



City of New Haven

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
ADMINISTRATION
CITY OF NEW HAVEN
JOHN DeSTEFANO, Jr., Mayor**

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KELLY MURPHY, AICP
*Economic Development
Administrator*

**New Haven Development Commission
Special Meeting
Thursday, April 2, 2009
City Hall Meeting Room #3
165 Church Street
New Haven, Connecticut 06510**

PRESENT:

Commissioners:

Jonathan Koppell
Lawrence Morico
Chris LaConte
Kathleen Krolak
Kevin G. Ewing
Shirley Ellis-West
Marcus Paca

Staff:

Kelly Murphy, Econ. Dev. Administrator
Tony Bialecki, Deputy Director, Econ. Dev.
Helen Rosenberg, Econ. Dev. Officer

Others:

Leonard Honeyman, New Haven Independent Reporter
Dave Sousa

Call to Order:

Chairman Koppell called the meeting to order at 5:39 P.M.

Approval of Minutes for March 10, 2009 Meeting:

Chairman Koppell asked about the minutes from last month's meeting. Ms. Murphy stated that because of the transitional phase in which the Office of Economic Development was in, the minutes were not available. She stated that the minutes from the March 10th meeting will be included in next month's agenda.

Commission Member MDP Assignments:

Chairman Koppell asked if there was anything new; or if there were any updates to report concerning the assignments of the Commissioners taking responsibility as liaisons in whatever area they were interested in for the current MDP's.

Ms. Murphy responded by asking how the committee members wanted to receive their assignments. Did they want her to continue to send everything to everyone and then find out what the committee members are interested in doing, or, should she just send the specific material regarding the MDP that each commissioner will be assigned to watch.

Chairman Koppell responded that the immediate next step would be to try and arrange for people to meet with the relevant staff person on the area that they are focusing on to sort of get up to speed, and then from there, proceed as to when there will be an opportunity for them to meet with the community. Chairman Koppell then posed the question to the members to see if they agreed with what he stated.

Ms. Rosenberg made a general comment about why no one signed up for Mill River MDP which is one of the more active MDP's. She went on to explain that all of the redevelopment parcel had been sold, but that there is a lot of business activity there and it is still an active MDP; it doesn't expire until 2017, and that it might be expanded to the property of the English Station, but that right now, there are some businesses that are leaving, there are properties that are for sale, so, there is sort of a dynamic environment there at present.

Chairman Koppell asked if anyone else had any other thoughts as to what might be a next step, or how to proceed with the MDP's. Mr. Bialecki suggested that the Economic Development Staff who is handling the project be the point person for the committee's liaison person for that particular project.

Website:

Commissioner Ewing asked if the information regarding all of the MDP's were on line. Ms. Murphy stated that information regarding some of the projects was posted on line and that they are updated frequently. She stated that River Street, Gateway and Route 34 are posted, but, some of the older ones are not posted. She stated that the package that was sent to the committee members a while ago regarding the history of the projects could go on line if that is what they wanted.

Chairman Koppell and Mr. Bialecki asked about our new website; was it up and running. Ms. Murphy stated that she is getting previews of the new website next week. The revised website will be more user friendly/interactive, and more informative. She stated that it should be ready for an official launch in a month or so.

Chairman Koppell asked the committee members if they wanted their contact information to be posted on the website. It was suggested that the members e-mail addresses be posted to the website. Chairman Koppell stated that it might be useful that the liaison for whatever MDP project they will be responsible for; that particular member should also be in contact with the Alderperson whose ward that particular project is in, and other city agency people who are working on that particular issue. Economic Development staff agreed to prepare this information.

Commissioner Ewing asked if there were any other thoughts concerning the MDP's. Ms. Rosenberg gave an update on River Street MDP. She stated that the side street improvements in the River Street MDP will begin before the end of the month. She stated that they have the contract and the procedures. The permit application for the Shoreline Stabilization should be submitted by the end of the week to the office of The Long Island Sound Programs and should be approved within the next two or three months. Colony Hardware is still on track to begin work this summer on their 133,000 sq. ft. expansion building on the Hess site. Lynn Lader Building is vacant, but there has been a lot of interest in the building. She stated that she is working with the real estate brokers to find a buyer.

Gateway College:

Mr. Bialecki talked about the land transfer at the Macy's and Malley sites, and closing of Gateway. He stated that they were very close to the land transfer happening. Ms. Murphy stated that the closing is likely to take place sometime in late April or early May.

Chairman Koppell asked if the issues regarding the delay in downtown construction projects having an affect on Northland's slow response. He asked if the slow down of the Long Wharf project affecting Northland's conversation. Ms. Murphy stated that it was complicated, that everything has slowed down nationwide, not just in New Haven. She stated that because of the financial situation, no one is rushing to finance projects. She stated that we have one of the few big projects going in the region, so, our senses are rather to do it slow and correct. We don't want to sell ourselves short, so, she would rather take it slow. She stated that they have been in meetings fairly regularly with Northland, and that Northland's selection as preferred developer was the correct once since they remain able to bring substantial equity to a deal.

Chairman Koppell asked about the reconfiguration of the flyover ramp on Route 34, and was it going to be complicated by interacting with the Coliseum/Gateway activity. Ms. Murphy stated that she didn't think so, because the activity regarding the Coliseum/Gateway project is further down and it shouldn't interact.

25 Science Park:

Commissioner LaConte asked about Science Park Garage. He asked if the garage would be completed by early fall. Ms. Murphy confirmed the early fall deadline for the garage. Commissioner LaConte asked if that would include the street cleaning and utility issue. He stated that he thought everything was going underground. Ms. Murphy assured him that the utilities will be underground.

Forest City/Tract A:

Commissioner LaConte asked if anything is happening with Forest City. Ms. Murphy stated that they are still very interested in the site. They got permission to knock down three of the buildings which was a key component to their ability to receive historic tax credits which is key to financing this project. Ms. Murphy stated that they had meetings with CHFA about the project and that they are in negotiations with Olin regarding the environment clean-up.

Other Updates:

Farmington Canal Line:

Chairman Koppell asked about the status of financing for the bike trail. Ms. Murphy stated that there is an event on next week on April 6, 2009. Commissioner LaConte asked if we were going to connect it with Hamden's bike trail. Ms. Murphy stated yes.

Grand Avenue:

Mr. Bialecki stated that they had a successful referendum on the creation of the Special Services District.

Adjournment:

A motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 6:01P.M.