



Town of Ridgefield
Economic Development Commission
400 Main Street
Ridgefield, CT 06877

Arnold Light
Chairman

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Office

John Collins
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Rudy Marconi,
First Selectman
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Approved Meeting Minutes
Economic Development Commission
June 6, 2016, 7:00 PM
Small Conference Room

Present: Arnold Light, Alexander Karsanidi, John Devine, Bob DeFalco, Mary Henwood, Paul Levine

Absent: John Collins

Guests: David Yagnesak

Arnold Light called the meeting to order at 7:05 PM

Alex Karasanidi recorded the minutes

1. Announcements

- a) Next EDC Meeting August 1st, 2016 (No meeting in July)
- b) May 2nd minutes approval

2. Discussion of Retail Task Force meeting June 7th at the Lounsbury House with two special visiting guests: David Genovese, CEO of Baywater Properties in Darien will share a presentation which has “downtown” examples from cities and towns across the country which helped to shape his thinking in designing his master plan project for downtown Dairen.

Tucker Murphy, Executive Director of the New Canaan Chamber will address retail recruitment, zoning and her recently initiated parking efforts in the downtown of New Canaan.

3. The OGSM EDC strategic plan was discussed and a PowerPoint presentation has been prepared by Bob DeFalco to present to the BOS, on May 28th. The EDC message to the BOS is that the EDC now has a new mission and agenda. There is a concern that the BOS may not like the EDC suggestion to pursue change in town zoning to restrict 1st floor to commercial retail only. It was proposed that this be handled as a possible phase in-over time through attrition as current leases expire and new tenants move in.

All EDC members were encouraged to be present at this meeting.

4. There was a discussion of the first Ridgefield Int'l Film Festival and that it was a successful event that drew very good attendance for its shows. The event was broadly promoted through various media because of the EDC contribution of \$2,500. It will most likely be continued next year.

5. Arnold Light and Bob DeFalco will be meeting with Dick Larson of the Schlumberger Committee for a tour of the site especially for the Auditorium and Philip Johnson buildings.

6. Discussion of the upcoming June 15th special BOS meeting to further review the recommendations of the Schlumberger Committee, with the prospect of approving them to move forward. The EDC hopes to obtain a spot on the implementation committee if the recommendations are approved.

7. Hamlet Hub offered to do an article about the new EDC to give us more recognition from the Town . There was a suggestion to possibly write the article for them, or at least provide enough information for a detailed article.

8. We discussed a new design of the EDC website and the cost of the necessary software. Suggestion to consider using Word Press as it might be the most cost effective for the qualities we are looking for in a web design. An IT company would need to be hired to redo the EDC website and cost was discussed as it could be significant. It was suggested once the new website was running the Word Press cost might be around \$20 per month.

John D. was investigating the issuance of a town RFP for the development of a new town website and discovered First Selectman Rudy Marconi had already approved the funds necessary to proceed with development. Evidently, the State of CT had advised they had no funds available to give us. Andrew Nesbit, the town IT person, is already working on the new website and promises it will be the best of all CT towns and will be ADA compliant. It was noted, Virtual Towns &

Schools (www.vt-s.net) will be utilized for the new town website. The Task Forces will be working with Andrew to provide input to him for content incorporation on this site. The website will be Smartphone and tablet compatible and will monitor visits to the new website.

In addition to its normal municipal functions will serve 2 new purposes:

- 1) Would provide a unified calendar to promote all town organizations.
- 2) Provide marketing site for town organizations and Ridgefield assets.

9. John Collins who co-chairs the Parking Task Force was not present but the Parking Task Force meeting was discussed and that main street landlord Wing Biddle made an extensive presentation to the Task Force.

Meeting was Adjourn at 8:30.