

**CHESHIRE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING HELD ON
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 2013 AT 7:30 A.M.
CHESHIRE TOWN HALL – 84 SOUTH MAIN STREET
ROOMS 207 / 209**

Commissioners Present:

Chairman David Pelletier, David Orsini, Steve Sidoruk and William Stanley

Commissioner Absent:

Robert Formica and Ray Voelker

Staff Present:

Jerry Sitko, Economic Development Coordinator

Others Present:

Glenn Purple of EDAC Technologies (departed at 8:25 a.m.)

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Pelletier called the meeting to order at 7:30 a.m.

II. ROLL CALL

The roll was called.

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 – Regular Meeting October 15, 2013

MOTION by Mr. Stanley that the minutes from the October 15, 2013 Regular Meeting of the Economic Development Commission be accepted as submitted. **SECONDED** by Mr. Sidoruk.

VOTE: In Favor –Orsini, Pelletier, Sidoruk and Stanley
Opposed – None

The motion passed 4 – 0.

VI. COMMUNICATIONS

None.

VII. BUSINESS

A) Discussion with EDAC Technologies

Chairman Pelletier and Commissioners welcomed Glenn Purple of EDAC Technologies to today's Economic Development Commission meeting.

Mr. Purple discussed the move to Cheshire, to the former Pratt & Whitney facility on Knotter Drive. He also talked about this history of EDAC, which was established in Hartford in 1946 as a tool and die manufacturer that moved to Farmington in the mid 1950's and expanded their design services to the automotive industry. EDAC is a publically owned company that purchased APEX in 1998 and grew to about 200 employees. By 2000, a gentleman named Dominic Pagano took an interest in the company and helped develop a railroad wheels inspection system. He later took on the position of part time CEO of EDAC but went through some very difficult times but was able to come through them and prosper with the help of Mr. Pagano.

EDAC is basically an aerospace manufacturer; they make parts for jet engines and parts for aerospace structures like helicopter and other jet parts. There are some larger parts that cost over \$ 2 million dollars but they also manufacturer smaller parts. There is also a Tool & Die division of EDAC Technologies, which is about 20% of their business as well as an Industrial Spindle division, which is about 10% of their business.

Around 2007 EDAC started to acquire some businesses, including a small aerospace repair facility in Newington, CT. There were a few additional small acquisitions over the past 6 years of related organizations in the surrounding area.

About 2 years ago, EDAC was outgrowing their facilities in Farmington and purchased the GE building in Plainville but later found out that the 300,000 square foot Pratt & Whitney facility on Knotter Drive and purchased that property just 2 months after purchasing in Plainville, with the help of TD Bank and the State. Mr. Purple mentioned that Mr. Sitko has also been very helpful in the move to Cheshire, which won't be completed until the end of next year.

Mr. Purple also mentioned that EDAC acquired a portion of Smith Renaud of Cheshire in October 2012.

Dominic Pagano has announced recently that he would be stepping down as CEO of EDAC and announced that Mark McDowell is the new CEO but Mr. Pagano is still active with EDAC.

Chairman Pelletier asked if EDAC is having problems finding skilled labor for their tool and die jobs or their projected growth. Mr. Purple replied yes, it is tough to find both machine operators and tool makers. Chairman Pelletier mentioned that this Commission is working with

the Chamber of Commerce to put together a “Manufacturing Day” to try to introduce some high school students to manufacturing and to show them that its not as dirty a business as it once was, which is an event that EDAC may want to get involved in as well. Mr. Sitko added that they are actually thinking of approaching it as careers in math and engineering. Chairman Pelletier mentioned that there are manufacturing programs at Wilcox Technical High School in Meriden and Kaynor Tech High School in Waterbury. Mr. Purple replied that he would be interested in learning more about the program as EDAC is always looking for manufacturing help.

Mr. Sitko asked if there is a need for English as a second language training at EDAC with the employees? Mr. Purple replied that he would check with the Human Resources Department at EDAC. Mr. Sitko mentioned that the Cheshire Adult Education program runs an English as a second language program on a regular basis for a nominal fee, if could be of use.

Chairman Pelletier asked if there is a transportation issue with some of the EDAC employees and Mr. Purple replied that there is and that EDAC did loose some employees with the move to Cheshire. Mr. Sitko mentioned the proposed CT Fastrack bus line plans between Waterbury and Hartford with links to New Britain and Farmington, which may come to be useful to EDAC employees.

Members thanked Mr. Purple for coming to speak to the Economic Development Commission this morning.

B) Speakers for Future Meetings

Cheshire resident and Commissioner of the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, Dan Esty, will be at the December 17th Economic Development Commission meeting. For future meeting speakers, Yankee Gas has been suggested as well as W/S Development and UTC Aerospace, formerly Goodrich.

C) Manufacturing Day

Mr. Sitko reported that he met this past Friday with Kelly Lenz of Cheshire Public Schools, Sheldon Dill of the Cheshire Chamber of Commerce, Matt Abifar of Congresswoman Esty’s office and representatives from Industrial Heater and Marion Manufacturing about organizing a “Manufacturing Day” event that would give Cheshire students the opportunity to tour a manufacturing company’s facility and learn about careers in manufacturing. Ms. Lenz is going to talk to some people at the Middle School and High School for their input into this program. The group will be meeting again after the next School / Business Partnership meeting in January to discuss this event further. There was also some discussion of participation in Career Day to promote manufacturing in the schools. Mr. Sitko added that he is not sure if this is going to work, but it can’t hurt to try to spur interest in students by bringing them into an actual manufacturing facility as opposed to just lecturing students about manufacturing.

D) STEAP Grant for West Main Street Sidewalks

Mr. Sitko reported that he is working on a new \$ 500,000 STEAP grant application for Cheshire to expand the sidewalks on West Main Street, on the north side, from Grove Street to Maple Avenue. The estimated engineering costs for this project is \$ 705,000 because of the grade of the area and the moving of utilities. The Town Council has already approved the application submission to the Connecticut Office of Policy and Management at their November 12th meeting.

E) Liaison Reports

None.

F) Coordinator's Report

Mr. Sitko reported that Marbridge Retirement Center is looking to demolish and expand on their current property and adjacent property for a 28,000 square foot facility on West Main Street. This proposed project would be done in phases so that the residents will not be displaced off their property. Mr. Sitko noted that there has been some push back from neighboring property owners at recent Public Hearings.

Consolidated Industries had proposed a 20,000 square foot building on Waterbury Road with 4 new drop hammers. They had a lot of opposition from the neighbors and it was discovered through Planning & Zoning that drop hammers are not allowed and that you can not expand a non-conforming use or move them on an existing site. Consolidated Industries is now considering putting the new hammers in one of the existing building on their property and then over a period of time they would be replacing the old hammers, which go back to 1948. Consolidated Industries is asking the Town if that would be acceptable; Mr. Sitko state that he has not had the opportunity to talk to Bill Voelker, Town Planner, yet about it because he is out on medical leave.

W/S Development is expected to submit its site development plans within the next month, if approved, construction is expected to begin next year.

Food Works is open, the store opened on Monday and so far the response from the community has been good.

Housing Authority Insurance Group, located on Commerce Court, has applied for tax incentive assistance for their recently approved 46,000 square foot building expansion at their current location at the end of the cul-de-sac. The Town Council has approved a 7 year tax break around \$ 300,000. Housing Authority Insurance Group currently has about 160 employees and is expected to top out around 180 or 190 employees. Mr. Sitko noted that they were approved for a tax incentive with their last addition, in 2003, but the company never pursued it.

Mr. Sitko informed the Commission that The Town became a member of the Regional Brownfields Partnership, a large group of 30 towns from Shelton to Cheshire that will permit experts in environmental remediation from the partnership to go out and look at properties that need remediation such as the Ball and Socket property. Mr. Sitko noted that this service would be available for any property in Town, not just Ball and Socket. He also noted that Ball and Socket Arts, with the help of Anthony Fazzone, is in front of Planning and Zoning with a text change.

Andrews Consulting is on the move and either was acquired or sold a few months ago, they will be leasing 16,000 square feet in the Marshall Fisco building at 1184 Highland Avenue.

John Hilzinger has proposed a 19,000 square foot warehouse building on Blacks Road, he has been looking at the property for a long time. There is no intended user for the facility at this time.

At the former Getty gas station on the corner of West Main Street and Main Street, there has been some interest in the property recently for a possible new tenant.

G) Other

None.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Mr. Orsini to adjourn the October 15th meeting of the Economic Development Commission at 8:55 a.m.; **SECONDED** by Mr. Sidoruk.

VOTE: In Favor –Orsini, Pelletier, Sidoruk, and Stanley
Opposed – None

The motion passed 4 - 0.

Respectfully submitted:

Tracey M. Kozlowski
Recording Secretary