



Meeting of the Board of Directors  
August 22, 2013  
7:30 AM

- I. **Quorum Established – NO QUORUM- no votes taken**
  - a. BOD in attendance: Carl Reiser, Frank Blanchard, Stephanie Fielding, John Bilda, Peter Nystrom, Bob Buckley, Alan Bergren
  - b. Absent: Donna Wertenbach, Stanley Israelite, Michael Rauh, Dee Boisclair, Pete Desaulniers, Stacie Lambert, Leland Loose, Charles Whitty

Others in attendance: Robert Mills, Jackie Roy, Jason Vincent and Brett Bernardini (Spirit of Broadway)
- II. **Approval of Previous Months Minutes**
  - a. No motion could be made at this time to accept minutes. Minutes will be voted on at September meeting.
- III. **Treasurer’s Report**
  - a. Carl Reiser reported on finances and noted two line items that were out of sync with budget, payroll and Economic Development. Both are timing issues and it is expected that they will come back in line with budget over time. These reports separated out the finances of the Mercantile Exchange from those of NCDC operations.
- IV. **Old Business**
  - a. Business Park Committee
    - i. Discussed how to commemorate Mark Ballestrini’s contributions to the community. Suggestions included adding a commemorative street name sign dedicating one of the roads in the park to his memory; as part of branding the Otrobando Avenue area of the park add a street name/sign there; and creating a separate, dedicated memorial area where bronze plaques could honor citizens deserving of that recognition. The discussion will return to the committee and they will make recommendations.
- V. **New Business**
  - i. Jason distributed the Reid & Hughes report to Board Members and walked them through NCDC’s presentation to Council. He explained the content and format of the report and the conclusions that led NCDC to present the three options

(Do Nothing, Demolish/selective demo, and Rehabilitation). Board was invited to ask questions and/or provide comment.

- ii. Bob discussed a number of activities and movements that represent the Genesis of Vibrancy's return to the City; and they are all grass roots efforts – people are involving themselves in making things happen.
  - The 24-hour mural project – one artist, with the support of the community, completed an 800 square foot mural on the side of the Spirit of Broadway building in 24 hours. Her purpose was to raise funds to support the community's youth. Board members contributed the funds needed to rent the scissor lift, the utility donated use of a generator and lights, SBT donated the brick canvas.
  - Brett Bernardini thanked the board and staff for their continued support and reported that his kickstarter campaign raised enough money for him to purchase the rights to Benedict Arnold the Musical. Another example of people rallying to support a local project for the benefit of Norwich – the production will be part of a much larger Benedict Arnold tourism attraction and will be run annually as part of Benedict Arnold [week].
  - Jason spoke to the events happening during Benedict Arnold week, September 15 - 21. Participants and activities include dinner at the Leffingwell, an interview with a portrayed Benedict Arnold, Otis Library will host speakers and have ready books about Benedict Arnold's role in Connecticut and American History, Jason will lead the first Benedict Arnold walking tour of places he worked, lived, and developed battle plans – and the places important to the people Arnold surrounded himself with. Mayor Nystrom pledged his office to get permission from property owners at those sites for One City Forum and volunteers to make the sites more visitor ready.
  - General consensus is that we cannot pick and choose which of our histories to ignore – we have to acknowledge and embrace our history in its entirety and use it to our advantage.
- iii. Bob also reported out on some of the other activities NCDC is involved in including:
  - Police Station Citizen's Group – NCDC and RDA provided information on development sites and how the group might go about identifying which site(s) would best meet the needs of the Police Department & Community.
  - People's Bank Building – This site will be vacated by Peoples by mid-September. The building, with its multi-level structure and elevators that don't run top to bottom, will be difficult to market for redevelopment unless it can become part of a larger overall development plan.

- Salem Turnpike Hotel – Bob Winston, current owner of the property, is seeking time with the Council to present his view on why and how the City should be involved in his project.
  - New activity – Starbucks and the two Broadway buildings are visible evidence that things are beginning to turn around.
  - Regionalization & funding sources - NCDC is reaching out to neighboring towns and communities to determine what role NCDC can play in their economic development plans. This would be a fee based involvement.
  - Walktober – Norwich has over 20 walks on the calendar for The Last Green Valley’s Walktober. That is more than any other community. Efforts to “put Norwich on the map” are proving fruitful.
- iv. John reported to the Board that NPU’s effort to convert customers to natural gas use is fully in line with the State of Connecticut’s energy policy and that NPU is far ahead of the rest of the state to reach the goals set by the policy – so far ahead that the Governor is contracting marketers to make Norwich the standard. The campaign name will be Energized Norwich. The campaign could start as early as next week.

**VI. Adjourn**

- a. Meeting was adjourned at 8:35AM