

RHODE ISLAND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

MEETING OF BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
MAKE IT EASIER TO DO BUSINESS SUBCOMMITTEE

PUBLIC SESSION

APRIL 23, 2012

The Make It Easier to Do Business Subcommittee of the Board of Directors of the Rhode Island Economic Development Corporation (the "Corporation") met on Monday, April 23, 2012, in Public Session, beginning at 3:00 p.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 as indicated: Mr. Karl Wadensten (Chair), Mr. Ron Cagnilia, Mr. Paul McGreevy, Mr. Gary Ezovski, Ms. Leslie Taito, Mr. Bill Parsons, Ms. Sherri Carrera, Mr. Michael Walker, and Ms. Nora Eshkhanian.

Mr. Wadensten called the meeting to order at 3:16 p.m.

Members of the subcommittee unanimously approved the minutes of the prior subcommittee meeting upon motion by Mr. McGreevy, seconded by Mr. Ezovski. Ms. Taito reported that she and Mr. Wadensten presented the Making It Easier To Do Business Plan (the "Plan") to the Corporation's Board of Directors, which approved the plan. She explained that the Plan has a number of key action steps, which include the following:

- Operate – Assisting Rhode Island businesses in navigating regulatory and permitting issues. Analyzing, prioritizing and recommending incremental improvement.
- Target – Targeting forward thinking cities and towns to establish benchmarks and participate in training programs in order to introduce change organically to cities and towns.
- Innovate – Developing and communicating a clear, predictable and reliable regulatory and permitting process in an effort to create, retain and grow Rhode Island businesses.
- Compete – Elevating Rhode Island to "Best In Class" for regulatory and permitting processes by reducing the time and cost to process, ultimately improving the state's overall competitiveness.

Mr. Taito stated that limited data and limited staff and resources make improving the regulatory environment challenging. She reported that she has mapped out the building permit process for the Town of North Smithfield and has presented the first draft of the building permit process map to the City of Pawtucket. She stated that the goal is to have five maps completed by September. It was reported that North Kingstown has agreed to provide the Office of Regulatory Reform (“ORR”) with the process map it used in implementing its online permitting system. Ms. Taito stated that the ORR needs two more communities to participate in order to conduct an analysis regarding the best practices.

Members of the subcommittee discussed pending legislation, which would facilitate the use of electronic filing of applications by state departments and agencies. Mr. Ezovski discussed the role of the State Building Commissioner in issuing permits for state facilities and for certain private entities. Members of the subcommittee agreed to look into the number of permits issued by the State versus the number of permits issued by municipalities and to invite the State Building Commissioner to an upcoming subcommittee meeting. Ms. Taito stressed the need for process mapping and system streamlining in order to ensure that the technology implemented reflects the best practices. Ms. Taito suggested meeting with the city of Warwick to discuss their data processing and Mr. Wadensten suggested presentations by the town of North Kingstown and city of Warwick to identify best practices. Members of the subcommittee discussed the vision of a statewide technology that will make it easier to obtain building permits.

Ms. Taito next reported on the “Rhode Island Ready” demonstration project, which is based on the work at Quonset to create pad-ready sites. She reported that the statewide demonstration project is targeted to certify 8-10 pad-ready sites, through fair and transparent processes. Ms. Taito reported that the “Rhode Island Ready” is intended to reduce the time required to develop land and construct buildings, as well as increase predictability. She noted that the project will also enhance collaborative efforts between the Corporation and municipalities in business attraction, expansion and growth efforts. Ms. Taito reported that the project will provide consistent standards regarding the availability and development of potential of commercial and industrial sites. The pad-ready sites simplify the development process and greatly reduce risk by eliminating many of the unknown from the site selection process. She stated that the project will also lower the development costs of a purchaser by saving valuable resources and time. Ms. Taito noted that the intent is to build an inventory of such “Rhode Island Ready” sites that can be marketed regionally, nationally and internationally, which will improve the State’s competitive advantage. She briefed the subcommittee on the tentative schedule to roll-out the project during fiscal year 2013. Ms. Taito noted that the properties will need to be zoned commercial/industrial to qualify and that the intent is to have the sites be located in a mix of urban, suburban and rural communities throughout the State. Members of the subcommittee discussed the need to market this program to developers.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:44 p.m.