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## **Creative vision and professional organization sets Newtown EDC apart from other communities**

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By Martha LaMarche

Creative vision and professional organization sets the Newtown EDC apart from other communities' economic development efforts. Under the direction of chairman Robert Rau, nine talented, energetic and dedicated residents have been organized into targeted focused committees. Each committee plans and executes its mission, drawing upon the entire commission's expertise, while reporting to the full board monthly. The structure is designed to cut through red tape that frequently inhibits economic growth. Newtown director of economic development Elizabeth Stocker implements the commission's directives.

Three of the commission's most active committees are:

- \* **Maximization of Sites for Economic Development:** Validate commercial areas needing focus and use as a basis for an achievable action plan. Focus actions in areas that support Newtown's economic plan of record. Support property owners who may have transactions in progress and need assistance in closing, zoning and raising visibility. Assisted a Farmer's Market relocation to the town-owned Fairfield Hills Campus.
- \* **Business Advocacy/Retention:** A three-year project to gain insights into local business issues, gather information and report on ways the EDC can improve its services was launched this month. An initial phase will focus on data collection to help the EDC build a strategy to improve and enhance advocacy activities.
- \* **Marketing/Public Relations** has worked for the past 18 months to develop and implement a newly designed Newtown image, with the focus on uncompromised quality, one project at a time. WWW.NEWTOWN.ORG went live in December 2009. A consultant has been engaged to target desired audiences.

### COMMISSIONERS

- \* Robert Rau, EDC chairman, also coordinates the Strategic Planning and Technology Park committees. He draws upon expertise gained in the chemical industry in research and the management of profit centers, strategic planning, new business development and services ( i.e. engineering, purchasing, info tech, etc.) as well as the consumer products industry.
- \* Joseph Humeston serves as a director of a community bank with resources of \$950 million. A retired senior banking executive, he has more than 40 years of service. He is a board member or chair for many organizations including the local chamber of commerce, counseling center, library and local housing partnership.
- \* Theodore (Ted) Kreinik is the managing member/owner of Kreinik & Co., LLC, a certified public accounting firm. He is a member of the Newtown Sustainable Energy Commission, has served on the board of the CH Booth Library and the Connecticut Society of Certified Public Accountants.

\* Martha LaMarche coordinates the Marketing/PR Committee. Her company provides graphic design and marketing services for local firms. Martha advocates for breast cancer survivors locally and nationally, having served on five first tier scientific panels evaluating breast cancer research proposals for the Congressionally Directed Medical Research Program. She is a reflectionist painter who studies with artist Alexander Shundi.

\* Robert Morey brings 30 years of real estate expertise to the EDC. He has been a residential real estate agent, commercial agent, agency owner, and served as branch manager for large real estate companies. In 2009 he was recognized as Newtown Realtor of the Year. He has served on the boards of professional and community associations.

\* Margaret Oliger coordinates the Business Advocacy and Retention Committee. She has more than 20 years of experience in corporate finance and accounting and is currently a controller at Smiths Detection, a multinational manufacturer. She holds a BBA in Accounting from Western CT State University, an MBA in Finance from Sacred Heart University, and is a Certified Project Manager. She is involved in many local organizations.

\* Don Sharpe is a seasoned newspaper executive and editor. Having served as editor and a vice president of the parent corporation and its two daily newspapers he brings business operations and 50 years of media experience to the EDC. He now has an entrepreneurial role in a custom home design firm.

\* Wes Thompson, EDC vice chairman, coordinates the Maximization of Sites Committee. A manufacturing and IT executive with experience in small and large corporations, from IBM to a privately held corporation that specialized in chemical process services to the Fortune 1000. Wes is currently providing oversight in a video production of Newtown and volunteers for SCORE.

Newtown's Economic Development Commission and Elizabeth Stocker are dedicated to supporting and encouraging business growth in Newtown and are only a phone call or mouse-click away! We will help you get your business up and running as quickly as possible in the perfect Newtown location and welcome the opportunity to show you how you, your company and employees can LIVE, WORK, GROW IN NEWTOWN!

Martha LaMarche is economic development commissioner for the Town of Newtown.

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