



Minutes: Economic Development Advisory Committee 9 February 2015

The regular meeting of the Middle Smithfield Township Economic Development Advisory Committee was held on February 9, 2015 at 6:30 pm at the Schoonover Municipal Building with Robert Hetu as Chairman presiding.

Board Members: Robert Hetu, Carrie Wetherbee, Carl Wilgus, Gina Bertucci, Beverly Brown

Subcommittee Members: Debbie Kulick, Ed Regina

Township Staff: Supervisor Annette Atkinson, Supervisor Michael Dwyer, and Judith Acosta as Liaison and Recording Secretary

Residents: Danny Younger, Bruce Brandli,

Meeting started at 6:40 with Robert Hetu as Chairman.

Agenda and Minutes

- Gina Bertucci motioned to accept the agenda, Carl Wilgus seconded the motion and the board unanimously agreed.
- Carl Wilgus motioned to accept the minutes from last meeting, January 12, 2015, Beverly Brown seconded the motion and the board unanimously agreed.

Goals for 2015

- Realtor Sell Package –
 - A Marketing piece about MST for Realtors both in and around the township that can be distributed to businesses/corporations/etc. who are interested in bringing their business to the area. This package would help them understand why businesses should move to MST. Possibly mention what commercial properties are available.
 - A subcommittee was formed to take on this task. Volunteers included Carl Wilgus, Carrie Wetherbee, Beverly Brown and Debbie Kulick. Someone additional from the business community should also be included if they volunteer, as well as local realtors.
 - The marketing piece/package is to provide correct information about MST, demographics, etc as well as boost development and dispel any misinformation already out there.
 - Carrie Wetherbee will speak to Martha Loomis (Fleurs Di Lis) about Stroudsburg

Package

- Debbie Kulick suggested we should sell minutes, not miles, to boost development.
- Recommendations were heard on attending a realtor's luncheon and getting on their agenda to speak to the room, having a seminar for realtors, using Survey Monkey or Google Docs Form to get business owners opinions.
- LERTA -
 - Public Q&A Meeting is coming up on February 28 at 10am.
 - Sample Ordinance and Sample Resolution were provided by Mike Dwyer at our January meeting and remain available if requested.
- Shop Local Program –
 - Judy Acosta provided updates from local businesses who participated in Shop Local 2014.
 - Many had positive outcomes and experiences and felt the program as a whole was a success.
 - Some felt they saw more traffic because of the raised awareness, an example is Los Tres Amigos Mexican Restaurant
 - Some did not have great deals so they did not see as many discount cards applied, however did see more traffic to their storefront. Example: Dawn's Tag & Title Service whose discount was \$5 off title transfer fee which required the resident to purchase a car to utilize this discount.
 - Ed Regina representing a local business felt the program works better for businesses that are more "tucked away" and felt that his discount offer was not successful. The discount for Regina Farms was \$5 off a full price Christmas Tree Monday – Friday only. Ed Regina saw 17 discount cards during the promotional period and felt that was not successful. He also felt we need a more aggressive and lax sign policy and street-scaping throughout the township.
 - Danny Younger suggested a seminar for local businesses on how to create a website, get on facebook, use social media, etc.
 - Debbie Kulick suggested sidewalks make the community seem more cohesive. It was further suggested by another member that we could perhaps attain that within the shopping centers but not down all of Route 209.
 - Bruce Brandli representing a local business felt the program as a whole was

successful and could grow into even more success. Bruce is interested in participating in a Restaurant Week during a slow season to bring in more customers. Last Restaurant Week was years ago with Local Flair and was not as successful as it could be. Given Bruce's recommendations the committee will come up with a plan for a successful Restaurant Week

- Gina Bertucci brought up the point of creating a brand with Shop Local so that residents and even tourists can know to look for it. Shop Local can be driven toward residents or tourists or both but should be under the same umbrella
- Carrie Wetherbee recommended we kick off this year with Restaurant Week and move on to other events from there. Robert Hetu suggested we do 2-3 key events each year such as Restaurant Week and Holiday Shopping.
- A more permanent discount card was discussed along with the possibility of a loyalty or punch card system. Some local businesses had mentioned the interest in year round offers. Some committee members had reservations about a loyalty or punch card system but all seemed to like the idea of a year round card system to encourage shopping throughout the year.
- Danny Younger suggested a sign at the entrance of Middle Smithfield Township with placards for each business represented. He has seen a similar sign in Tannersville.
- Restaurant Week –
 - The last week of April is proposed as a good week to hold this event based on his observations of slower seasons.
 - Judy Acosta will reach out to local restaurants to see if there is interest and when it is best overall.
 - Bruce Brandli suggested a special menu or menu item for the week. This may be the easiest way to track participation. Judy Acosta will get a feel for what other restaurants are interested in doing when in contact.
- Tourist Week –
 - Discussed as a possibility
 - Carl Wilgus talked about NPS and coordinating with their summer activities celebrating their upcoming anniversary. A triathlon is in the works for October, August 25th is the official anniversary.
 - Carl Wilgus will also reach out to the NPS to see if they are willing to come and speak to the EDC.

- Business Directory –
 - Judy Acosta, Steven Natiello and other MST staff members are hard at work updating our Business Directory. Essentially, our www.mstshoplocal.com website will become the official business directory and links to this site will be on the township website and EDC page as well as facebook.
 - www.mstshoplocal.com will also have a tab for Shop Local events and provide details on all specials being offered.

New Business

- Danny Younger provided an update on a historical marker for the Mastadon. The marker was approved 4 years ago but the project fell to the wayside. Danny now has all necessary forms and documents with contact information and a marker will be placed soon.
- Carl Wilgus advised that Jeffrey Scott Young with the Pocono Mountain Economic Development Guide is working with Wayne and Carbon counties to create an EDC magazine, supported by advertising. Carl provided Jeffrey with contacts in MST.
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Meeting adjourned at 8:34pm

The next meeting will take place on March 9, 2015 at 6:30pm