



MINUTES

September 19, 2017

Meeting Room 3 - 7:00pm

Present:

Bob Rau, Nick Roussas, Dana Trado, Amy Dent (joined 7:25), Steve Gogliettino, Al Roznicki, Matthew Mihalcik, Kim Chiappetta (clerk).

Public Participation:

Absent:

Wes Thompson, Cramer Owen,
Christal Prezler – Deputy Director – Economic and Community
Development

The meeting was called to order at 7:02 p.m.

Matt Mihalcik made the motion to accept the minutes from August 15 and August 30, 2017 and Dana Trado seconded the motion. Motion passed with all in favor.

Reports:

Economic and Community Development & Fairfield Hills Coordinator

Kim Chiappetta informed EDC members of the demolition of Woodbury Hall and how having this newly cleared parcel may provide economic development opportunities. Members briefly discussed the benefits of the parcel from a buyer's perspective.

Kim also informed the Commission members that a bench in honor of Jean and Michael Leonard has been installed along the fruit trail. Jean Leonard had been chairman of the EDC.

Finally, Kim noted that a new EDC group photo is needed to update the website and asked that at the next ribbon cutting or event all Commission members are able to attend a new picture is taken.

Commissioner's Reports:

SHOP – Trado:

Dana Trado informed the commission that he was not able to make the September SHOP meeting, so he was unable to provide an update.

Dana provided a status update of his work on mapping commercial properties. He explained that the Tax Assessor would have to charge the EDC for their services, so he has begun tackling the work himself. Steve Gogliettino has been assisting in the process by contacting the GIS specialist in the town's



Technology & GIS department to discuss the EDC's plan. Dana explained to the group how he is working to obtain the necessary information from the Maps application located under the Tax Assessor in the Town's website works. Bob asked if there is enough of an understanding of how to collect the data to possibly enroll someone else to perform the repetitive tasks, but it was found that it is not possible at this time. Steve will be compiling a list of 7 – 8 business properties to replicate data in a form similar to Orange County. Bob complimented Steve and Dana on their drive to make contacts in the town and move forward with the project.

Marketing Plan – Dent, Roussas, Gogliettino:

Amy had Kim distribute a list of questions for local businesses and asked Commission members to review and provide feedback. Bob and Nick discussed the similarities in the Newtown EDC questions to the Bridgeport Regional Business Council. The group further discussed the list of questions, the objective of the questions and how they would be executed. Nick confirmed that the EDC is looking to obtain feedback from light industrial, advanced manufacturing, and recently expanded medical. Amy explained that after answers have been obtained the results will be put into a grid so responses can be weighed to identify the most important factors. Dana questioned if the questions were too open ended. The group further discussed that the EDC member who is asking the questions can ask more detailed questions if answers are too vague. Al Roznicki asked that questions number 6 and number 7 be re-phrased so that they are not perceived to be negative. Amy will be updating 2 questions.

Deep Brook West – Owen:

Bob informed members that Cramer Owen was not able to attend the meeting. Members spoke about the pending response from the Army Chore of Engineers.

Covered Bridge – Owen:

Bob spoke in Cramer's absence and explained that the developer has been informed that the EDC will not be taking further action. The group discussed the next options for the developer.

Fairfield Hills – Thompson:

Bob spoke in place of Wes. He informed the group that the EDC will be participating in the development of the Fairfield Hills campus by performing economic evaluation of client proposals and providing feedback to the FHA. Bob explained the importance of attracting business as unoccupied buildings are charged a lower tax rate than occupied buildings.

Chairman's Report:

Bob began a discussion regarding adjunct membership to the EDC. He expressed that EDC members have valuable skills but may not have the spare time to work on projects. He further explained that providing adjunct membership to interested people will benefit the EDC in providing new skills or



existing skills where members do not have the availability. He gave examples of two people who approached him with their interest in supporting the EDC in their areas of expertise. Both people provided their resumes. Adjunct members do not have the authority to vote, but could participate in meetings and provide expertise. Bob then asked if any members had questions on Scott Orlando's resume, and there were none. He then moved forward and if anyone wanted to propose having him as an adjunct member. Nick Roussas proposed having Scott Orlando as an adjunct member. Al Roznicki seconded. All were in favor. Bob will be notifying Scott of his adjunct membership.

The group then discussed some other properties in town. Amy informed the group of her efforts to identify marketable commercial properties.

The discussion then returned to marketing and Nick informed Commission members that next week he will be meeting with key contacts. The Bridgeport Regional Business council has marketing similar to Orange County but on a smaller scale. They publish bi-annual pamphlets that are 4 – 5 pages describing what is currently under development, what has been developed, available rentals and what is newly rented.

Amy provided members with details of the planned demolition of Woodbury Hall, and also mentioned Stratford Hall interests based upon a meeting she had attended.

The group then discussed marketing options and strategies and WesCog's approach.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned by Amy at 8:07 pm and was seconded by Matt.

Respectfully Submitted, *Kimberly Chiappetta, Clerk*

I'm proposing that we ask these questions of the top corporate taxpayers in Newtown. We might also ask them of smaller but growing corporate entities that we've identified, if we have enough manpower to do that. The purpose of these questions is twofold. First, it's important to cultivate and maintain a strong relationship with the corporate entities already located here. Second, in order to create an effective marketing plan, we need to identify the key attributes of our town that make it attractive to business leaders. Conversely, we need to recognize our weaknesses in order to rectify them if possible or prepare to refute them if we can.

If a business **has located or relocated here within the last two years**, this question should be asked:

Did you find the approval and permitting process to be efficient?

- a. Did you engage the EDC to help you through the process?

Questions to be asked of all the businesses:

1. Why did you choose Newtown?
2. What keeps you here?
3. Ask, if questions 1 and 2 don't answer this question, "What are Newtown's strengths?"
4. Would you recommend Newtown to others with whom you do business?
5. Would you encourage them to relocate or expand here?
6. Ask, if questions 4 and 5 don't answer this question, "What ~~are~~ issues should Newtown's be addressing ~~weaknesses~~?"
7. ~~Is there anything that the town~~ In your opinion, what can Newtown do to make it more attractive to business site finders?
8. Are you considering expanding? Would you remain in Newtown if you do?
9. The EDC has one major charge: to build the value of the grand list while maintaining the ambiance of the town. Do you think that charge should be modified in any way?