

Economic Development Advisory Committee

5.13.09 Meeting notes

Americana Room – Hampshire Hills

Present:

Tom Sapienza, Chairman, Hampshire Hills Sports Club
Rich Ball, Cirtronics Corporation
Sean Trombly, Trombly Gardens
Dale White, Leighton A. White, Inc.
Rosie Deloge, Milford School District representative
John McCormack, TIFD representative
George Infanti, Milford Paint and Wallpaper
Brad Chappell, Chappell Tractor
Matt Ciardelli, Ciardelli Fuel Co
Tim O'Connell, Butternut Farms
Chris Costantino, Conservation Commission representative
Janet Langdell, Planning Board representative

Bill Parker, Director Community Development
Guy Scaife, Town Administrator

T. Sapienza called the meeting to order at 7:35AM.

Minutes

Approval of the May 6, 2009 minutes was tabled to the next meeting due to B. Parker's "copying issues".

Discussion with Town Administrator Guy Scaife

T. Sapienza welcomed Guy Scaife, Town Administrator, invited to this morning's meeting to discuss the work of the Economic Development Advisory Committee thus far and as presented in the final draft *Recommendations to Foster Economic Development in Milford*. T. Sapienza stated that G. Scaife had a key role in the recommendations as many recommendations needed his support to help carry out, and that the report focused on how the Town, businesses, and taxpayers can work together to make necessary improvements to better promote economic development in Town. T. Sapienza noted that even though there were very many positives regarding Milford's situation, there are areas that can always be improved.

G. Scaife thanked the Committee and commended the group on its efforts. G. Scaife explained that to move forward to address issues he would need specifics to focus on, whether regulatory, overarching policy, or Town functions that could be better streamlined. He noted that the Board of Selectmen would need to formulate the overarching economic development policy, and that he felt Town government had the bandwidth to fix the issues. G. Scaife mentioned a recent visit to Hitchiner Manufacturing by Selectman Tim Finan, John McCormack, Bill Parker and himself which identified educational opportunities/training and affordable housing as its main issues. J. McCormack added that high energy costs were also a Hitchiner issue. R. Deloge added that much of the work done with the Schools may not be well-enough known and acknowledged the need for greater outreach.

Discussion ensued on the Committee's listing of priority areas to address, obtaining more perspective from the development community, Milford's tax rate, the future of BROX land development, and workforce housing. T. Sapienza noted that one of the recommendations of the Committee is to enlist all parties to build community wide support for economic development, and that the priorities reflect areas of improvement that can be done right away versus long-term. To accomplish solid economic development there must be a two-way street and an attitude of the Town of "what can we do to help businesses". R. Deloge stated that the Committee did not want to tell G. Scaife what to do and how to do it, that the detail and specifics would come upon further work. J. McCormack added that the big picture must be understood by the Selectmen and that management by objective should be followed. G. Scaife followed up that he can direct staff in the right direction, and areas that can be focused on include the website and streamlining permitting and procedures. All agreed that one of the big issues is to get the Selectmen to understand there is a big economic picture to consider. R. Ball added that commitment was necessary to make Milford inviting and business-friendly, building an atmosphere that allows the Town to

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prosper. T. O'Connell added that the report recommends a proactive and positive approach to economic development. D. White stated that it is a privilege to be a part of the community, and that economic development and support of existing customers and businesses is essential. The Town cannot stick its head in the sand, and must be proactive with regards to infrastructure development and in seeking out ways to make the tax burden lighter. One of the recommendations is to create an ongoing economic development advisory group. G. Scaife agreed that an economic development group is necessary to 'push' the Selectmen in developing economic policy.

After much discussion, and at 9 AM, the meeting was brought to a close by T. Sapienza who thanked G. Scaife for visiting with the Committee.

B. Parker noted that he would not be able to attend a meeting on the next two Wednesdays, and the group scheduled the next meeting for Wednesday, June 2, 2009 with the goal of finalizing the recommendations and preparing for the BOS presentation.

The meeting adjourned at 9:05 AM.