

APPROVAL OF MINUTES Economic Development Commission
Meeting Minutes – **FINAL&Approved**

Wednesday, June 29, 2011

CALL TO ORDER

David Dean, EDC Chairman, called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

PRESENT

Regular members, Renee Betar, Kay Carroll, David Dean, Cleve Fuessenich, Lee Losee, and Doug Parker, were present. Alternates William Conti, Mitchell Fishman and Alexander VandenBerg were present. Regular member, Judy Elliott, was absent.

Barbara Putnam, Litchfield Planning and Zoning Chair and Ricky Campbell, Register-Citizen Reporter, were present.

APPOINTMENT OF ALTERNATES

NONE

APPROVAL OF MAY 25, 2011 MINUTES

Cleve Fuessenich made a motion to accept the minutes of the May 25, 2011 meeting, as read. Doug Parker seconded the motion; it passed unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

LITCHFIELD JAIL

Cleve Fuessenich reported that the Preservation Trust is waiting for the State of CT's bid deadline on June 30. There is limited interest in the property and no bids are expected. However if an offer is tendered and accepted, the town of Litchfield has 45 days to counter-offer. Kay Carroll reported that the Litchfield Preservation Trust made a presentation to the Litchfield Board of Selectman and shared the Trust's preference for an external bid. David Dean shared it is unlikely that the Nader Foundation will pursue using the jail as a Tort Museum. Bill Conti will monitor the need for an FOI request should a bid be received.

ASSIGNING LITCHFIELD GOVERNING ENTITIES TO MONITOR INDIVIDUALLY BY EDC MEMBERS

Reports from EDC members monitoring selected Litchfield commission and government entities:

- Kay Carroll reported on Park and Recreation's first outdoor movie night scheduled for July 1 at Community Field
- Doug Parker noted LABA's resumption of summer's monthly Date Night starting July 7
- Renee Betar noted WPCA's rate increase

- Bill Conti shared activity on the sale of the Litchfield Inn
- Lee Losee reported that the Art Grab earlier this month was a success with over 60 attending
- Mitchell Fishman reported on three of Planning and Zoning Commission's primary activities:
 - 1) the Borough of Litchfield's concern regarding a missing permit for the operation of the Litchfield Hills Farm-Fresh Market;
 - 2) a complaint regarding an alleged conflict of interest of P&Z member, Bill Burgess; and
 - 3) Additions of a pool, spa, paved parking lot and extensive landscaping for the Litchfield Inn and additions for Brandywine Assisted Living.

DISCUSSION ON TECHNIQUES TO BE USED ON "CALL TO ACTION" ITEMS

Chairman David Dean confirmed that his role as fact-finder, facilitator and moderator and not as a sole decision-maker for EDC when interacting with other town entities to resolve common challenges. EDC members agreed David was doing what was expected, and felt confident in David's ability and integrity to represent the EDC and bring an issue to the EDC when/if a decision needed to be made.

MONTHLY UPDATES

- Litchfield Hills Food Systems:
- Kay Carroll reported the Saturday Farmer-Fresh Market activity is strong; the Market receive a permit from P&Z; and despite the start of school playground construction, the traffic concerns were resolved with on-street parking on the west side of Woodruff Lane and securing a traffic/parking director.
- NW CT Economic Development Corporation
Doug Parker reported the EDA funding decisions are slow to come; approval for CEDS initiatives were pending but EDA is now holding back; frustration within the region and state. Doug Parker will try to get CT Senators Blumenthal and Lieberman involved in resolving the EDA bottleneck.
- Commercial Properties-New Listings/Changes
 - 1) Common Ground is closing at the end of June due to a lease issue and business owners moving out of the region. Economic conditions are not the reason for closing.
 - 2) Talbots is closing due to store consolidation nation-wide. No new tenants for the building on the green to be vacated have surfaced yet.
 - 3) Kaulike Crossfit in the Commons is closing; some crossfit classes are moving to Charym.
 - 4) Litchfield Inn has been bought. P&Z has received applications for expansion.
 - 5) New business, Prudential CT Real Estate, is opening soon.
- LITCHFIELD TOWN WEBSITE
Kay Carroll and Mitchell Fishman noted several web pages with kinks to be worked out and misinformation to be corrected. Of special note are the tourism pages that send readers to out-of-town events. EDC members should send David Dean specific suggestions and recommendations for improvements. David will

compile responses and share with Roxanne Carroll (and/or appropriate parties) to resolve.

OLD BUSINESS

- Alexander VanderBerg spoke with owners of the UOP building on Route 209 in Bantam who confirmed progress on the building will definitely continue.
- Doug Parker's EDC status will change from regular member to alternate member. Alexander VandenBerg's EDC status will change from alternate member to regular member. Doug and Zander will coordinate the execution sequence of these changes before the July EDC meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

Cleve Fuesennich suggested a possible role for EDC is to invite and encourage new business owners in town to share their experiences regarding the process to set up business. How can EDC help improve the process and potentially attract and facilitate additional new business formation in town?

MEETING SCHEDULE

The next meeting is scheduled for **July 27, 2011** at the Litchfield Borough Hall on Russell Street at 7 pm.

ADJOURNMENT

Kay Carroll made a motion to adjourn; Doug Parker seconded it. The motion passed unanimously. Meeting was adjourned at 7:51 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Renée Betar, Acting Secretary
Economic Development Commission
David Dean, Chr.