

Wilton Economic Development Committee – Meeting Minutes May 20, 2015

Attendees – Peter Gaboriault (Chair), Lee Wilson, Chris Fuentes, David Clune, Keith Rodgerson, Robert Sabo.

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 PM.

Approval of minutes – The minutes of the April 8, 2015 meeting were reviewed and approved.

Website Update:

Chris Fuentes reported that the website is almost ready for deployment.

- We need to get approval of the corporate logos we plan to include on the website. Who will do this??
- Get additional sports photos for the website. Chris will secure and review them. We also need a few additional Wilton photos. Peter will send a contact for additional photos and Chris will follow up.
- Chris plans to meet with the web site developer, Mac Johnson , to review and finalize the copy.
- We need someone to maintain the content and administer the website. Members were asked to submit candidates. Bob will call Lisa Bogan who has maintained sites for other organizations in Wilton. This will be paid from the 2015 budget.
- Target date for releasing the site in June 3, 2015. Final content to be done by May 29.
- Plan to conduct an interview in the Wilton Bulletin consisting of an interview with our Chairman.
- Keith will develop a list of media outlets in which to post the press release.

Future EDC activities:

Budget - \$36,000 (approx), was included in the Town budget for the 2016 FY.

Once the website is up and being maintained, discussion turned to how the EDC should focus future efforts.

- Review open parcels and decide how to promote and market them. The EDC members need to revisit the existing EDC Charter for discussion.
- How can the EDC generate interest in developing in Wilton? How can we encourage development of certain parcels like the Crossways property? How can we pick a high value project that the Committee can push? Could we focus vacant property on a particular segment like home furnishing and decorators? This would require creating a critical mass of that type of business. Innovation hubs that attract small startups was also discussed. In Stanford they took a

City owned property (library) and created an innovation. What is the property profile for an innovation hub and is it possible in Wilton? How can Wilton set itself apart from surrounding towns?

- How can the EDC get input from the Community? Dave suggested a feedback section for people to submit ideas to the Committee.
- What is the best use of the existing budget?

General discussion of various open parcels and development opportunities ensued. Consensus was that the EDC should pick a few properties we can focus on that would have an impact.

Planning and Zoning Potential Agenda:

Lee Wilson distributed and draft note to P&Z that would assist businesses in Wilton. (Attached). One item of discussion concerned the Adaptive Use Regulation. Should owners be allowed to create a new building with historical character on an existing parcel on RT 7.

Bob raised the issue of the role of the commission for both maintaining activity like the website and advocacy with Town Boards like the P:&Z. How can Wilton streamline regulations to make it easier to establish and maintain businesses.

A proposal was made to meet with the Planning and Zoning Commission informally, assuming it meets open meeting regulations. We want to meet with the Chamber of Commerce as well. Chris suggested meeting with all three groups. Chris Fuentes will organize the meeting. Keith will research the open meetings issues to make sure we are in compliance.

Dave agreed to contact Heather Borden Herve from Good Morning Wilton to explore getting public input.

We also discussed a business/community meeting or event. Bob mentioned a similar meeting the EDC does in Orange.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:45 PM