

City of Middletown
Economic Development Committee

Minutes

9/10/01

Present	Absent	Also Present
G. Daley R. Santangelo J. Robinson	S. Shapiro S. Gionfriddo	W. Warner, PCD R. Kearney, PCD
Public: L. McHugh; R. Hill, W. Vasiliou; V. Amato; A. McCalla		

- A Call to Order:** Daley called the meeting to order at 7:22 PM.
- B Public Session**
- C Minutes:** Santangelo motioned to accept the 9/10/01 meeting minutes, Robinson seconded; the committee voted unanimously to approve the motion.
- D Communications**
- E Old Business**
 - 1) **North End Industrial Area**
 - a) **Remington Rand**
 - 2) **Industrial Park Area and Vicinity**
 - a) **Lot 21 Middle ST/Timber Ridge RD**
 - 3) **Brownfields-Riverfront Properties**
 - 4) **Armory**

5) REINVEST Loan

- a) **Petracca;** Kearney presented the project progress stating the basement floor may not be finished prior to the closing. The collateral is sufficient to cover any contingencies. The committee agreed to proceed with the closing under these circumstances.

6) 646-654 Main ST

7) I-3 Development Plan

8) Community Economic Development Fund (CEDF)

9) VERIZON Wireless Tower

10) INFORM: Warner stated the General Fund and the Remington Rand budget are supporting the \$25,000-30,000 annual expense, this is a big hit out of the Remington Rand budget. Warner and McHugh had conversations regarding funding of staffing services ranging from \$1-1,500/mo. Hill stated INFORM was looking at various funding options. Vasiliou stated it is not the intent of the INFORM Board to have this kind of a funding arrangement and funding options are being considered. INFORM has contributed 30 years of expertise to the city at no cost. This expertise is a specialty item. INFORM provides comprehensive location and utility information and is a proactive recruitment organization. The city has benefited from INFORM's infrastructure improvements. INFORM is not just a realtor marketing thing. INFORM is a specialty thing. Daley questioned what the proposal would be. Vasiliou agreed that a reduced amount of dollars and other mechanisms to target numbers with other ways to accomplish the goals of INFORM. Vasiliou questioned is the issue money. INFORM is not comfortable with just staff level representation; industry is a different type of development, and there is a need for somebody able to understand these issues like Joe Carney who came from the industrial environment. INFORM has had a good relationship with the city. Amato state the results in job growth generated over the years by INFORM. INFORM is uncomfortable with the city paying to fund these organizations. The city doesn't need INFORM, what INFORM needs is a piece of land to market.

Daley asked for the Chamber's comments. McHugh stated he is an appointee by the Mayor to the INFORM. Board. The Chamber works on many city industrial development issues including MAT bus services. McHugh cited the lack of land and group relocation efforts with city staff. Chamber is proposing \$1,300/mo for staff to keep INFORM Board going. Relooking 2-3 years down the line for land. There is a need to hire someone in the \$50-60-100,000/year range to do accomplish this kind of job. Daley questioned what \$1,300/month would give the city. McHugh stated a person would be hired part time or full time and work for another community, or maybe a Chamber staff member could do this work. Hill stated he appreciated the 7 years of service. INFORM's accomplishments include: web site attracted over 46,000 hits; a 5 state mailing, the annual Realtors Conference (by McHugh) and an inventory of properties. INFORM brought 66 companies, 1504 jobs and 1.5 million square feet to the city. Hill stated he enjoyed working with all involved. Daley suggested a memo of understanding

be drafted between the city, INFORM and the Chamber of 1-2 pages stating what the city would get. McHugh stated the chamber would work directly with the city on an agreement. Daley stated support for the continuation of INFORM. Robinson made a motion to accept Daley's proposal, Santangelo seconded, the committee voted unanimously approve the motion. Warner stated to INFORM that the Remington Rand facility budget pays \$37,000 in property management and \$30,000 to INFORM. The facility is being cleaned up with DECD and DEP funds and could be sold or run by an organization like INFORM. Hill stated INFORM is discussing with Armetta his Maromas property. Daley thanked Hill and asked that he stay in touch.

F New Business

- a) 47 Rapallo Avenue Parking:** Warner described the problems of no funds available for paving, responsibility of digging and the lead and asbestos issues. McCalla described the compact nature of the soil, sidewalk disrepair and the need for curb cuts and ADA issues. Warner discussed the North End Redevelopment Plan. McCalla discussed with the Mayor a 10 year agreement with lease terms of \$1/yr. McCalla would install lights and paving. Robinson questioned if this parking is included in the North End Redevelopment Plan. Warner stated the plan has always been to have parking connecting Rapallo to Green. Santangelo questioned the impact on resident parking needs. Warner stated the city does rent parking space to businesses. McCalla described a plan for 22 spaces fenced in, questioning the layout relative to ADA issues for exclusive use for 45 years. Robinson questioned the logic of giving up use after 5 years. Daley questioned the cost of the project. Robinson mentioned city guidelines relative to paving and development contracting. McHugh questioned the commitment to the community and minimizing giving away property rights. Santangelo stated the project would help the business with parking for after business hours and lunch with exclusively initial use. Robinson questioned if Public Works could pave the lot. Daley stated city funds are too tight to pay for this project and turning over the project creates liability issues. Daley questioned whether other interests like private parking lot operators would be interested in acquiring the lot and/or operating the city parking lots. Santangelo stated the business depends on parking and suggested considering a REINVEST Loan to finance the property. Daley cautioned turning over the property. Warner questioned the possibility of road bonds to do the paving. Kearney and Warner suggested financing and operation issues and alternatives be looked at and discussed at the next meeting.
- b) Hubbard Field:** Warner presented the proposal to pave the parking lot. P&Z denied the request relative to giving up public land to private use. Park & Recreation Dept. is in favor of the proposal. Description of the lease with lighting and paving. Lease would be for business hours. The lot would be available for the public on weekends and evenings or upon request. Santangelo questioned using public property by private users relative to the precedent of the Dialysis Center an the Parking arcade. Robinson made a motion to approve the lease, Santangelo seconded; the committee voted unanimously approved the lease.

c) **Plan of Development:** Warner described the document and stated he is reviewing this with all committees. Discussion of the document. Santangelo made a motion to approve Section 5.0, Robinson seconded; the committee voted unanimously to approve the motion.

d) **Workforce Development Contract**

e) **DECD Distressed Community Designation;** Robinson questioned how the city would be affected. Warner stated the percentage formula for state funding would be lessened. Santangelo questioned where the numbers came from. Kearney stated the IRS and DOL. Santangelo stated poverty is being under reported. Daley stated this is a losing battle. Santangelo stated this is an indication the city is doing better. Daley stated this will place additional demands on the city. Santangelo stated the need for controlling zoning and water & sewer to prevent undue expansion of requests for city services.

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**

5) **INFORM, monthly report**

H Other

I **Adjournment:** There being no further business, the committee adjourned at 8:20 PM.