



Town of Warren, Rhode Island

Minutes of the Economic Development Board

The Town of Warren, RI Economic Development Board met at a Regular Meeting on June 21, 2010 at 6:00 p.m. at Town Hall, located at 514 Main Street. Board Members present included Sara Volino, Paula Silva, Davison Bolster, Karen Dionne, Brandt Heckert, Linda Brunini, and Diane Horton. Kristin MacDonald was present at the meeting to serve as Secretary to the EDB. Ex Officio member Caroline Wells was not present. Also present at the meeting was Ted Hayes from the East Bay Newspaper; Ron Cranwell and Louise Ornstein were present to represent the Water Street Neighborhood Association.

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m.

1. Review and Approval of Minutes from the Regular Meeting on May 24, 2010

The minutes from the regular meeting held on May 24th, 2010 were reviewed by the members via email. A motion was made by Ms. Silva to accept the minutes, Mr. Bolster seconded the motion, and all members were in favor.

2. Discussion on EDB presentation to Town Council (July 13, 2010)

The EDB presentation to Town Council of its progress and accomplishments is planned for Tuesday, July 13, 2010. The Board nominated Mr. Bolster to serve as the speaker for the presentation. A sub-committee was formed to discuss the EDB work plan. The subcommittee members include Mr. Bolster, Ms. Volino, and Ms. Brunini. Ms. Brunini stated that she had started to reorganize the work plan to show both recent accomplishments, as well as to prioritize goals for the future. As part of the report, the Board plans to include the cost of volunteer hours for various tasks, including graphic design and technical writing. A meeting to discuss the work plan and the presentation was planned for Monday, July 7th at 6:30 p.m.

3. Update on Storefront Review

Caroline Wells needs three members of the EDB to review applications for the Storefront Review. Ms. Silva, Mr. Heckert, and Ms. Horton agreed to review applications for the grant; they will follow up with Ms. Wells regarding a time schedule for this project.

4. Update on Banner Project

Ms. Dionne and Ms. Silva presented the Board with a sample of the proposed banner. The Board discussed the choice of words on the banner, but supported the design of the banner and the use of the words “walk, bike, explore, Warren”. The banners will be printed and ready to install in the next two weeks. Ms. Silva noted that she is still researching options for mounting hardware for the banners.

5. Update and Discussion on Comprehensive Plan, Nat’l and Cultural Resources

The Board discussed the importance of having the section on Warren’s Natural and Cultural Resources mesh with recently revised sections of the Comprehensive Plan relevant to economic development. Mr. Bolster stated that he was in contact with Sam Shamoon regarding input from the EDB on the waterfront and open spaces; it was noted that Caroline Wells would like to see drastic changes from the old plan to the new plan. Ms. Brunini commented that she has not been able to find a copy of the 2002 version of the Waterfront Plan; Mr. Bolster noted that although he was on the committee he did not have a copy of the plan. The Board suggested that Tony de Sisto might be able to provide Ms. Brunini with a copy of the plan.

6. New business – Update on Water Street Association meeting report

Ron Cranwell and Louise Ornstein were present to discuss the Water Street Neighborhood Association. Mr. Cranwell, the owner of a retail store located on Water Street, expressed his concern about the negative impact of traffic on Water Street and the downtown area as a whole. Ms. Brunini asked Mr. Cranwell how the EDB could support his concerns and asked him to list high priority concerns. Mr. Cranwell stated speeding is the first priority. The Board discussed possibilities to improve the traffic situation, including marking the street, raised crosswalks, better speed limit indicators and signage, etc. Mr. Heckert emphasized that slowing down traffic is integral to economic development; it keeps drivers focused on the town. Ms. Brunini suggested that the EDB could bring the Water Street Neighborhood Association forward at the July 13th Town Council meeting as part of the EDB Agenda item.

7. New Business – Update on Narragansett Bay Seafood Co-Op

Mr. Bolster reported on a conversation he had recently had with Nate Berg regarding the Narragansett Bay Seafood Co-Op and the possibility of this group using a processing facility on the Warren Waterfront. Ms. Volino requested that Mr. Bolster invite representatives of the Narragansett Bay Seafood Co-Op to the July meeting of the EDB. The Board also suggested inviting Al Bilideau to the meeting regarding his Water Street property. The Board also discussed the importance of including seafood processing as part of the Comprehensive Plan.

Mr. Bolster stated that Caroline Wells has access to the Liberty Street School and will be able to schedule a walk through with the EDB in the near future.

Given the time, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn at 7:40 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kristin M. MacDonald

*Minutes submitted by Kristin MacDonald
June 19, 2010*

