

RHODE ISLAND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

MEETING OF BOARD OF DIRECTORS
MAIN STREETS SUBCOMMITTEE
PUBLIC SESSION

July 21, 2011

The Main Streets Subcommittee of the Board of Directors of the Rhode Island Economic Development Corporation (the "Corporation") met on Thursday, July 21, 2011, in Public Session, beginning at 11:00 a.m., at the offices of the Rhode Island Economic Development Corporation located at 315 Iron Horse Way, Providence, Rhode Island, pursuant to notice of the meeting to all subcommittee members, and public notice of the meeting, a copy of which is attached hereto, as required by the By-Laws of the Corporation and applicable Rhode Island law.

The following individuals were present and participated throughout the meeting: Subcommittee Chairman Mr. Stanley Weiss, Mr. Jerauld Adams, Mr. Victor Barros, Jr., Mr. Daniel Sullivan, Mr. Bill Parsons, Mr. Keith Stokes and Ms. Doris de los Santos.

Mr. Weiss opened the meeting with a discussion of proposed modifications to the existing Enterprise Zone Program. He stated that the recommendation is to redefine the geography of the existing enterprise zones to consist solely of the targeted Main Streets in the five core urban cities and towns, which are: Broad Street, Valley Street/Manton Avenue and Cranston Street in Providence; Roosevelt Avenue, Broad Street and Dexter Street in Central Falls; Main Street, Roosevelt Avenue and Broad Street in Pawtucket; Main Street in Woonsocket and Main Street in West Warwick. Mr. Weiss stated the enterprise zones should also include the pilot areas identified in the Urban Business Investment Program (UBIP), which include: Armory Arts District/Exchange Street in Pawtucket; Upper South Providence (Dudley Street to Public Street, Allens Avenue to Prairie Avenue) and Olneyville/Valley Street in Providence. Mr. Weiss explained that the UBIP locations are determined and focused on to bringing in advanced manufacturing, digital media, medical and life sciences, and green energy. He emphasized the need to create viable live/work environments in order to encourage people to live in these areas and he stated that inducements and incentives are necessary to help these areas grow.

Mr. Stokes stated that the Corporation can draft legislation that revises the current Enterprise Zone legislation to incorporate a series of inducements and incentives tied to these five urban areas. Mr. Stokes suggested setting up a meeting with the legislators in these areas in order to get them involved by early January.

Mr. Weiss then discussed streamlined permitting and expedited licensing recommendations. He stated that all local municipalities should be required to institute

a process for streamlined and expedited permitting and licensing for designated Main Street businesses. Mr. Weiss stated that there has to be coordination of the building department, inspection department and with the fire department. Ms. de los Santos expressed her concern that Broad Street was not mentioned as one of the initial pilot sites. Mr. Barros stated that Broad Street in Providence is a prominent component of the Main Street initiative.

The members of the subcommittee then discussed the proposed modifications to the Minority Business Enterprise (“MBE”) program. Mr. Stokes explained that state funded public construction projects and state purchasing of goods and services are subject to mandated MBE participation at a minimum of 10% of the dollar value of the entire project or procurement. Mr. Barros added that this is an urban business development issue because many MBEs, particularly in the construction trades, are physically located in urban communities and hire, almost exclusively, urban residents. Mr. Stokes suggested that the Corporation should re-establish the process and examine the eligibility for the MBE. Mr. Stokes stated that the MBE program is administered through the Department of Administration, but suggested that the program should instead be administered through the Corporation. The members of the subcommittee agreed that the next step would be an Executive Order from the Governor to effectuate this change. Mr. Stokes suggested that an MBE Coordinator should be appointed from each state agency. He also stated that each state governmental agency should be held responsible for MBE compliance on contract and procurement activities.

Mr. Weiss stated that UBIP is focusing on three pilot sites and he suggested that the consultant who is performing the demographic analysis of these areas should attend the next subcommittee meeting to discuss the program. Mr. Weiss then opened up the discussion to the topic of tours of urban main streets. He noted that West Warwick may be releasing an RFP for the Arctic Village Redevelopment Master Plan and that the subcommittee should look into this matter.

The members of the subcommittee discussed the Main Street Program consultant services and the status of the RFP. Mr. Barros stated that the final version of the RFP will be ready for review and approval at the next subcommittee meeting. Mr. Parsons explained that the RFP had been on hold due to the budget. Mr. Weiss noted that the Corporation is working to develop a working list of people for the establishment of an urban small business advisory committee, consisting of both private and public sector representatives from each of the five core urban communities. Mr. Barros noted that the list is expected to be complete in August with the first meeting of the committee in late September or early October.

The meeting adjourned at 12:30 PM.