

Economic Development Report: Central and Western Mass.

Fr: Doug McGarrah

To: Missy and Steve

June, July and August.

Meetings:

Tom Haberlin, CD Dir. in Chicopee (7/9)

Jaymie Chernoff, Dir. Amherst EDC (7/9)

Dem. Town Committee Pic, Amherst (7/9)

Tom Litwiler, G.E. Pittsfield (7/1)

Williamstown Testimonial for Town Manager (6/30)

Doug Fletcher (Gardner paper) and Alan Rouleau (local businessman) in Gardner (6/30)

Gordon Bell (Publisher of the Gardner Paper) (6/29)

Marvin Sifflinger re: Barkley House in Brookline (6/26)

Tom Hubbard, CD Dir. in Gardner (6/26)

Wil Akman, MTDC (6/23)

Nelson Lande re Barkley House (6/23)

Tom Burditt, ACT (6/23)

Don St. Pierre, Exec. Dir. Berkshire Hills Conf. (6/19)

Joe Moran, MDC re Charles River Land (6/5)

Jim Craig and Austin Heath, owners of Denholms in Worcester (6/3)

Chicopee Uniroyal workers re: job retraining (6/2)

Northampton w/ Mayor Musante re EDA 304 project and others (6/3)

Projects:

Worcester Resource Recovery: The state has given up on the full plant at Norton and have opted for a rural collection and separation and trucking to Norton. This is only an option if someone will accept the plant. Norton has made clear that they are only interested in resource recovery so long as it is acceptable to to all parties. Their internal review showed that coal would be as attractive economically as refuse and therefore have decided to avoid any further controversy.

On my visit to G.E. in Pittsfield I discussed two major issues with

Meetings

Pat Canavan, Research Dir. of MURAG (7/15).

Dave Delhante, Northern Area Assoc. for Retarded Citizens (7/15). (Berkshires)

Leon Charkoudian re: Springfield YMCA Bld. (7/20).

Marty Adler, ACT, re: Greenfield Theatre and Gardner Bld. reuse (7/21).

Larry Bretta re: disposition of GSA controled land for MDC use on Charles River (7/24).

Bob Schwarz, Sprld Chamber, re Arena (7/28).

Frank Gulluni re: Skills Ctr. grant, etc. (7/28).

Mayor Dimauro re: Arena, etc. (7/28).

Groundbreaking of Polish National Home (MB Assoc.) Chicopee (7/30)

Don St. Pierre, Berkshire Hills Conf. (7/30)

Central Berkshire Chamber with Barry Hollister, St. Pierre, Glenn Harvey, re: Arena, etc. (7/30).

Mayor Smith, re: Arena, etc. (7/30). Pittsfield

Pittsfield "Artabout" (a downtown festival) (7/30).

Amy Anthony, Leon Charkoudian and Jane Turner re: Sprld YMCA (8/5)

Wayne Chen re: SBA Certification and defense contracting. (8/5).

Northampton re: St. Mike's hearing on Land Bank finance (8/6).

Bill Short, Greg Dawson, re: Arena (Worcester! 8/10).

Farmers Home re: housing projects under review (8/11).

Lewis Shaw, Pioneer Valley Association, re: Arena (8/11).

Mayor Musante, re: Arena and EDA projects (8/11).

Fran McGrath's Asst. re: Arena (8/17) Worcester

Dick Denton, V.P. Shawmut of Boston re: Agricultural Investment (8/18)

Springfield Chamber of Commerce Board Meeting re: Arena (8/20 - 7:45 A.M.!)

Major Project Updates:

The first meeting to discuss the Gardner LDC has been reset for 8/27. Jack Perry of the LDFC has agreed to come and make a presentation. I have also spoken with Neal Finnegan, Chairman of the Board of Worcester County National Bank and he was most supportive of the effort and would make sure that the WCNB rep at the meeting understood the importance of the effort.

The Round HOuse project in Northampton which had a \$200,000 EDA 304 commitment from the Gov. is in some trouble. The purpose of the grant is for the construction of parking and EDA is balking on this as an eligible use. However, I spoke with Jack Corrigan and he has given his approval and will make sure the project is funded. Corrigan also told me that he considers the North Adams PWIP grant a priority project for F.Y. '82. The Skills Center in Springfield is in processing.

I received a call from Mary O'Brien that G.E. Plastics was very interested in developing an expansion proposal that included state property adjacent to their facilities. They needed an indication from the state on future plans and I spoke with George Kariotis who followed up.

The proposed Pittsfield UDAG was not reviewed with great enthusiasm in a preliminary meeting with Pat Burke. She felt that the private/public ratio was not competitive with other commercial UDAG applications and that the relocation costs were too great. I met with the developers (the Fisher Group) after the meeting and will discuss the possibilities of some local contribution to the project (via a LDC or mortgage pool) and the participation of the FNBB.

The Greenfield Board of Selectmen have voted to go ahead with the State Street Development proposal for housing on the site of the Millers Falls Tool Building. A study on the feasibility of ACT rehabing a downtown theatre should also be completed by Sept. 1.

The housing development project for the YMCA building, a building previously to be razed for a parking lot, seems likely to receive historic designation and the city of Springfield has changed its position and is rethinking the downtown parking strategy.

My meetings with Chambers, Mayors and others related to arena sales efforts has been very useful to maintain close relationships and an opportunity to discuss other matters of common interest.

Tom Litwiler: the future of Power Transformer and; PCB contamination. G.E. is faced with an industry demand that has dropped to 1/3 of the previous year in the large power transformer business. If G.E. stays in the large transformer business they will continue to make them in Pittsfield. The next issue related to this is whether the two other divisions, (G.E. in Pittsfield is really three separate businesses) plastics and ordinance, will be able to pick up the slack. Already Ordinance has taken over one major building that formerly housed transformer operations. We will be writing G.E. to see if we can assist them in any way with this transformation.

The PCB prob. has become a very emotional issue in Pittsfield. G.E. has funded several studies already and purchased several housing units in the contaminated area. So little is known about the effects of PCB and its sources that many are scared of tests that show any level present. EPA feels that G.E. is acting responsibly and research continues.

Kollmorgan of Northampton sent us a telegram to ask our support for an export trading license that the State Department has held up. The product is for a Neatherlands submarine contract with Nationalists China. Cong. Conte has already met with State Dept. officials on this and it is receiving the highest level review, We have recorded our interest and passed on a status report to Kollmorgan.

The Garden Theatre study should be competed by ACT shortly and prospects look good for a community-wide effort lead by the Franklin County Trust to finance the development.

There appears to be \$2M available in EDA T.9 for implementation of recomendations of the recovery plans. Chicopee may submit an application to finance a riverfront development with a payback through the Western Mass Development Corp.

There have been meetings of the leading business and political leaders in the Hampden County area to discuss regional economic development issues. This is an outgrowth of meetings I had with Mayor Kumor and Herb Algrem of the Shawmut First in Springfield nearly 1½ years ago.