

Governor's Health Sciences Task Force

Wednesday, July 24, 2013

9:00 AM

**Rhode Island Economic Development Corporation
315 Iron Horse Way, Suite 101
Providence, Rhode Island**

The following were in attendance:

Appointees/Delegates

Marcel Valois, RIEDC (Chair)
Richard Licht, RI Dept. of Administration
Dr. Timothy Babineau, Lifespan
Mark Montella, Lifespan
Dr. Nancy Carriuolo, RI College (RIC)
Dr. David Dooley, University of Rhode Island (URI)
Dan Baudouin, Providence Foundation
Patricia Phillips, Rhode Island School of Design (RISD)
Senator Paul Jabour, Office of the Senate President
Russell Carey, Brown University (Brown)
George Bottomley, Johnson & Wales University
Michael Sabatoni, RI Building & Trades Council
Laurie White, Greater Providence Chamber of Commerce
Will Farrell, Office of Mayor Angel Taveras
Christina Bastastini, Office of the Governor
Gail Costa, Care New England
Sen. Mary Ellen Goodwin, Providence Economic Development

RIEDC Staff

Christine Smith
Lori Bassett

Others

Ray Coulombo, RI Building & Trades Council
Kerri Bennett, URI
Paul Grimaldi, Providence Journal

Mr. Valois opened the meeting at 9:08 a.m. He welcomed everyone and thanked them for coming. All attendees introduced themselves.

Mr. Valois noted that he would like to discuss the following at this meeting:

- An overview of the Dynamo Project, development over the next few months and type of public support needed to engender with this group
- What this means as a catalytic project in this district for economic development and health sciences in the state.
- How does this fit into the strategic initiative and the State's Sustainable Communities Program *Rhode Map RI*?

Mr. Valois called on Director Licht to provide an overview of the Dynamo Project.

Director Licht noted that this project has a long history, much of which predates the Chafee Administration. He stated there are issues that are beyond our control, but the environmental issues are not insurmountable. The most important factor at this time is financing and numbers. This project also entails student housing for Brown in the jewelry district and a parking garage, and it will also benefit the 195 initiative.

Dr. Carriuolo spoke of the feasibility study. Not only will this provide additional space but also advanced technology (i.e., an operating room). This will also allow RIC the opportunity for continued collaboration with Brown University.

Dr. Dooley concurred with Dr. Carriuolo that this project will provide an enormous opportunity for high quality education and enrollment expansion. It has the opportunity to serve as an "economic engine" for the City of Providence and the entire state.

Mr. Carey said that Brown University is very enthusiastic about this project and believes there is a huge amount of potential.

Mr. Valois asked Ms. White to share the Greater Providence Chamber's vision on how to develop a life sciences cluster around the Dynamo Project. She suggested Providence had a strategic advantage in the neurosciences around bench science, psychology and surgery and including specialty devices.

Dr. Babineau added that Lifespan has been committed to the Knowledge District for over a decade and that neuroscience is the last great frontier.

Mr. Valois asked "How do we take these concepts and develop a strategic agenda that can be embedded in the state comprehensive planning process?" RI has embarked on a project called "Sustainable Communities". This is funded by U.S Department of Housing and Urban Development; a key element is economic development. This will become the State's Comprehensive Plan. How do we ensure that a major life sciences sector becomes embedded in the State's Comprehensive Plan by next summer? Is this possible, and how would we work together to make this happen?

Director Licht stated the most important thing is to encourage entrepreneurship. Interactive and "cool" places are important to young entrepreneurs.

Ms. White referenced the Massachusetts Life Sciences Annual Report and suggested that the group review this. Massachusetts has committed \$1,000,000,000 to utilize over ten years to cultivate life sciences companies and activities. Because we are competing with states that have vast resources, we need do some catching up and be specific about what area of the life sciences we're going to target. She feels leaders of our life science institutions would be key in identifying these goals. Dr. Carriuolo stated that RIC is also doing work in the neuroscience area and it might be a good idea to bring in other resources. The Veteran's Administration (VA) has been collaborating with RIC on traumatic brain injuries; she suggested the VA as a resource.

Mr. Baudouin noted that there have been at least ten years of studies, and reviewing the research would be beneficial. He suggested a point person to collect, review and present this information. Mr. Valois concurred with his idea.

The intersection of sectors within the state is important to this project. Dr. Dooley suggested we foster a culture of innovation within RI and build on the strengths of the colleges and universities of Rhode Island.

STAC has the responsibility of developing a science & technology plan for the State every five years. Ms. Smith said they will accelerate the start date of the data collection for the life sciences/health care to coordinate efforts with the task force.

Mr. Sabatoni noted that we need to invest in Rhode Island and ourselves to change the perception of the State. Mr. Valois agreed and said that we need to stay focused on this catalytic project. He asked that those attending upcoming meetings come prepared with substantial material.

Dr. Babineau asked if there is a specific charge for this group. Mr. Valois stated that the initial deliverable was to get the joint nursing project off the ground; this has already been accomplished. He said we need to keep working to get the project to fruition. We also need to work to deliver a life science industry/economic development strategic plan.

Ms. White suggested that the "homework assignment" be to read the Massachusetts Life Science Report that she had mentioned earlier. Following is the link:
http://www.tbf.org/~media/TBFOrg/Files/Reports/LifeSciences_%C6%92.pdf

Mr. Valois noted that the Greater Providence Chamber of Commerce, Providence Economic Development and RI Economic Development have been working on the resuscitation of the public-private partnerships and the rebranding of Rhode Island to overcome the perception issues. He also said to let him know if there are any individuals within their groups that have an economic development perspective that might be able to bring this all together.

The meeting adjourned at 10:12 AM. There was no mention of a date for the next meeting.