



Minutes: Economic Development Advisory Committee (EDC) November 17, 2025

The regular meeting of the Middle Smithfield Township Economic Development Advisory Committee was held on November 17, 2025, with Ed Regina (Chairperson) presiding.

Board Members: Ed Regina (Chairperson), Deborah Emin (Vice Chairperson), Joe Memoli, and Charlie Stecker attended in person. Gina Bertucci and Beverly Brown attended via Zoom.

Absent: Ashley Takacs

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

Township Residents/Guests: Bonnie Jungfer and Bill Hopaugh via Zoom.

The meeting was called to order at 5:31 pm with Ed Regina presiding.

Minutes and Agenda

- Deborah Emin made a motion to approve the October Minutes, seconded by Joe Memoli. Motion passed 6-0.
- Deborah Emin made a motion to approve the November agenda, seconded by Joe Memoli. Motion passed 6-0.

Correspondence

- None.

New Business:

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

- Hild Arms LLC is open at the Dutchman. The business sells ammunition and sells/buys/trades firearms.
- East Coast Barbers moved from Retro Plaza to Liberty Plaza and is open.
- Savory Eats at Liberty Plaza is doing a soft opening and partaking in the Township's Shop Local Program with a deal. The fare is traditional American cuisine with subs, burgers, loaded fries, homemade lemonade, and more.
- The Preliminary/Final Land Development Plans were submitted for a Mt. Nebo Phase II, with 30 units, and is being reviewed by the Township's Planning Commission.
- The Exploria Office Building is sold and expected to be converted into apartments.
- Pocono Ridge is open and will be announcing a grand opening ribbon-cutting ceremony for December 2025.

Community/Township Updates: James Brechbiel directed the committee to review the list of events at the bottom of agenda and the following:

- The Township planned to submit an application for the Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) Local Share Account (LSA) Statewide for the Downtown Development District Plan in the amount of \$50,000, as well as another application on behalf of the Bushkill Volunteer Fire Dept. for needed renovations on its building in an amount up to \$300,000.
- Person of the Year nominations were extended through 11/24/25.
- The Middle Smithfield Township Holiday Market and Tree Lighting Ceremony is scheduled for 11/29/25. Deborah Emin and Charlie Stecker noted they would attend to help with Shop Local card activations.

Old Business:

Homeowner and First Time Home Buyer Program with NeighborWorks Feedback:

- James Brechbiel thanked EDC members, Beverly Brown, Ed Regina, and Joe Memoli for attending the event.
- Beverly Brown noted the program was excellent and presentations were well delivered by professionals. Beverly B. noted that the title of the program should be changed to "Home Buyer Workshop" to attract a larger audience, and there was discussion amongst the Committee regarding the program benefiting new and previous buyers alike.
- James Brechbiel noted that actual attendance was lower than the number of confirmed registrants. NeighborWorks reported that all 25 available spots had been filled prior to the event and that registration was closed once capacity was reached. They also informed James B. that some fall-off in numbers is typical for these events. The Committee discussed the possibility of keeping registration open to help ensure a full turnout.
- The Committee discussed that the program may be too long for a single day and suggested that a shorter format might improve attendance. Charlie Stecker noted that the 8-hour duration is a requirement of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) in order for NeighborWorks to remain eligible for grant funding.
- Joe Memoli and Beverly Brown suggested adding information about local systems (septic, well water, grinder pumps) that newcomers from urban areas may not understand. The Committee discussed possible HUD restrictions regarding allowing general educational materials to be displayed at the program.

- Joe Memoli suggested having YouTube videos available for those unable to attend the events.
- Ed Regina noted that the information presented is an excellent resource and can be compiled for a booklet. Ed R. furthered that a “New/Recent” buyers program can be a consideration for future presentations.
- Ed Regina noted that there were issues with lighting glare and acoustics at the Community Center and suggested installing curtains on the window and possibly additional acoustic panels for the Community Room.

Shop Local Holiday Campaign Status:

- James Brechbiel reported that the program has reached 62 deals to date, a new record. He noted that the deal card is currently with the printer and is expected to be included in the Holiday Newsletter, scheduled to reach mailboxes on 11/21/25. James B. added that the campaign will launch on Monday, 11/24/25, with posts scheduled to run throughout the duration of the campaign.
- James Brechbiel reported that the video shoot finished, and editing was in progress. He noted videos would start running on Facebook on 11/24/25.

Business Directory 2026 Status:

- James Brechbiel reported that final edits for the publication were submitted, and new directories were expected to be mailed prior to Thanksgiving.
- The Committee discussed possibly holding a contest for the design of the next directory cover.

Revitalize 209 Status Updates: The Committee reviewed the following:

- **Jinyin Temple** completed its project, and Zoning was reviewing the work.
- **Lakeside Investment Corp.**’s project was completed, and reimbursement was approved by the Board of Supervisors (BOS) at its 10/23/25 meeting.
- **The Green Rental at 5047 Milford Rd.**- The owner received preliminary approval from BOS at its 11/13/25 meeting for the siding project.

Goals for 2026 Continued

- The Committee discussed that each member would come to the December meeting with at least one goal for 2026.

Meeting Dates for January and February 2026, Confirmation:

- The Committee discussed the January and February meeting dates for 2026 and determined to meet on Monday, 1/26/25, at 5:30 pm and Monday, 2/23/25, at 5:30 pm.

Announcements:

- James Brechbiel announced Joe Memoli's resignation from the EDC effective 12/1/25, after nine years of dedicated service. The Committee reviewed a recognition article in the Township’s Holiday Newsletter that highlights Joe Memoli’s significant contributions, including his leadership role in bringing Lehigh Valley Health Network (LVHN) services to the township, his instrumental role in shaping the Revitalize 209 grant program, his championing of Shop Local and Restaurant Week initiatives, support for Country Club of the Poconos golf course sale, and more. The Committee thanked Joe Memoli for his service and welcomed him to attend any EDC function/meeting in the future.
- The Committee discussed future memberships, and Charlie Stecker requested applications for 2 individuals he felt might be interested in the EDC.

Public Comments:

- None

Meeting adjournment: Deborah Emin made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:30 p.m., seconded by Charlie Stecker. The motion passed 6-0.

The next meeting will be held on Monday, December 15, 2025, at 5:30 p.m. at the Township Municipal Center.

Respectfully Submitted,
James Brechbiel, Middle Smithfield Township