



LITCHFIELD ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

Regular Meeting Minutes · DRAFT

November 16, 2022

Bantam Annex

80 Doyle Road

Bantam, CT 06750

1. Meeting called to order at 7:03 p.m. by Will Neary, Chair.

PRESENT *Regular members:* Lindsey Turner, Thomas Roman, Michele Murelli,
Tara-Marie Bares
Alternate members: Renee Betar, Missy Lafferty
Members of the public: Doug Clement, Meghan Riehl
Ex-officio: Denise Raap, First Selectman, Litchfield

ABSENT *Regular members:* L. Cleveland Fuessenich, Will Neary
Alternate members: Lelah Campo, Cailyn Paradise, Lelah Campo

2. Appointment of alternate voting member(s) for meeting: Missy Lafferty and Renee Betar.
3. Motion by R. Betar to approve draft minutes of the October 26, 2022 regular meeting; M. Murelli seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried.
4. Public comment:
 - M. Riehl (owner of Vibrant Farm) moved here from NY — they've been in the farming business for more than 8 seasons — wants to get more involved
5. New EDC members / candidates:
 - M. Riehl can take the next step by applying for EDC membership (D. Raap mentioned the next Board of Selectmen meeting is December 6)
6. EDC task force updates:
 - Marketing and branding Litchfield (D. Clement)

- Breakdown of audience:
 - 80% women / 20% men
 - 18-34 = 10% / 35-54 = 44% / 55-64 = 18% / 65+ = 10%
- Shop Small weekend is getting good response so far
- On the website, most popular pages are Events and Shopping
- Boost subscribers to email newsletter (65-70% open rates) — potentially weave this into “Made in Litchfield” campaign (enter email to enter)
- People have been responding well to vintage photos on social media
- “Made in Litchfield” initiative (T. Lynch)
 - Launch December 1
 - T. Lynch did a show-and-tell of all the goods in the basket
- Signage and posters for local merchants, stores, restaurants with VLCT QR code to print and distribute in acrylic placards (T. Lynch)
 - T. Lynch has designed flyers with QR codes to be placed in placards
 - T. Lynch to send design to D. Raap to color print at Town of Litchfield
 - T. Lynch has secured placards (30)
 - EDC members to assemble and distribute these across businesses (focus on high-foot-traffic businesses so that the code is scanned and people go to the website and see businesses that may not have as much attention ... yet)

7. Holiday Stroll

- Park & Rec Chairman, his wife, some commission members, and other volunteers have taken on the Holiday Stroll 2022
- D. Raap suggested a lanyard that says “EDC” or “Visit Litchfield CT” (for a distinguishing trait while volunteers are at events)

8. Restaurant Week

- M. Murelli sent an outline to W. Neary after connecting with Frank Cohen
- Form an exploratory committee with town leadership, EDC members, and 3-4 prominent restaurateurs
- Produce a poster or postcards for participating restaurants (to let people know what’s coming) — include pizza places too
- VLCT website should feature the Restaurant Week, with direct links to “Restaurant Week” menus
- Publicity-generating kickoff event (feature local celebrities and include commercial tie-ins to benefit retailers)
- 3-course, pre-fixe: one price point for lunch and a “three-tier” price point for dinner — given varying offerings?
- D. Clement offered additional insights and connections he has (look to New Haven)
- End of February 2023 (2/17-2/24) are target dates

9. Old and unfinished business:

- Secretary volunteer?
- Airbnb outreach for VLCT

10. New business:

- R. Betar mentioned the NWCT EDC is working on new economic development strategy for the next 5 years
 - NWCT EDC's current 5 focus areas:
 - Fiber Optics
 - Tourism
 - Farms
 - Manufacturers
 - Innovation / entrepreneurs
 - Local EDCs (like Litchfield) have an opportunity to offer ideas for the new plan
- R. Betar asked whether we should put Litchfield's Visitors' Guide:
 - Litchfield Inn
 - YARDwork
 - Historical Society
 - Bantam Firehouse (for when they're selling Christmas trees)
 - Mohawk
 - Even in other towns...
- D. Clement will link the PDF on the website
- T. Roman mentioned the bus tours (if anyone has ideas, let him know)

11. Adjourn: Motion to adjourn meeting made by T.Lynch; L. Turner seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

Next regular meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, December 21, 2022.

Respectfully submitted,

Tara-Marie Lynch

Litchfield Economic Development Commission

Litchfield Economic Development Commission Mission Statement (adopted 06/10/2020):

The mission is to promote sustainable economic diversity for Litchfield.