Lane property)
- Local landscaping business seeks location (zoning problem with trucks in residential)
- Inquiry for a site that could accommodate a propane tank farm & regional delivery
- 7 Edmond Road (155,000 sf) is on the market for sale at \$5.9 million
- Manufacturing seeking 15,000 sf for expansion (out of town bus)
- Indication that a proposed medical office building on Mt. Pleasant Rd. will break ground soon
- Out of town service company seeking 5,000+/- sf for business expansion
- Axel Plastics filed an application for the business incentive program
- Manufacturing co. from out of state seeking location – 300 jobs (7 Edmond Road)
- Start up seeking assistance with zoning/site needs – referred to zoning
- Local business seeking new site for business expansion need 6,000 sf office space
- Local business seeking information about bids for town work at Fairfield Hills
- McGuire's Ale House will be opening on Mt. Pleasant Rd. (former Hot Shots)
- Inquiry for indoor sports training facility – Fairfield Hills potential
- Inquiry from out of state co seeking 125,000 – 175,000 sf light mfg./administration
- Inquiry for the Tech Park land for pharmaceutical/medical/R&D

5. **Sandy Hook:** The water line extension should be completed and the intersection will move forward when DOT and the utilities determine the timeline – spring is expected. Monthly meetings are held with representatives of SHOP.

6. **Grants:** No word on the \$500,000 **STEAP** application that was submitted in June for the infrastructure/streetscape work at Fairfield Hills. The **EPA** clean up and assessment grant applications were submitted. EPA called to say that they will be offering a new grant for single properties that have a need for assessment and clean up. The next round of CT

Brownfields grants will be announced on Jan. 6th and are due in Hartford on Feb. 3rd. The **Transportation enhancement program** requests (sidewalks) are due to HVCEO on January 9th.

7. **Budget:** A request to increase the EDC's consulting budget by \$10,000 (to \$40,000) has been submitted. Budget meetings will begin in January.

8. The Celebrate CT event was held at the Bushnell Theatre in Hartford on December 7th. We celebrated awardees from around the state including two from Danbury. The Matrix Realty Company who worked on the Matrix Corporate Center project and the Western CT Health Care Network (Danbury and New Milford Hospital merger) were honored as contributing to our economic success.

9. Catherine Smith, Commissioner of DECD will continue hosting business information sessions to discuss the new initiatives from the CT legislature. She will be in Danbury at the Matrix Corp. Center on January 12th from 8:30 to 10 am. Other dates/locations available as well.

10. The Western CT CEDS (WC CEDS) group meets on January 18th in Danbury. I will attend.

11. The Naugatuck Valley Corridor Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (NVC CEDS) group meets next on January 19th in Shelton. I will plan to attend.

12/19/2011 Elizabeth Stocker 203-270-4271

Town of Newtown
Economic Development Commission

2012 Meeting Schedule

The Economic Development Commission will have regular meeting on the third Tuesday of each month at 7PM. For 2012, the meeting dates are as follows:

January 17 th	April 17 th	July 17 th	October 16 th
February 21 st	May 15 th	August 21 st	November 20 th
March 20 th	June 19 th	September 18 th	December 18 th