

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING
CITY OF STAMFORD, CONNECTICUT
URBAN REDEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 2011

1. At 9:30am, Chairman Stephen C. Osman called the special meeting to order. The following were in attendance:

Commissioners:

Stephen C. Osman, Chairman
James I. Nixon, Vice Chairman
Jackie Heftman

Staff:

Rachel Goldberg, Interim Director & General Counsel
Durelle Alexander

Attendees:

Charles Rosner, Reinventing Stamford Consultant

Absent:

Joel P. Mellis, Secretary/Treasurer
Christopher D. Meek

2. Reinventing Stamford

Chairman Osman said, "I called this meeting to do a little brainstorming about *Reinventing Stamford* because I know if we don't move ahead now and carry it forward, it will die. *Reinventing Stamford* is a real thing and we should not let that happen." He reported that former Planning Board Chair Duane Hill has agreed to chair/emcee the next Town Meeting.

Consultant Charles Rosner gave a brief update and spoke about branding. He said, "A brand only lives as long as it's supported, and brands are fragile. It's really out of sight, out of mind. There has been a hiatus since the Executive Director Kip Bergstrom left in March until today – and this has to be addressed." He suggested pulling together a small, experienced group of Stamford's citizens and leaders to do a brainstorming session in the next four weeks to think about what the next Town Meeting should be about, with a Town Meeting to follow approximately four weeks later. It was noted that Matthew McCreight of Schaffer Consulting has volunteered to facilitate this session in his firm's conference room, pending availability.

Commissioner Heftman said, "I think we need to put into context what's happened since Kip left. I agree that we need to move forward but my perspective is that when Kip left, the Commission decided it wanted to keep *Reinventing Stamford* alive, wanted to move forward, gave you (Mr. Rosner) a three-month contract that was extended to four, and we now find ourselves in a place where we have not moved at all and I, as a Commissioner, thought we would have been much further along. I see the task at hand today as two separate tracks: (i) what is it that we want to do for *Reinventing Stamford*? and (ii) who out there should be leading that effort? I'm uncomfortable about your putting us in a position that says the brand is what's important, and if you let it die, it will be our fault." Attorney Goldberg noted her opinion that it was the conversation that was important, not the brand. Chairman Osman agreed, and asked what the Commission had to do to move forward.

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Attorney Goldberg said, "Bringing a group of people together for a brainstorming session is great, but doing it without a road map will be chaos. If you get ten people, you'll get ten different ideas. I think that conversation should happen sooner than in four weeks, but it has to happen with direction. My suggestion would be to reach out to Kip for some suggestions for the next round of topics and use that short list of topics to focus the direction and the conversation." Discussion ensued and the consensus was that Mr. Rosner contact the former Executive Director for input.

Commissioner Nixon said, "I think I have a slightly different slant on where we are and therefore what we ought to do. Apparently there is general agreement that we ought to do something now. I think time is of the essence and I don't see a downside to calling a meeting as soon as we can logically get one together. I am worried about what Rachel brought up. Asking a large group to do brainstorming is not only chaos; it's an invitation to a broad level of dissent and disagreement that I'd rather not start. I think we need to spend some brainstorming time focusing on what really is the mission of this activity of the Commission. I see the next step as reporting back to our 600 member audience what we've been working on ... what's been accomplished since we had our last meeting. I think we have enough to talk about to justify calling a meeting just so we can bring everybody up to speed on where we are because what we want to do, as I see it, is to encourage creative thinking and entrepreneurial activities in all four team categories. That's not something you can necessarily plan and program." Commissioner Heftman suggested getting reports from each of the four teams prior to determining future action.

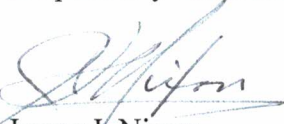
Discussion ensued. Mr. Rosner was asked to do the following: (i) contact Kip for a list of potential topics; (ii) identify team members to potentially update the Commission; (iii) edit/revise the list of key invitees for a brainstorming session; and, (iv) schedule the session for either October 3, 4 or 5 from 12:00 to 1:30pm.

3. Adjournment

The next regular meeting, which will also be the annual meeting, is scheduled for Thursday, October 13, 2011 at 6:00pm.

Having completed the business for which this special meeting was called, Commissioner Nixon made a motion to adjourn. The motion was carried by unanimous vote and the meeting was adjourned at 9:35am.

Respectfully submitted,



James J. Nixon
Vice Chair & Acting Secretary

CITY OF STAMFORD, CONNECTICUT, URBAN REDEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

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SPECIAL
MEETING NOTICE

A special meeting of the City of Stamford, Connecticut, Urban Redevelopment Commission, will be held in the Commission Offices on the 9th Floor of the Stamford Government Center, 888 Washington Boulevard, Stamford, Connecticut, on Wednesday, September 14, 2011 at 9:00am.

AGENDA:

1. Roll Call
2. Reinventing Stamford
3. Adjournment