



## Economic Development Report DECEMBER 2010

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### **Northern Tier**

**STEAP Grant.** DECD reports that the Town's efforts to develop a road into the site may be premature as end-users have not yet been identified. DECD would be more comfortable with the funds being used to install the underpinnings of infrastructure and leaving as blank a canvas as possible for the ultimate user to work with. Additionally, the DECD would like an update on the Town's Agricultural Lands Preservation Effort; this was taken up by the Conservation Commission.

A new idea: Designate the Northern Tier an Information Technology Zone. See report on the Computer Company visit and the attached.

**Rte. 3 Corridor Study.** Tighe & Bond have been engaged to conduct a study of the Route 3 Corridor. The Town has been invited to provide input at a meeting to be scheduled the first week of January 2011.

**Melilli Cafe & Grill.** Melilli's was awarded a \$10,322 Economic development grant to improve the parking lot of the business. The funds will be awarded on completion of the work and after an Assistance Agreement based on the Town's incentive policy is executed.

### **Business Visitations**

**The Computer Company-** Met with Eileen Hassan on December 16, 2010 to review the progress of her business. Although she reports her sales as being flat, that is actually quite an achievement during this economic downturn. She views the future growth of her business in providing data storage and back up recovery; e-commerce (possibly with fulfillment capacity) as well as providing "cloud" based applications server space and maintenance. To assist in growth an effort must be made to keep her cost per square foot nationally competitive. This involves abatement of taxes on machinery and equipment. The possible designation of the area as an Information Technology Zone could be extremely important. TCC is interested in building out their reserve 3,500 square feet and possibly purchasing the lot next door, but need support and assistance.

**GKN Services Structures** -- the growth at GKN continues to exponentially. They continue to refit the facility on Hillside and bulge at the seams at 1000 Corporate Row. The immediate need continues to be high speed internet access.

Enzo Faienza has been coordinating GKN with Comcast and a price to provide the infrastructure for standard high speed through Comcast stands at \$29,207.08. The BOS has authorized but not yet allocated an amount of \$15,000 for this purpose. For comparative purposes, AT&T has been contacted to provide a competitive proposal. This is being worked on by the AT&T engineering department.

In addition to the IT connection, parking continues to be a challenge. Once the internet issue is behind us, we will work with GKN and their landlord to address this issue.



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**Middlesex Chamber** -- A meeting was held with Larry McHugh to review potential growth areas and issues needing attention. Mr. McHugh suggested a visit to the recently expanded Liturgical Publications, possible opportunities along the Route 372 Corridor due to the development of the new military base. This could aid in the lease up of Crown Plaza and the former Liberty Bank site. Larry also noted possible opportunities to leverage the 200 acre redevelopment of the Aetna site.

**Upcoming Business Visitations**

Delta Building  
Jack Gardner  
Liturgical Publications  
Other?

**Planning & Zoning Issues**

Testimony was provided at the most recent P & Z Public Hearing to discuss the adoption of new zoning regulations. Phil Gagnon, a commercial broker expressed concerns about the huge number of special permits in these regulations. A quick review revealed that indeed an end-user would need a special permit to put a factory in the industrial zone. There seems to be a heavy reliance on special permits in the new zoning regs. Special permits are great but they need to be used sparingly and for "special" circumstances. Successful economic development requires a predictable, stable regulatory process. Maintaining and encouraging quality is crucial, but we have to present these goal and objectives in black and white. I will work with P & Z to try to limit the special permits and hope to increase our competitiveness with these new regulations. They have given me a month to review and make my recommendations.

**Marketing**

**Web Site.** Request for authorization up to \$3,500 to develop a new site

**Hartford Publications.** Do we want to reconnect and have a publication for next year's Championship?

## **Business of the Month:**

### **Objective:**

To recognize and promote businesses within our community which contribute to the quality of life of our citizens, supports a wide variety of community activities, and supports economic development initiatives.

### **Examples:**

- Active community volunteer
- Has been recognized by a civic group for a specific accomplishment
- Gives back to the community in some manner

### **Also:**

- Has reached a significant business milestone, e.g. 5,10,15<sup>th</sup> year anniversary
- Opening an additional facility, expanding current location, major renovation or remodeling
- Business expansion by adding employees
- New business, adding to the town's tax revenue

### **Benefits of Recognition:**

- Sandwich board outside place of business for one month, announcing this place of business recipient of Business of the Month award
- Recognition in local newspaper via press release
- Recognition via email notice through Middlesex Chamber of Commerce
- Open House at place of business announcing award, supported by Cromwell Economic Development Commission and Business Owner.