

**CHESHIRE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING HELD ON
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 21, 2008 AT 7:30 A.M.
CHESHIRE TOWN HALL – 84 SOUTH MAIN STREET
ROOMS 207 / 209**

Commissioners Present:

Justin Adinolfi, Lelah Campo, Beatrice Fiorino, Arthur Hostage and David Pelletier

Commissioners Absent:

Chairman Brian Miller and Kathleen Gannon

Staff Present:

Jerry Sitko, Economic Development Coordinator

Others Present:

Bob DeJongh, Liaison for the Inland / Wetlands Commission; John Lesky, Liaison for the Cheshire Chamber of Commerce (arrived at 7:34 a.m.); Joel Roy, President of Creative Dimensions (departed at 7:52 am)

I. CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Fiorino called the meeting to order at 7:28 a.m.

II. ROLL CALL

The roll was taken.

III. DETERMINATION OF QUORUM

It was determined that a quorum was present.

IV. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

All present recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – June 17, 2008 Regular Meeting
September 16, 2008 Regular Meeting

MOTION by Lelah Campo that the minutes from the June 17, 2008 Regular Meeting of the Economic Development Commission be accepted as presented. **SECONDED** by Justin Adinolfi

VOTE: In Favor – Adinolfi, Campo, Fiorino, Hostage and Pelletier
Opposed – None

The motion passed 5 - 0.

MOTION by Arthur Hostage that the minutes from the September 16, 2008 Regular Meeting of the Economic Development Commission be accepted as presented. **SECONDED** by David Pelletier

VOTE: In Favor – Adinolfi, Campo, Fiorino, Hostage and Pelletier
Opposed – None

The motion passed 5 - 0.

VI. COMMUNICATIONS

There were communications throughout the meeting's packet.

VII. BUSINESS

A) Presentation RE: Creative Dimensions

Ms. Fiorino welcomed Joel Roy, President Creative Dimensions to the Economic Development Commission meeting. Mr. Sitko commented that Creative Dimensions came to Cheshire from Plainville about a month ago and is located at 345 McCausland Court in the former McKesson building.

Mr. Roy explained that Creative Dimensions designs and manufacturers custom trade show display booths, standard display booths, portable convention exhibit displays and retail / corporate interior and exterior signage. There are approximately 40 employees that work for Creative Dimensions. Some of Creative Dimensions' customers include the Travelers Golf Tournament, Big Y stores, ESPN and Bozzuto's.

Mr. Roy explained that their new location has a wonderful area for a showroom to display their products. He added that in addition to all of the corporate and retail work they do they are also available to create simple signs, such as "Happy Birthday" all the way up to the installation of very large exterior signs such as for Best Buys.

Mr. Adinolfi asked about how much of Creative Dimensions' business is production vs installation? Mr. Roy replied that about 2/3rds of their business is exhibits and 1/3 is signs. There was discussion on how the current economic conditions effect businesses like Creative Dimensions and Mr. Roy explained that he sees a lot more "refurbishment" of current exhibits or spaces than new construction / creation. He stated that there is a full cabinet shop and paint booth in their new location.

Mr. Lesky asked if they work with neon or LED lighting and Mr. Roy replied yes, but it is not created on site, they work with another vendor but have a very good understanding of the products and its uses.

Mr. Adinolfi asked what, if anything Plainville did try to keep Creative Dimensions in their Town and Mr. Roy replied that the Town Manager did try to find them a location in their town but there only 2 options, one of which was next to a competitor. Other towns they looked in were Meriden, Waterbury and Bristol before finalizing their selection here in Town. Mr. Roy commented that once he saw the building on McCausland Court he knew it was the right location for them.

Mr. Roy invited the Commission to come to their building for a tour as well as hold a future Commission meeting in their conference room. Commissioners agreed they would like to tour the Creative Dimensions facility and Mr. Sitko stated that he would work on making the arrangements.

When asked if there was anything the Town of Cheshire could do for Creative Dimensions, Mr. Roy replied that he would like to get in contact with representatives from W/S Development. He also commented how fabulous Mr. Sitko has been to work with; Cheshire has been a great and different experience for Creative Dimensions and they are very happy with their move to Town.

Ms. Fiorino thanked Mr. Roy for attending this morning's meeting of the Economic Development Commission.

B) Meetings with Cheshire Companies

Mr. Sitko would like to invite ACS Healthcare Solutions to a future Economic Development Commission meeting. It was also suggested that a representative from Atlantic Inertial Systems, MicroTech, Nutmeg Utility Products and a local grower could be invited to a meeting. Mr. Hostage suggested that someone from Yale's pharmaceutical division be invited to a future meeting.

C) West Main Street Commercial Area Streetscape Improvements Project Update

Mr. Sitko reported that there will be a meeting of the West Main Street Commercial Area Streetscape Improvements Subcommittee on November 13th. He also stated that the Connecticut Department of Transportation is almost ready to approve the plans for the culvert on West Main Street. A representative from the Connecticut Department of Transportation will be attending the November 13th meeting. Also to be discussed at that meeting is a tentative schedule, probably for the Summer 2010, for the culvert work. There have been some discussions about creating a detour around the culvert / West Main Street for a weekend during the project to save a month's worth of daytime hours.

There is no resolution yet on the pedestrian crossing of West Main Street for the Linear Trail. The Connecticut Department of Transportation has suggested that the Town re-

submit a request for a traffic light at the intersection of West Main Street and Willow Street. There is a traffic study underway to help evaluate the pedestrian traffic the Linear Trail sees. Mr. Sitko commented that the Subcommittee is hopeful that they can start bids for the first phase of the project, west of the culvert, this Spring. He also noted that Chairman Miller and Mr. Adinolfi are the representatives from this Commission to the West Main Street Commercial Area Streetscape Improvements Subcommittee.

D) Business Survey & Strategic Work Plan

The Business Survey Committee and Strategic Plan Committee have met over the past month to continue their work and develop a Strategic Work Plan but Mr. Hostage commented that is not complete yet and would like the opportunity to meet at least one more time. Once finalized, the Strategic Work Plan will be presented to the full Economic Development Commission for approval before it is presented to the Town Council.

Mr. Hostage asked about the types of industries that companies in Cheshire are engaging in because similar industries tend to cluster. Mr. Hostage believes that we should focus on the pharmaceutical industry and develop a plan to pull them to Cheshire. Mr. Lesky commented that "personal care" is a strong industry during difficult financial times.

Mr. Pelletier commented that it seems to be State driven as to what is attractive to locate here. Mr. Hostage asked if the State spends money on Economic Development and Mr. Sitko replied yes. Mr. Hostage is interested in recruiting the State to focus on Cheshire.

E) Business Appreciation Day

Mr. Sitko is working with Elim Park to pick dates for April or May 2009 to hold Business Appreciation Day and once he has them he will work on recruiting a guest speaker for the event. Some suggestions from Commissioners were: the winner of the 5th District Congressional Race, the Commissioner of the State Economic Development Department, the President of UTC or President / Vice President of Whole Foods.

F) Liaison Reports

Mr. Lesky, Liaison for the Cheshire Chamber of Commerce stated that a letter is going out to the Postmaster regarding delivery problems / delays. Mr. Lesky also mentioned that the Prospect Chamber of Commerce recently went out of business, which may mean increased membership for the Cheshire Chamber of Commerce. He also mentioned that Sheldon Dill, Executive Director of the Cheshire Chamber of Commerce was recently honored as Citizen of the Year at Elim Park.

Ms. Fiorino, Liaison for the Town Beautification Committee stated that the Committee is working on lighting for the exterior of Town Hall.

Mr. DeJongh, Liaison for the Inland / Wetlands Commission, he was going to be interviewed later today for a Public Access Channel show with Town Manager Milone to give information about the Inland / Wetlands Commission.

G) Coordinator's Report

Mr. Sitko reported that the sealed bids were due this past Friday for the former Wachovia Bank property on the corner of South Main Street and Cornwall Avenue. He noted that this property is zoned residential.

Mr. Sitko continues to work with the Connecticut Department of Transportation regarding traffic counts and improvements for Route 10.

The new Cheshire Post Office continues to progress very slowly. Mr. Sitko noted that the USPS is has been paying rent for its location on Maple Avenue as well as the new proposed location on Highland Avenue for over 2 ½ years now.

Mr. Sitko reported that W/S Development will be in to talk with the Planning Staff in about 2 weeks on the status of their proposed project in the North end of Town.

H) Other

None.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Ms. Campo to adjourned the meeting at 8:30 a.m.; **SECONDED** by Mr. Hostage.

VOTE: In Favor – Adinolfi, Campo, Fiorino, Hostage and Pelletier
Opposed – None

The motion passed 5 - 0.

Respectfully submitted:

Tracey M. Kozlowski
Recording Secretary