

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COORDINATOR'S REPORT 6/18/09

Submitted by Joseph Seacrist

- 1. Concerning the Watertown Renewable Energy Project (WRP-formerly Tamarack Energy), the legislative session adjourned without passing the legislation necessary to allow WRP to change its energy contract with CL&P from a Market Based contract to a Cost to Serve Contract. This will make it more difficult to arrange the funding to construct the plant. Mark Mirabito, the project manager for WRP tells me that he is continuing to work with Murtha Cullinan a large Hartford lobbying firm, and Richard Balducci a former Speaker of the CT House of Representatives to still find a way to pass the necessary legislation in the upcoming special session. If this does not happen this year, the WRP project will have to wait for the next year's legislature to try to pass the necessary bills, and will delay the possible positive tax impact on the Town of Watertown for at least a year.**
- 2. Joe McGrail and I appeared before the Town Council to ask for its approval for Chuck Frigon to sign the CGI contract (video's for the website). The Council approved Chuck to sign, pending approval of the contract by Paul Jessel the town attorney. There were some minor changes to the contract which are now with CGI. Pending the contract approval, the videographers should be in town in the fall to begin shooting.**
- 3. Attended a seminar put on by the state and the utility companies concerning the Federal stimulus package and how it can be applied to Watertown's block grant of \$89,000 for energy efficiency. Attended the seminar at the Town Manager's request. There will be a follow-up seminar on the subject on June 28 with detailed instructions on how to apply for the funds.**
- 4. Met with the Regional Manager of HRP Associates, an energy management company, to discuss how they might work with the Town to develop an energy efficiency plan, which will help with Federal stimulus money for energy efficiency.**
- 5. Working with other Town officials to make the transition of several businesses from a Waterbury address to a Watertown address as easy as possible. This is a result of the agreement between Waterbury and Watertown to move the town line. Needless to say the businesses have many questions about taxes, assessments, the need to re-print brochures and business cards with the new Watertown address etc. Also talked with Debbie Fabiani of the Old Pin shop to try to answer her questions about the pin shop property**

and her potential new tax assessment. Chuck Frigon has asked that once all these questions have answers, that I personally call on each of the businesses involved and help them through the process.

6. Spoke with a potential new tenant on Main Street Watertown, who would like to open a pre-prepared food retail store. Walked her through the necessary steps with the P&Z and reviewed the applicable zoning regulations with her. I helped her understand the significant differences of parking requirements between a retail store and a restaurant. She hopes to be open in August in the store front next to the current Liberty Tailor shop.
7. Spoke again with a local food retailer who would like to purchase property currently adjoining his property to expand his store into a retail/restaurant property. Like with the above potential business, I walked him through the necessary steps with P&Z to house both a retail store and a restaurant on the same property. Again the differences in parking requirements were paramount, given property size constraints. Also reviewed property line set-backs with him, to prepare him for a meeting with P&Z.
8. Received a proposal from the Buxton Corporation for a detailed retail analysis of the Watertown area, and their company's abilities to match their research with potential national chain restaurants and other retailers. Copies of the proposal will be available at the EDC meeting.
9. Donna Bonasera of the CT Dance Studio has agreed to again host the EDC Meet and Greet at her studio below the Country Cinema where we held it last year. We only need to agree on some dates in September.
10. Met with Lisa Carew and Joan Rentelman of the Watertown Library to discuss details of this year's farmers market. It will again be held in the Library parking lot.
11. Sent to EDC members a copy of all the various bills concerning businesses which have been passed or defeated in the current legislative session. The business community was successful in defeating a number of bills which would have made doing business in Connecticut extremely more difficult.
12. Met with the nominating committee of the Waterbury/Oakville Chamber of Commerce concerning the naming of the 2009 outstanding citizen for an award. It was decided to postpone this

year's luncheon and award ceremony until the fall, until certain standardized criteria and a formal application can be worked out.

- 13. Sean Williams has notified the EDC that he has been successful in getting a Route 8 southbound sign for the Watertown Business Park included in the 2010 state DOT budget, much like he did for the northbound sign. Thanks to Sean for his efforts, when out appeals directly to the Governor did not succeed.**