

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
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CITY CLERK
ANSONIA, CONNECTICUT

Keith Murray
Chairman
Saleh "Sal" Hanaif
Vice Chairman
William Luneski
Secretary
Gregg Seccombe
Treasurer

Sheila O'Malley
Executive Director

MINUTES

REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING, THURSDAY, JUNE 18, 2015 ALDERMANIC CHAMBERS 7:00 PM

The Economic Development Commission held its Regular Monthly meeting on Thursday, June 18, 2015. The meeting began at 7:05 P.M.

Roll call:

Keith Murray	Present
William Luneski	Present
Sal Hanaif	Absent
Greg Seccombe	Late 7:10
Terri Goldson	Present
Jeff Sweeney	Present
Bart Flaherty	Present
Horace Behrle	Present
Charles Stowe	Present

8 present, 1 absent

also present:

Sheila O'Malley, Executive Director of Economic Development
Corporation Council John Marini

Mr. Murray opened the meeting at 7:05. The meeting began with the pledge of allegiance to the flag.

Mr. Murray opened the floor to approve April's minutes. Mr. Luneski made a motion to approve the minutes. Mr. Behrle seconded the motion. All were in favor of the motion.

Mr. Murray then opened the Public Session. No one wished to speak during the Public Session. As there one that wished to speak during the session, Mr. Murray closed the Public Session.

Mr. Murray then asked if there was any correspondence. He was told that there was none. He then

asked if there were any bills. He was again told that there were none.

Mr. Flaherty made a motion to deviate from the agenda so that they could hear from Ms. Low. The motion was seconded by Mr. Seccombe. All were in favor of the motion.

Ms. Lisa Low was present with her associates, Tom Foley, Housing Rehab and Debbie McKay, Eligibility Review. Mr. Murray stated that the last time that Ms. Low was present, the Commission had some concerns about a lot of very "high value" projects in the list that was presented. He then stated that what the Commission would like to see going forward is more projects in the smaller dollar range. He then stated that it was the Commission's understanding that there is quite a long waiting list of people with applications for smaller projects. They would like to see smaller projects addressed and complete as many projects as possible. He suggested that maybe they should place a cap on the amount for each project. He was told that the state actually placed a cap of \$30, 000 per single family home or \$50, 000 for a multifamily home. If the project were to go over that, the applicant could make an appeal to the state. He was also told that there is no longer a waiting list. They have served every single applicant on the list at this point in time.

Mr. Sweeney asked what are the drawbacks to getting people approved for the program. He was told that the criteria that disqualifies an applicant is that they have to have at least 90% equity in their home, they have to meet the HUD income limits for the City of Ansonia, and you have to be up to date on your local taxes. They need to provide 6 weeks of pay stubs. They are trying to make sure that the applications are being processed at a quick pace. These are 0% interest loans, which do not have to be paid back until the home is sold.

Mr. Stowe asked what the income limit is if they are employed? He was told that it is located on the last page of the application and depends on the number of people in the family. The program requires them to look at Carbon Monoxide Detectors, Smoke Detectors, GFI's and lead abatement. Chairman Murray stated that he would like a representative from Ms. Low's firm come to our monthly meeting and give a report as to what applications they have received, the cost of the projects, etc.

Mr. Flaherty stated that he feels that they should stick with the State guidelines. Mr. Murray agreed and stated that he was just concerned that there were so many high cost applications in the past as well as repeat applicants. Ms. Low then explained that when they see repeat applicants what happens is that they had to do an emergency furnace in late fall. They would then go back and complete the balance of what needed to be done. Mr. Flaherty then asked if by doing that, does that disrupt the first come, first served... He was told that the emergency repair is completed and then they go back to the normal place on the list. Ms. Low then stated that it's usually a furnace, roof or septic that needs to be repaired or replaced in an emergency. The Commission had no further questions for Ms. Low and her associates.

Mr. Murray then asked if there was anyone that wished to speak.

Mr. Luneski introduced two new restaurant owners. Ty Wilson, from Savor Lounge (former Mustang Sally's location), they just opened the previous week and stated that it seems to be slowly gaining in popularity. He met Mr. Luneski while he was passing out flyers to local businesses. Mr. Luneski

invited him to an EDC meeting. They are open 11-11. Mr. Wilson passed out menus to the members. They will be having a grand opening on July 1st.

Mr. Luneski made a motion to move the Taste the Valley agenda item to be the next item discussed. The motion was seconded by Mr. Sweeney. All were in favor of the motion.

Mr. Luneski stated that he had some restaurant owners approach him about doing something to promote the restaurants in the city. He felt that it would be logical to discuss this idea to possibly coincide with the summer bands that will be playing on select Wednesday evenings. There was a young lady named Sandy with the Valley Ad Book. She is willing to help with creating a booklet featuring different restaurants in town. The books go out to 30, 000 people. She stated that if we had enough participants, we could do our own mailer, but the postage is very costly. She stated that they may want to mail out to a smaller number of households to keep the cost down. She then explained that we could do a newspaper insert instead that would also reduce the cost as well. Mr. Murray asked if they decided to do a booklet, what would the minimum number of participants be to make it worthwhile. He was told that we would need to make it at least 30 pages to make it cost effective. It could be one or two vendors per page. He then asked what the cost would be for a page. She stated that she wasn't sure what the cost would be. To mail the pieces it would be approximately .17 per household or \$5,100 for 30, 000 households. Mr. Seccombe suggested that create a card that requires you to go to all x amount of restaurants and as a reward you are entered into a raffle for something of value. The members decided to revisit this item in September.

Mr. Murray then moved on to new business and requested that Ms. O'Malley present her report. Ms. O'Malley passed out the redevelopment proposal presented by Copper City Development. They received two bids, they were from Mr. Mustapha Diakhate and Copper City Development. Mr. Diakhate did not include a required \$10,000 refundable deposit. Also, the bid was supposed to be sealed, his was not sealed. Due to those facts, his bid was rejected.

Copper City has a financial investment of approximately nine million dollars. They are proposing a total of 95 units: 9 one bedroom studio units, 21 one bedroom units, and 15 two bedroom units on the 2nd third and fourth floor of 159 Main Street. On the first floor of 159 Main they are proposing 12, 000 square feet of retail and restaurant. 497 East Main Street, they are proposing 50 units: 40 one bedroom, 10 two bedroom units. The City is currently talking about the Senior Center and what will happen with that. Mr. Goldson asked if an impact study was done regarding this. He further explained that with two bedroom units there is a possibility of children living at the location. He wanted to know how these units would impact the schools? Ms. O'Malley stated that reports such as this would be done. She further explained that the City has the right to reject the proposal. Mr. Goldson stated that they have to do impact studies. As it is the schools are looking to utilize "portable classrooms". Mr. Stowe then asked about the parking for these units. He further stated that since we need to be concerned about parking, we could include an impact study in regard to the schools. Ms. O'Malley stated that it's the responsibility of the developer to make a full presentation, including a feasibility study. We can ask them to do a impact study as well in regard to what the impact will be to the school system. Mr. Goldson made a motion to support the proposal. The motion was seconded by Mr. Luneski. All were in favor of the motion.

Mr. Behrle asked what was happening with Washington Management (Mr. Mustapha Diakhate) and its property. Corporation Council stated that he is currently delinquent on his taxes and he has outstanding blight liens. The City is preparing to perform delinquent collections on them. These accounts will be putting tax liens on the properties in question. There is a judicial process that needs to be complied with. Mr. Behrle stated that he is not happy that the stairs in the alley way between the two buildings is now blocked off. He explained that those stairs are a right of way. Corporation Council stated that the alley way is not safe as there is debris that falls from the buildings. Mr. Behrle stated that the city should clean it up because that alley way is city property. Council Marini stated that it is because there is so much glass falling from the building that it is unsafe. There are no more meetings scheduled with this property owner. The lenders have a court order that will allow them to get onto the property to remediate it, but to date nothing has been done.

Mr. Behrle then asked what was going on with Cook's Industrial. He was told that the new Assessor is attempting to work something out for him. The owner is having some issues with the manufacturer's assistant program, (It is in essence an abatement of taxes) that they are trying to work out with the City.

Mr. Behrle asked about the Ansonia Copper and Brass. He wanted to know what was going on with that building. He was told that they are in the middle of the second phase agreement. They have until September to complete the second phase of the agreement and up to \$400,000 in tax abatements if they produce invoices and they actually demolish. They are proposing to demolish approximately 15 acres.

Mr. Stowe asked about the "Land Bank". He was told that we are the first test case for the Land Bank. Ms. O'Malley will have a report ready for the next meeting that will include this subject.

(the tape ended)

There was a discussion regarding the date and time for the Business Forum. The members decided on September 24th at 7:00 at Savor on East Main Street.

Mr. Murray then asked Mr. Luneski to discuss the barriers to Economic Development. He asked the members if they had any thoughts as to what the city could do to alleviate some of the barriers. In regard to the posters/signs that are posted on the telephone poles, Mr. Stowe posed a question. He asked who do we contact regarding the removal of these signs? One of the members suggested that we have a standalone kiosk for people to post their signs in a central location. Mr. Luneski suggested that some of the businesses may want to sponsor the kiosks. He suggested that we look into them.

Mr. Luneski then asked what an enterprise zone is. He was told that the city has certain tax abatements because we are in that zone. He wanted to know if it had anything to do with the utilities. He was told that they didn't believe that it did. Mr. Luneski stated that at his business, he has no heat during the summer. The businesses are charged \$56 per month (as opposed to \$7 for residents) for the connections to the gas. Unfortunately there is nothing that can be done about that.

Mr. Murray then moved onto old business. He stated that there are no new applications for the façade program.

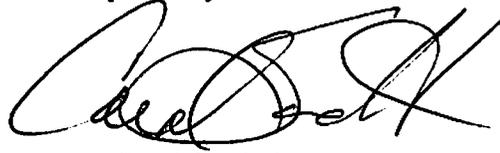
Mr. Flaherty asked if something could be done about windows of the Crave building. He explained that the windows are in desperate need of being reglazed. They are in danger of falling out and hurting someone. He asked if the owner could use the façade program to repair the windows. He was told that it could. Mr. Flaherty suggested that Ms' O'Malley contact the owner and address it with him and suggest that he apply for the façade program to help with this repair.

Mr. Murray asked if anyone else had anything to discuss with the members. There was no one. He then entertained motions to adjourn.

Mr. Luneski made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Behrle. All were in favor of the motion.

The meeting ended at 8:50.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Carol Sardinha', written in a cursive style.

Carol Sardinha
Secretary