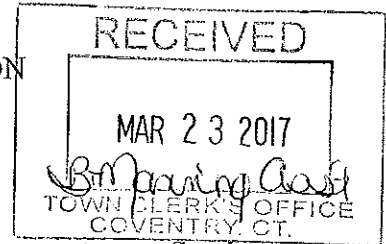


COVENTRY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
March 23, 2017, Town Hall Conference Room B



Roll Call: The meeting was called to order by the chair at 7:12PM. Members present were Sondra Stave, Bill Jobbagy, Tim Liptrap, Dick Giggey, Carol Polsky, Sam Belsito, Barbara Berry, and Mark Lavitt. Members absent- Alex Konigsberg- Excused. Staff present were Eric Trott and John Elsesser.

A motion was made by Tim Liptrap and seconded by Carol Polsky to accept the minutes of the February 23, 2017 meeting. The motion, with no corrections, was approved by all.

Sondra reported that the Library expansion funding will be on the May 2nd referendum.

Bill reported that the Governor's Economic Forum was held earlier in the week. The forum noted the positive aspects of the economic climate in the State including the State's positive ranking in terms of advanced degrees, R&D investment, exports, productivity, patents and the like. However, Bill noted that the job creation in the State over the past 10 years has been only 2%, so there is a dichotomy here. John noted that the State's infrastructure is basically of the 1970's style and the tax situation is dire which are some of the reasons that the good economic statistics have not translated to jobs.

Carol Reported on her visits to local businesses. The Hoffmann's (forge and arts) were very appreciative of the visit and offered suggestions as to how the town could help with marketing. A discussion followed regarding the town recognizing a "Business of the Month" or some similar items. The EDC will follow-up with the idea. Carol also visited Biz Tech and noted they were very busy, but are experiencing issues with the landlord. They want to stay in town and are looking for other local venues.

Manager:

John reported that the Lake & Cross Street project is proceeding with planning and grant applications. The Main Street curve project has had some rework and minor delays, but should be complete by November.

John will also be meeting with the plant manager of Teleflex for general discussion and business updates and the possible use of adjacent land, and any ways the town could facilitate their business.

He mentioned that one striking result of the forum held by Senator Murphy with local farmers was their fear that government immigration initiatives may limit their ability to hire migrant farm workers which are key to their business. Local residents seem to be adverse to this kind of work.

John also reported that the WPCA has found some infiltration in the Village which is limiting the capacity of the town's sewer system. They are working to correct the issues and search for other ways to limit improper use of the sewers, such as sump pumps.

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He also mentioned that work is continuing with the Town of Bolton and the State regarding the sewer extension on Route 44. There is no State money available for the project, but the town and private concerns can fund some of the extension, and a capacity study is also planned.

Planner:

Eric reported that he will be working with LADA regarding a concept study for commercial land use on the Coventry- Bolton town line so that we can envision the commercial uses in the area.

He also reported that the business survey is complete and, due to the wishes of the respondents, several workshops are planned for local businesses.

He mentioned that the 2017 Farmers market planning is in full swing. Two farm viability grants are being pursued to determine ways to connect farmers with the consumer. The event calendar for 2017 is complete and both vendor sign-ups and sponsorships are going very well. He and John noted that we have received a grant for tree planting in the Hale Homestead area and potential public works projects that will enhance the parking, pedestrian safety and connectivity to the Fife & Drum and Historical Society adjacent properties.

Eric also mentioned the receipt of an \$11,000 grant to design and planning for a multi-purpose walking trail on the land given to the town by the State from the old Route 6 project. This trail will compliment and tie to the Hop River Airline Trail.

Tim Reported on his plans for business workshops which will include Facebook Messenger, a new tool to “push” advertising to media devices and “Profile” where customers can be targeted directly based on their personal profile.

A motion was made at 9:20 to adjourn by Tim Liptrap and seconded by Carol Polsky.

The next meeting is April 27, 2017 in the Town Hall.

Respectfully submitted,



Bill Jobbagy
Vice-Chair