

Economic Development Committee

Minutes from the meeting of February 14, 2005

<u>Present</u>	<u>Also Present</u>
G. Daley, Chair	R. Kearney, EDS
S. Gionfriddo	
J. Robinson	
R. Santangelo	
J. Bibisi	
Public: D. Hopkins, M. Gallaher, P. Hylton, S. Strickling, P. Femia, T. McKinney	

- A Call to Order:** Daley called the meeting to order at 5:37 PM.
- B Public Session**
- C Minutes:** Gionfriddo made a motion seconded by Bibisi to approve the minutes of December 13, 2004 and the Special Meeting of January 3, 2005. The committee approved the motion, Santangelo abstained from the January 3, 2005 meeting minutes approval.
- D Communications**
- E Old Business**
- 1) **Middlesex YMCA Parking Lot**
 - 2) **350 Main Street EXECUTIVE SESSION- discussion of the selection of a site or the lease, sale or purchase of real estate by a political subdivision of the state when publicity regarding such site, lease, sale, purchase or construction would cause a likelihood of increased price until such time as all of the property has been acquired or all proceedings or transactions concerning same have been terminated or abandoned, exempt from disclosure under Section 1-200(6)(D) of the Connecticut General Statutes.**
 - 3) **CBB Parking**

- 4) **Potential lease of 180 Johnson Street EXECUTIVE SESSION- discussion of the selection of a site or the lease, sale or purchase of real estate by a political subdivision of the state when publicity regarding such site, lease, sale, purchase or construction would cause a likelihood of increased price until such time as all of the property has been acquired or all proceedings or transactions concerning same have been terminated or abandoned, exempt from disclosure under Section 1-200(6)(D) of the Connecticut General Statutes.**

- 5) **HOPE Inc - Bretton Road proposal:** Kearney described the department comments. Gionfriddo questioned the sight lines. General discussion ensued. Hopkins stated Bianco is working on plans for a small single story starter home for the project. Daley asked if the city could find a more viable property since this one appears to be marginal for building. Robinson asked if there was other vacant land available. Robinson questioned whether the process could be circumvented to allow for non-profits so that the community could benefit by fostering affordable housing. Gionfriddo stated the RFP could be written with language requiring affordable housing be built. Daley stated the city has previously sold properties for reasons other than just maximizing the money on the sale. Robinson stated the city has previously worked with HOPE and Habasit including a HUD property in the Highlands. Kearney stated he would ask Wackers about any additional HUD properties. Daley asked staff to work with HOPE in finding property for the project.

F New Business

- 1) **131 & 155 Wadsworth Street:** Gionfriddo asked why this item is before the committee since the property is owned by the State of Connecticut. Daley stated the city has first right of refusal on the sale of state property. Daley stated the offer needs to be made to the state. Femia described the condition of the properties and questioned that the state is looking to sell the properties for \$150,000. Gionfriddo restated the offer would give \$150,000 to the state and \$20,000 to the city. Femia stated the properties would be rehabilitated and rented to Wesleyan faculty. Daley asked how the city would own the property first? Strickland stated the transaction would be a double closing. Daley stated the city customarily advertises an RFP for a competitive offering and other proposals. Gionfriddo stated the offer to buy and fix up properties is now public knowledge. Robinson stated it is the city's prior practice to advertise property for sale with an RFP.. Gionfriddo asked how the committee could negotiate now with the potential of receiving higher offers at a later date. Daley asked if the city had any statutes that regulated the sale of property by the city. Daley stated the city previously offered property up for sale by the RFP process. Santangelo stated the city has considered the site for the fire dispatch center. Daley state that if the city were planning to sell the property the first step would be to circulate the plan to city departments and if the city departments recommended the sale then the

property would be advertised by the RFP process. Daley recommended the applicant go to the State of Connecticut Public Works Department and questioned what the state process is. Gionfriddo stated the city has the right of first refusal. Robinson stated the plan to use the property for the Cross Street dispatch center. Strickland asked what would happen to the house in between the 2 properties. Robinson stated the city would purchase the property. Daley stated the committee recommends that the applicant go to the State of Connecticut Department of Public Works with the offer. The state will offer the property to the city and force the city to make a decision about the property.

- 2) **Harbor Park Restaurant, option to extend lease:** Gionfriddo stated that he did legal work for the lease. General discussion of the notice to renew the lease. Bibisi questioned on whether the lease had repaired the boardwalk. Santangelo stated concern of the issues of loud music and people wandering off the premises with alcohol. Gionfriddo stated the lease is entitled to the option and the city would have to prove the lease is not in compliance with the lease. Robinson asked when the lease was up and stated the city needs to seek due diligence in the process of reviewing the lease. Daley stated the city would need to provide default and asked staff to seek out police, parks & recreation and fire departments records of the property. Santangelo stated that when his windows were opened he could hear noise coming from the restaurant. Daley requested that staff keep the issue in front of the committee during this option period.
- 3) **CHFA Police Homeownership Program:** General discussion ensued.
- 4) **Realtor/Developer Reception:** Daley asked the committee if they would like to continue hosting the event. The committee affirmed. Daley asked how many people attend. Kearney responded the average attendance is 50-75 people. Kearney suggested looking into hosting the event at the Cameron Gallery and having a caterer provide the refreshments. Daley agreed and asked Kearney to research the costs and report back to the committee.

G Status Reports

- 1) **Economic Development Fund, monthly report**
- 2) **Economic Development Specialist Report**
- 3) **REINVEST Loan Program, monthly summary report**
- 4) **JOBS Loan Program, monthly summary report**
 - a) **Carta, Food Imports of Middletown**

H Other

I Adjournment: There being no further business, Santangelo made a motion seconded by Bibisi to adjourn. The committee approved the motion to adjourn.