

Around Town

An Update from the Economic Development Commission

by Elizabeth Stocker, AICP, Director of Economic and Community Development

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The Newtown Economic Development Commission launched its business advocacy program and is actively reaching out to Newtown businesses to learn more about them and to listen to their needs. EDC members are initiating conversations with business owners in an effort to be more helpful. The members discuss their conversations at monthly meetings and determine what the Commission can do to address any concerns or problems that may have been raised. Their objective is to identify common problems or areas of concern which can be addressed by the Commission.

The Commission, now back at full strength with the appointments of Margaret Oligier, a corporate finance expert, and Joseph Humeston, a veteran banker, is also moving forward with other new work groups devoted to improving business in Newtown.

Many of the assignments appear to

have a natural “fit” with the Newtown chamber’s 2010 programs and goals. EDC Chairman Robert Rau cited the appointment of a Business Advocacy and Retention Committee and one focused on the Maximization of Sites



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for (new) economic development as evidence of the EDC’S continued desire to work closely with the chamber on subjects of mutual interest. The Chairman emphasized the Commission’s goal to “advocate for business.” An example of their mission includes their role in finding a new site for the Farmer’s Market in the Borough of Newtown where the

market will be more visible to residents. Another example is advocating with the Chamber of Commerce for a change in the sign regulations.

The other committees named include one to Evaluate/Upgrade EDC Marketing Aids. This subcommittee worked on a new branding for the commission and the newly redesigned web site www.newtown.org unveiled last week after nearly a year in planning. Also named were panels with a continued focus on development of the 42 acre town-owned Tech Park property off Commerce Road and one devoted to helping update the town’s Strategic Plan of Economic Development.

The nine members of the Commission include Bob Rau, Mitchell Bolinsky, Ted Kreinik, Wes Thompson, Don Sharpe, Marty LaMarche, Robert Morey, Margaret Oligier and Joe Humeston.

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