

Metuchen Development Commission
Meeting Minutes
February 1, 2012

Attendees: Jack Altman, Audrey Gatling, Gideon Gelber, Munsamy Govender, Laura Griffith, Jon Rabinowitz, JoAnn Sabatino-Falkenstein, Beata Thompson, Council Liaison Dorothy Rasmussen. Not in attendance: Kevin Donahue.

Meeting called to order at 8:09pm

New member Dan Topping introduced by JoAnn followed by intro of members to Dan.

Minutes from January 2012 meeting were reviewed and approved with changes.

Opening a New Business in Metuchen pamphlet has been reviewed and Jon is preparing it for publication. Munsamy questioned the Utilities and Services telephone numbers and adding Direct TV or is Verizon the only provider of telecom Services. Jon replied that this has already be reviewed and is acceptable as written.

The pamphlet will be available at the Chamber of Commerce Office and have a possible link from their web-site.

JoAnn provided an update to the District of Metuchen. Things are moving along and the Mayor is assisting. Janet Briggs quoted a retail square footage space of 63,000. Project will begin with Boro Hardware. They've been waiting since November 2011 for approval of electrical plans.

Dan commented that retail is not doing well right now and there are vacancies on Main Street.

No definite retailer interest at this time for the District.

Gideon commented that large retailers have requirements such as near an exit, adequate parking etc.

JoAnn: Many delays, Renaissance bought the property in 2001 and zoning was approved in 2007.

The Blockbuster building owner by McPherson is for rent and the new construction on Middlesex Avenue next to Friendly's Restaurant is in Litigation. The interior is 85% finished.

With regard to rents, Gideon mentioned that the Malls set a rent which includes a percentage of Sales. This seems to be a reasonable approach in this economy.

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JoAnn: Next month's meeting agenda could be a meeting with several prominent landlords. Eric Berger and Fred Schmidt were mentioned.

The outcome of the Mayor's meeting with the landlords from last year is not known.

JoAnn asked for members to send one question for the landlords by email next week.

Munsamy: maybe we should get some tenants involved to meet with and see their side of the situation.

Motion to adjourn made by Jon and seconded by Laura. Meeting adjourned at 9:30pm

Respectfully submitted by Jack Altman