

METUCHEN DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
Borough Hall
December 7, 2011

Attendees: J. Sabatino-Falkstein—Chairman; D. Rasmussen--Council Liaison; K. Donahue; G. Gelber; L. Griffith; J. Rabinowitz

Chairman Sabatino-Falkstein called the meeting to order at 8 PM, and asked that approval of the minutes from the November meeting be tabled for the January meeting, as there was not a quorum.

OLD BUSINESS

D. Rasmussen reported that the mayor, Stanley Lease, Linda Koskoski, and Congressman Pallone met with business owners along Main Street in October and discussed relevant bills pending in Congress (i.e., payroll). They asked business owners about existing problems with business in town and inquired about how they were coping in these difficult economic times.

J. Rabinowitz reported that the *Opening a New Business in Metuchen* brochure is in attorney review with the Planning Board attorney, and has been seen by Bill Boerth. Apparently the Planning Board is also working on a separate related brochure.

There was a discussion about what could be done to bring more people to the Forum Theater. J. Rabinowitz suggested that the theater team up with local restaurants to offer specials. J. Sabatino-Falkstein recommended having programs for mothers while their children were in school.

D. Ramussen raised creating a special commission to talk to developers who may be interested in the Pearl Street Parking lot site development as an anchor for Metuchen's downtown. The commission could target people who submitted bids and review the bid packets to see what they would like to pursue at the site or changes negotiate.

J. Sabatino-Falkstein reported that a new superintendent has been hired for Metuchen schools—Vincent R. Caputo, from the Clark school district, who is a resident of Cranford.

K. Donahue noted that those submitting Metuchen brochure information get it to him as soon as possible, and he will put the 2000 Census figures on-line as a placeholder until the 2010 figures are available.

NEW BUSINESS

D. Rasmussen announced that Downtown Excellence Awards were being held at the Heldrich Center in New Brunswick December 15, 2011, and suggested the event might be of interest to members of the Development Commission.

She attended the annual NJ State League of Municipalities conference in November, and reported on the Downtown Development Multi-channel seminar, related to exploring new sales and marketing techniques such e-commerce and catalogues for retailers. It was noted that business owners cannot wait for business to come to them—they need to actively form liaisons with community groups in order to solicit new clients. Chambers of Commerce can additionally assist with website links, etc.

L. Griffith raised the attractive Borough Improvement League brochure about local vendors and holiday events that was issued for the holiday season, and wondered how the Development Commission might be able to coordinate efforts with them as our missions are similar. J. Sabatino-Falkstein suggested that the BIL link up with the Chamber of Commerce.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held January 4 at 8 PM in Borough Hall.

The Chairman asked for a motion to adjourn, which was made by L. Griffith, and seconded by K. Donahue, and unanimously carried by all present.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura S. Griffith