



Minutes: Economic Development Advisory Committee January 8, 2018

The regular meeting of the Middle Smithfield Township Economic Development Advisory Committee was held on January 8th, 2018 at 6:00 pm at the Schoonover Municipal Building with Gina Bertucci (Chairperson) presiding, and Dana Francis as recording secretary.

Board Members: Chris Barrett, Bob Phillips, Joe Memoli, Gina Bertucci and Beverly Brown (called in by phone).

Absent: none

Township Staff: Annette Atkinson, Supervisor/Admin & Ops Dir., Mike Dwyer, Supervisor/ Public Works/Parks & Recreation Director, Patrice Dume, Economic Development Manager, and Dana Francis, Municipal & Community Projects Assistant

Township Residents/Guests: none

Meeting called to order at 6:07 pm with Gina Bertucci presiding.

Minutes and Agenda

- Bob Phillips motioned to accept minutes from the December 11th, 2017, Joe Memoli seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0.
- Joe Memoli motioned to accept the December 11th, 2017, agenda, Bob Phillips seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0.

Correspondence

- No correspondence

New Business

Committee Reorganization

- Chairman Gina Bertucci was reappointed by the Board of Supervisors at the Reorganization Meeting held on January 2, 2018
- Motion to appoint Joe Memoli Vice Chairperson, by Beverly Brown. Second by Bob Phillips. Motion passed 5-0
- Motion to appoint Beverly Brown Secretary, by Gina Bertucci. Second by Joe Memoli. Motion passed 5-0

Old Business

Shop Local Review

- Being Chris Barrett's first committee meeting, Patrice gave a brief overview of the Shop Local program and how it works. This year's program saw approximately 400 card activations. This year Shop Local had coverage on several local news stations and Facebook videos that were

created showcasing local businesses were very well received. Patrice will reach out to the participating businesses for feedback within the next few weeks.

Goals for 2018

- Patrice went over the Economic Development goals for 2018 with the Committee. General discussion about the goals took place.

Golf Course

The Supervisors are providing a zoning classification for approximately 320 vacant acres owned by the township, which includes the Country Club of the Poconos Municipal Golf Course and adjacent vacant lands. The Supervisors are considering the C2 commercial classification, which could advance the sale of the golf course to a qualified buyer of a compatible use, such as time shares, hotel, spa, etc. Mike explained on maps displayed at the meeting where the land being considered is located. . If a developer with a compatible use such as timeshares or 55+ garden apartments, etc. developed there, they could benefit from the LERTA if the taxing authorities agree to include that parcel, as well as sewer financing, and they could purchase the adjacent golf course at land only value. This would convert the land and golf course from tax exempt (because the township owns it) to taxable. This is increasing tax revenue for the township without increasing taxes. Annette informed everyone there will be a public hearing about this matter on February 8th. In the meantime, she encouraged everyone to attend the January 25th Supervisors meeting & Preview of 2018 where questions and concerns could be answered. General discussion took place about the golf course. The EDC unanimously agreed that this is a good move for economic development, and would not only provide tax ratable, but jobs, and since Fernwood Hotel and Conference center is no more, a branded hotel would be a good addition to the township.

Announcements

- a) El Valley Diner Ribbon Cutting – Wednesday January 24th, 2018 at 1:00pm.

Discussion:

- Brief discussion took place about Restaurant Week 2018. Mike suggested reaching out to all the local restaurants about coming up with a set menu of items for the week and compiling each restaurant's menu into a book for residents, similar to what areas like Easton do. Everyone agreed it was a great idea and will discuss further in future meetings.

Public Comments:

- none

Next meeting date: February 12th, 2018 at 6:00pm. Meeting adjourned at 7:19pm.