

# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COUNCIL

## ~ 2012 REPORT ~

The 15-member Economic Development Advisory Council (EDAC), established in 2009, represents a broad-based group of Milford citizens and business owners working to strengthen and retain the existing business and commercial base in Town and encourage opportunities for new economic growth. The Council was given the charge by the Selectmen to:

*“...develop and recommend economic development policy in accordance with the goals of the Milford Board of Selectmen and Milford Master Plan, and utilizing the report Recommendations to Foster Economic Development in Milford dated June 8, 2009, facilitate the economic development goals, recommendations, and actions at the direction of the Board of Selectmen.”*

The Council met regularly in 2012. Early in the year EDAC focused on promoting the land use and regulatory changes proposed by the Planning Board, namely the Commerce and Community District and the West Elm Street Gateway District. These zoning changes incorporated such elements as fast-track permitting and architectural guidelines with the intent of expediting the review and approval process required of property owners and developers. This in turn is intended to address issues of uncertainty faced by developers when proposing changes ahead of time and thus addressing the EDAC goal of simplifying processes when ‘time is money’, as identified in the 2009 Recommendations to Foster Economic Development in Milford, Report to the Milford Board of Selectmen and Planning Board

Additionally through the course of 2012, EDAC members focused considerable time analyzing how best to encourage balanced economic growth in Town. With that in mind, EDAC members began two initiatives. The first initiative, spearheaded by the Policies and Procedures Committee, was the development of a customer service survey centered on the Community Development Office. The results of this survey, being distributed in early 2013, will be used as a foundation for customer service improvements, if needed, for the Community Development Office, as well as regulatory boards, such as the Planning Board and Zoning Board of Adjustment.

The second initiative builds upon the issue of ‘what should the local economy be in ten years and how does the Town get there?’ This overarching need for a coherent Town-wide economic development policy that is utilized by decision-makers and supported by the general public is essential for encouraging appropriate and realistic economic growth in Town. Issues such as zoning and land use, permitting and regulations, marketing the Town as a desirable location for business, and improvements to and expansion of roads, sidewalks, water and sanitary sewer lines, and communications all should be based on achievable economic development strategies. The result of the policy initiative will be presented to the Board of Selectmen in 2013.

In 2012 EDAC continued to proactively support development projects that will provide positive economic development benefits to the Town, such as the Pine Valley Mill Affordable Housing project, the proposed Eecotech Development acquisition of the former police station and the tax increment financing district properties, and initiatives of the Milford Improvement Team (MIT). Building communication, resources, and cooperation between existing businesses and the Town as well as building a strong diversified local economy for the future is the mission of the Economic Development Advisory Council. If at any time additional information is needed, please contact Bill Parker, Community Development Director at 249-0620 or at:

<http://www.milford.nh.gov/town/boards-committees-and-commissions/community-development/economic-development-advisory-council> or any EDAC member.

Respectfully submitted,

Matt Ciardelli, Chairman,

Economic Development Advisory Council

