



Minutes: Economic Development Advisory Committee (EDC) April 21, 2025

The regular meeting of the Middle Smithfield Township Economic Development Advisory Committee was held on April 21, 2025, with Ed Regina (Chairperson) presiding.

Board Members: Charlie Stecker (Secretary), Joe Memoli, and Ashley Takacs attended in person. Gina Bertucci and Beverly Brown attended via Zoom.

Absent: Deborah Emin (Vice Chairperson).

Township Staff: James Brechbiel, Economic Development Manager, in person, and Annette Atkinson, Township Supervisor, via Zoom.

Township Residents/Guests: None.

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 pm with Ed Regina presiding.

Minutes and Agenda

- Joe Memoli made a motion to approve the March Minutes, seconded by Gina Bertucci. Motion passed 6-0.
- Charlie Stecker made a motion to approve the April agenda. Ed Regina seconded the motion. Motion passed 6-0.

Correspondence

- None

New Business:

Welcome, Ashley Takacs: The EDC welcomed its newest member for her first official meeting.

Business Updates: James Brechbiel reviewed the following updates for businesses in the area:

- Exploria: Tree Ventures Zipline will be run by A Yak or Two (kayak, raft, and canoe rentals) in 2025.
- The Dutchman: New tenant, JuJu's Vault (soaps, candles, lotion, accessories), will be in Suite 500 and working with Zoning to finalize the Certificate of Occupancy (CO). The tenant expects to open in May 2025.
- The Car Cleaners Detail Shop at Mobil Gas is working with Zoning for its Certificate of Occupancy (CO).
- Price Chopper Complex has an early education center prospect for the former Urgent Care unit.
- Former 209 Motors Inc. and U-Haul property was purchased, and the owner is in touch with Zoning to review options.
- LVPG: An announcement regarding additional services and the official name change is expected. Joe Memoli noted that the EDC and Anthony Homer were instrumental in getting health services in Middle Smithfield. Annette Atkinson suggested a scrapbook should be made to share with Anthony H. Beverly Brown noted she could reach out.
- Raj Investments' conditional use application, including 31 conditions, was approved at the 3/27 BOS meeting.
- Charlie Stecker announced that Pocono Ridge Inn (former Deerfield Inn) is working to set up a final inspection.
- Plans for Phase II of Mt. Nebo Apartments were submitted to the Township.

Community Update: James Brechbiel directed the committee to review the list of events at the bottom of the agenda:

- The 1,000 Feet of Street Litter Clean Up will be on Sat., 4/26/25, at 8 am. Volunteers who are not able to attend on the day of can do a litter pick up on another day of their choosing.
- Pink Lights Walk Tea Party is on Sat., 4/26/25, at 11 am at the Community and Cultural Center.
- The East Stroudsburg University (ESU) Economic Summit is Friday, 5/16/25, from 7:30 am to 12 pm at Kalahari Resort. Members of the committee were invited to attend.
- The Pocono Mountain Visitors Bureau (PMVB) Tourism Summit is Thursday, 5/22/25 from 8:00 am to 3:30 pm at Kalahari Resort. Members of the committee were invited to attend.

Old Business:

National Park Service (NPS) Reported Staff Cuts / Effects to Delaware Water Gap Recreation Area (DWGRA) and

Local Businesses: James Brechbiel reviewed the following updates from NPS:

- NPS noted it is hiring back all its seasonal staff (same amount as in 2024) and the staff is expected back mid-May. Ed Regina noted that they always need more staff and that the Friends of the Park Group reported the same.
- There is a new acting superintendent.
- There are no reported additional closures or staff cuts.
- NPS will continue to support MST businesses, eateries, and services.

Revitalize 209 Spring Campaign Canvassing Feedback:

- Joe Memoli noted that the businesses/properties he canvassed were very receptive, but noted they may not have immediate projects to consider, or the funds to complete them within the year. Joe M. furthered he reassured them the money was still available. Annette Atkinson noted that the funds allocated are based on the consensus of the supervisors when doing the budget. Annette A. noted that she is for continuing the program, but that it would have to be approved by the Board year to year. Charlie Stecker noted that he will stress the urgency to the businesses.
- Ed Regina noted that the complex tenants should consider projects that benefit the entire property, not just a storefront.
- Charlie Stecker noted that businesses far off the road would benefit if there were elements of the grant program that drew traffic towards them. Ed Regina added that, although signs are not part of the grant, there should be some considerations for future programs to help with those needs. Joe Memoli noted the precedence set by the Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) grant programs was that signage projects were generally not accepted, but that if the Township were to incorporate this into future programs, there should be a threshold of three (3) years in operation required for businesses.

Revitalize 209 Projects Update: James Brechbiel reviewed the following:

- Jinyin Temple submitted (3) quotes for the former arcade building. A revised application is to be reviewed by the Revitalize 209 Committee at its 4/22/25 meeting.
- Richards Tree Farm submitted a Letter of Interest (LOI) for the committee to review at its next meeting.
- Pocono Bazaar submitted an LOI to do a landscaping project on its property.
- The Church at 5146 Milford Rd. received an extension to do its window replacement project.
- Joe Memoli asked if Pocono U-Haul had sent in a completed application and James Brechbiel noted they had not.

LERTA (Local Economic Revitalization Tax Assistance) Status Update: James Brechbiel reviewed the following:

- ESASD Board of Education Meeting - 10-year extension approved on 2/24/25. Resolution received 2/26/25.
- Monroe County is reviewing the determination for its renewal- In progress.

Announcements:

- James Brechbiel noted that NeighborWorks is targeting a date in November to do a home buyers seminar.

Public Comments:

- None

Meeting adjournment: Charlie Stecker made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:26 p.m., seconded by Ashley Takacs. The motion passed 6-0.

The next meeting will be held on Monday, May 19, 2025, at 5:30 p.m. at the Township Municipal Center.

Respectfully Submitted,
James Brechbiel, Middle Smithfield Township