

**Town of Barkhamsted
Economic Development Commission
Meeting Minutes
September 20, 2018**

Meeting called to order at 7:15 PM

Attending members: Kathy Williams, Tim Deschenes-Desmond, alternate Amy Starr (7:45), Ginny Apple (7:30), Bob Tim Sullivan and Kevin Noblet. Also present was Don Stein, First Selectman.

On a motion by Tim Deschenes-Desmond, seconded by Kathy Williams, and passed unanimously, Kevin Noblet was appointed as Acting Chair for the meeting

Review of minutes: On a motion by Tim Deschenes-Desmond, seconded by Kathy Williams, and passed unanimously, the minutes of the July 19, 2018 meeting were approved.

On a motion by Tim Deschenes-Desmond, seconded by Kathy Williams, and passed unanimously, the minutes of the August 16, 2018 meeting were approved, with a correction to change the start time in the minutes to 7:15 (not 8:15).

Discussion:

- Tourist Map – Kevin Noblet reported that he had been working with the artist and is hoping to have the project in progress and completed early next year. The focus will be on natural resources, historical sites, the Lighthouse community, and some amount of business information, since there is concern about businesses opening and closing, thus making the map out-of-date. Kevin will provide written copy and photos to the artist.
- Business Meet and Greet – The Commission selected Thursday, 8/25 at 5:30, for the event. Ginny Apple, Tim Sullivan, Amy Starr, and Kathy Williams will be the subcommittee organizing and publicizing the event, and they were deputized to move forward independently. The format will reflect the feedback from the first business-meet-and-greet breakfast meeting, and they will use direct contact, social media, and other publicity means, to reach out to the local businesses.
- Welcome Kit – Amy Starr reported that the Women’s Club has not yet started on this project and that one good option would be to use the Tourist Map as an emblem on the bag. She will follow up on this project.
- Other Initiatives – Don Stein reported that a feasibility study was underway to look at the sewer and water extension from Winsted to Mallory Brook Plaza, Lombard Ford and Mallory Brook farm and the contiguous area. He and the Winsted Town Manager are also working on updating the interlocal agreements for extending both water and sewer.

There is also discussion with the owner of the Riverton Self-Storage building about how that property can be developed, which is even more important now that Sweet Peas Restaurant has closed.

- Community Garden – There was a good response to the question on Facebook regarding interest in the garden, so the EDC members were encouraged that this initiative could be positive for the community. Don Stein will follow up with CT DEEP and the Historical Society regarding the area by Squires Tavern that is the first choice for the garden. Both organizations were positive about the preliminary inquiry which had been made earlier in the year. Assuming it is a go, Don Stein will apply for a grant from the Northwest Community Foundation for the materials needed to create the raised beds, fencing and a water tank for the garden plots.
- Sustainable CT – this initiative was tabled until the next meeting
- Other Topics:
 - discoverlitchfieldhills.com – Don Stein showed the EDC a short video about a new initiative which consists of a website for each town in the region that allows them to post events and businesses to improve the visibility of our communities and what they have to offer. The basic website is free, as are the postings, but for a modest fee, there are enhancements available. The questions that were raised were: how to link this site to the Town calendar and how can we upgrade the current calendar on our website; how to interest businesses in posting on this site; how to promote the use of the website by our residents; and how does it link to other search engines. It will be presented at the business meet-and-greet, followed by a more detailed meeting, possibly with the website developer.
 - NWconneCT – Don Stein provided some information on this initiative to bring fiber optic internet service throughout the region, like a public utility. This service would provide gigabit speed for both downloads and uploads, and would enhance service for both wifi and cellphone coverage. It would enable the growth of new businesses or attract people who need very fast internet to work remotely. This group is working to promote this concept and to work with the Legislature to make it happen throughout the Northwest Corner. Don Stein is on the Board for this group and will keep the EDC apprised of progress.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:37 PM on a motion by Tim Deschenes-Desmond, seconded by Tim Sullivan.

Respectfully submitted,

Don Stein