



City of New Haven
John DeStefano, Jr.
Mayor

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
ADMINISTRATION
CITY OF NEW HAVEN**

165 Church Street, New Haven, CT 06510
Phone: (203) 946-2366 Fax: (203) 946-2391



KELLY MURPHY, AICP
*Economic Development
Administrator*

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**New Haven Development Commission
Meeting**

**Tuesday, April 13, 2010
City Hall Meeting Room #3
165 Church Street
New Haven, Connecticut 06510**

PRESENT:

Commissioners:

Frances (Bitsie) Clark
Kevin Ewing
Jonathan Koppell
Christopher LaConte
Lawrence Morico
Ryan Munden
Pedro Soto

Staff:

Tony Bialecki, Deputy Director, Econ Dev.
Helen Rosenberg, Economic Development Officer
Michael Piscitelli, Director, TT&P
Lisa Moore-Fox, Exec. Administrative Assistant

Public:

Leonard Honeyman, Reporter, New Haven Independent

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 8:08 A.M.

Approval of Minutes for March 9, 2010 Meeting

Motion was made to approve the minutes for March 9, 2010. Motion was seconded, minutes were passed unanimously.

Resolution

Helen Rosenberg presented a resolution to the Development Commission reauthorizing the filing of a grant application with the Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD) for the River Street Municipal Development Project. DECD needs the Commission to reauthorize its approval of the City's \$2.8 million grant application since it's been a year since they last approved it. DECD has approved the application, but it is taking them the better part of a year to get the Assistance Agreement in order so we can sign it; hence the need for the attached resolution. Chairman Koppell asked if there were any changes. Ms. Rosenberg stated no. Motion was made to approve the Resolution. Resolution was approved.

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Economic Development Updates:

Knights of Columbus (KofC)

Tony Bialecki gave the commission members a heads-up that they should be receiving something in the mail next month regarding the possible sale of the coliseum property to the KofC.

Gateway Community College

Construction is moving along.

100 College Street Update

The project is moving along.

At the State Legislature about a year ago and again this year, we had a budget discussion to take back all bonding that had been approved by the Legislature for hundreds of projects throughout the State; these were requests that was before the prior administration. The projects/items were worth \$3 to \$4 Hundred Million Dollars, but they were never approved by the Bond Commission. The City of New Haven had 3-three items that was on the list that we testified about in Hartford: 1) the Tweed Airport (\$5 Million Dollars for public improvements); 2) a \$5.8 Million Dollar economic development grant that was intended for Downtown/ biotechnology corridor; and 3) \$2.5 Million Dollars for River Street (Helen Rosenberg's project) for additional infrastructure improvements. The State was trying to rescind the \$5.8 Million Dollars to use it towards other State projects. We were looking to use a portion of the \$5.8 Million Dollars for 100 College Street's public infrastructure with roadway improvements. The committee obtained a vote in which the \$5.8 Million Dollars was kept in place. There was about a 10% reduction on the funding for Tweed Airport and the River Street projects. Most of the money was kept in place. It is now going through the final motions of the Assembly in terms of whether it stays. A lot of the bonds didn't get refunded.

The State's last session approved the disposition of the land (the highway piece) to the City and we will do a disposition to the developer as part of the development deal. We have an item in the State Legislature now because some of the traffic improvements sort of go east of College Street. Some road widening may be necessary east of College and so we have asked for permission to do the widening. We are working closely with DOT on the traffic piece. The other piece is how we work out the infrastructure improvements and cost. The developer can finance his deals himself for the building and garage. The cost is for the public improvements of the highway. We have negotiated that cost down significantly. We put in for a TIGER Grant application, but neither the City of New Haven, nor the State received any funding from the grant.

A City delegation went to DC to speak to the Federal DOT about how to make the application better for the next round. We are still hopeful that we can push money back into the project, but the timing is such that we have to keep plowing ahead between the State and the City to figure out how to pay the infrastructure improvements. We have been in discussions with CDA and

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DECD; everyone is on board; we are trying to tailor the infrastructure improvement down or in phases. The developer wants to start before the end of the year.

360 State Street

Project is moving forward. We are still negotiating regarding the grocery store. At one point, there was a discussion of Shoprite Grocery Store operating out of 360 State Street under a new brand, but when Shaw's Grocery Stores closed, the owners of Shoprite stopped negotiations. So, the developers of 360 State Street are talking with new prospects and they are moving ahead.

The question was asked if there was an ETA. Mr. Bialecki stated the developer would like it sooner rather than later; he would like it as soon as the building is open. I don't think it will be much longer after it opens. Commissioner LaConte asked if there was going to be an announcement soon. Mr. Bialecki said there should be one in about a month or so. The building should open in September, 2010. They are leasing apartments for late August. There are 50 affordable units and they are now taking the names of people, but the actual plan has to be approved and in place by both the Housing Authority and the State Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD) because some of the funding came from the New Haven Housing Authority and some came from Housing Trust Funds; so the State is sort of signing off on their leasing plans. There is a certain period of time (90 days) before the rents are available that they can sign-off on any of the leases.

Site of Shaw's Grocery Store

The Greater Dwight Development Corporation is the owner of the plaza where Shaw's was located. Shaw's (Value Foods) still has a lease on the grocery store space. The primary discussions regarding this matter are between the City of New Haven, Greater Dwight Development Corporation, Value Foods and Yale Properties; with GDDC taking the lead in the discussions. Clay Williams, Small Business Development Officer is working closely with the GDDC on the plaza, along with the Yale Law Clinic. About a year ago, they refinanced the plaza and Mr. Williams was very instrumental in sealing the deal. TD Bank provided the mortgage in favorable terms for the GDDC.

Overview by Michael Piscitelli – Downtown Parking Study

In recent years the City of New Haven has carefully monitored the supply of publicly-accessible parking Downtown relative to demand through a series of "point-in-time surveys", which provide a snapshot of Downtown parking utilization. This has allowed the City to plan new parking facilities prudently and appropriately as a number of new developments have been constructed Downtown.

Downtown "point-in-time" survey has been done every year since 2004. If you can recall, it was around the time that Gateway Community College announced that they would be moving to downtown New Haven, the Coliseum was imploded and many conversations began to surface about parking. With good reason, we started an annual tracking of how many parking spaces we have Downtown, how many spaces aren't utilized, and then we do a very basic forecast; a five year look ahead to see over the horizon what are the major developments that are coming up in

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New Haven and how that will affect the system. What we have learned is that we could very easily go over the top and have too much parking and that will suppress rates and not create the dynamic environment in Downtown New Haven that we like; so, we have had on the back shelf, for a while now, the Mid Block Garage proposal on State and Wall. We are trying to maintain a balance of about 80% to 90% occupancy of the Downtown parking supply; so we count that.

Year after year we do counting with volunteers from Livable Cities Initiative (LCI), City Plan, and Economic Development. This year our consultant help was from Milone & MacBroom, Inc. We used city personnel to count, both, on-street parking spaces and parking lots/garages, as well as the numbers of pedestrians and bicycles at key intersections. We identified four intersections where we counted pedestrians and five intersections that we counted bicycles.

The count was conducted on a Wednesday; this is the day they received their optical forecast. They chose to count on Wednesday because it is in the middle of the week, it is the busiest day of the week, and schools are in session (university and public schools). Another reason for counting on Wednesday is the fact that the Broadway shows are on Wednesdays and there is a big increase in numbers at the train station because of it. This sort of gives us our optical forecast and then we do it during the middle of the day.

Remarkably, the report is very consistent. The number of spaces has picked up over the years. We now have 13,528 publicly available parking spaces in Downtown New Haven and the occupancy remains in the mid to high 90% range. This year, we counted 11,943 occupied spaces. We do it by districts, so, there are four quadrants to Downtown as we do this study; financial and Audubon, the Broadway District, south and west of Chapel and Ninth Square. The highest occupancy was south and west Chapel (the area of the retail district – Crown Street) and that registered 91% occupancy under the study.

Second was Ninth Square with 89% occupancy. I will make a note of that only because on one hand, the off-street spaces in the Ninth Square were highly utilized. The Coliseum lot had a significant number of people from Yale New Haven Hospital. The two garages there had a high number of monthly parkers. Adversely, the on-street meter spaces in Ninth Square in this count is 51%; it was the biggest variant for off-street parking. There was no one parking on the street.

Highest number of lots that was over subscribed (meaning lots that had more cars than actual parking spaces) were State and Wall (112% occupied), ProPark lot in the same area, the Coliseum lot, and the Horowitz lot.

The key findings of the study are:

- The observed 2009 parking utilization was 88%, 89% when Union Station was included in the analysis;

- The most significant increase to Downtown parking demand will result from the relocation of Gateway Community College to the Ninth Square District. The college has plans to lease approximately 700 parking spaces to accommodate staff and students;
- Based on projections developed by City staff, the parking system is anticipated to operate at over 90% of capacity by 2012, peaking at a projected 99% utilization by the end of that year, even assuming all planned garages are completed on schedule;
- Construction of the State and Wall Garage would help accommodate projected parking demand during the anticipated parking crunch in the second half of 2012, although additional measures, either temporary capacity increases or the use of TDM strategies will be required to reduce parking utilization below 90%;
- The bicycle counts showed a high level of off-peak bicycle transportation activity with 74 bicyclists observed in a one-hour period at the intersection of Elm Street at York Street;
- Counts of pedestrian activity showed that pedestrians constitute a significant component of Downtown travel activity with between 431 and 1,314 pedestrians observed in one hour at the count intersections. Two of the four intersections counted had hourly volumes of over 1,000 pedestrians.

Adjournment:

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 9:04 A.M.