

LITCHFIELD ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes (Draft)
June 29, 2016
Litchfield Town Offices
West Street, Litchfield, CT 06759

Meeting called to order at 7:03 p.m. by C. Fuessenich, Acting Chair.

Present- Regular Members: Renée Betar, Kay Carroll, Fred Colson, David Dean, Cleve Fuessenich and Paula Rolleston; Alternate Member: Doug Parker

Appointment of secretary: Renée Betar
Appointment of alternates: None needed

Doug Parker confirmed that EDC member, Sander Vandenberg tendered his EDC resignation; the First Selectman's meeting minutes reflect receipt of this resignation.

Motion to approve draft minutes of May 25, 2016 was made by F. Colson and seconded by K. Carroll; the motion was approved as presented.

- **Public Comment**

- Anne Haas - Bantam resident for 30 years, interior seamstress, support to family business (Wood's Pit) and member of Bantam P&Z Commission - is considering seeking appointment as EDC member.

- **Monthly economic updates per region**

- **Bantam:**
 - *Arethusa A Mano* coffee shop is open.
 - Construction at post office - eyesore and safety issue
 - Dream House is open weekends only; concern about public safety issues
 - Market CT is new name for the formerly known as Northville Market and Bantam Market. Plans to convert house behind the former Bantam Market into a bakery and café.
- Litchfield
 - Speculation that former jail is on the market; conflicting information includes temporary banner on building soliciting businesses and residents, and real estate listing.
 - Stop and Shop update: Ground work is almost completed; projected opening in January 2017; not known what will happen with existing Stop and Shop space.
 - Jim Lamond's Fabric Shop will move upstairs when Bradford Jewelers' moves to former Workshop building.
- East Litchfield – no update from ELVIS

- **Old Business**

1. Discussion on web review and suggested changes:
 - P. Rolleston submitted suggested EDC web changes and updates to town webmaster.
 - Discussion on broadening EDC web exposure to include Bantam and East Litchfield
 - Need for comprehensive central data base of town records (e.g., assessor cards, commissions' minutes, etc.)
 - Anticipating Litchfield's 300th anniversary, changes to the web site could portray Litchfield in a more complete and favorable way.
 - How to best address the web issue? EDC can start process by informally proposing recommendation to First Selectman's office to initiate study.
2. EDC Commission by-laws
 - EDC is supposed to have by-laws. No other commissions are required to have by-laws; P&Z does have by-laws.
 - K. Carroll searched extensively and no by-laws are available at town hall nor is there any reference to by-laws in EDC or other town commissions' minutes.
 - How EDC draft minutes become EDC final minutes would be addressed in by-laws, if EDC had by-laws. Process could be:
 1. Draft minutes are sent to EDC members and town clerk
 - Within 48 hours, if minutes include any motions; or
 - Within 7 days, if minutes do not include motions
 2. Any approved modifications to draft minutes are proposed and approved at the next scheduled EDC meeting and recorded in those minutes. The draft with modifications replaces the draft, and both documents become the final minutes.
 3. R. Betar will ask Lisa Losee for a written process, if one exists, or a verbal process, if a written process does not exist.
 4. K. Carroll will suggest edits to sample by-laws that C. Fuessenich provided.
3. Food Hub update: K. Carroll reported that Food Hub project received a \$400k grant from the Draper Foundation to conduct feasibility study. Additional funds were received: \$25K from NW Hills COG, \$5K from Housatonic Valley Association and \$5K from the Farmers' Table.
4. Aging of CT: Importance of discussing this topic each month. What business sectors are likely to service this population? For example, housing within walking distance to retail and services; support affordable housing to attract younger population who, in turn, would help support community that includes aging population.
5. Town of Litchfield 300th Anniversary in 2019: P. Rolleston, as member of committee, shared details of committee meeting:

- Committee will be umbrella for all events to be held throughout 2018 and 2019.
 - Charge to EDC members for next meeting: Bring ideas (not events) that will help market Litchfield to organizations that might be thinking of starting/moving a business to Litchfield – ideas that will increase revenue for town.
6. New EDC member: EDC would benefit by having a representative from E. Litchfield. Palmer Marrin and Barbara Putnam were suggested.
- **New Business**
 - EDC officers and elections
 - No nominations yet; postpone until after by-laws are adopted.
 - C. Fuessenich, current Vice Chair, will act as Chair on a month-to-month basis until permanent Chair is elected. R. Betar agreed to act as Secretary on a month-to-month basis until permanent secretary is elected. Commission will review these vacancies monthly.
 - C. Fuessenich opened a discussion to explore establishing a public forum, including perhaps a series of meetings, in which candidates running for office in the CT legislature, could share their economic development initiatives and receive feedback from EDC members and other residents.
 - K. Carroll made a motion to initiate C. Fuessenich’s suggestion by first inviting candidates running for office in the CT legislature to an EDC meeting. D. Dean seconded the motion. Discussion: F. Colson: Identify specific candidates in the motion. Motion amended: Initiate C. Fuessenich’s suggestion to invite Gayle Carr, candidate for State Representative from the 66th District and Craig Minor, candidate for State Senator from the 30th and 76th Districts to an EDC meeting. Motion passed.
 - D. Dean opened a discussion on the current thinking of First Selectman’s office about the former Bantam School/current courthouse. Issues discussed include:
 - Concern if zone is changed to commercial
 - Current run-down condition of property and lack of handicap access
 - Concern that property will be sold. Could property be a better future setting for Town Hall?
 - Visitor A. Haas expressed it is premature to call the High Bridge Rd. project in Bantam “in process”.

The next EDC meeting will be Wednesday, July 27, 2016.

Motion to adjourn by D. Dean; seconded by P. Rolleston. Meeting adjourned at 8:27 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Renee Betar, Acting Secretary
Economic Development Commission

Cleve Fuessenich, Acting Chair
Economic Development Commission