

Economic Development Committee Task Force

Meeting Minutes

March 6, 2009

Opening:

The regular meeting of the Economic Development Committee Task Force was called to order at 9:40am on March 6, 2009 in the Red Hook Town Hall by Michelle Martin.

Present:

Mary Ann Johnson, Jim Brudvig, Edward Pruitt, Beth Jones, Michelle Martin

A. Approval of Agenda

The agenda was unanimously approved as distributed.

B. Approval of Minutes

As this was the first meeting, there were no minutes to approve of. Harry Colgan stopped in to welcome us. He thanked us for coming, discussed the purpose of the task force and why we were there. He then left.

C. Open Issues

Michelle opened the meeting by explaining what we had all been asked to do. The EDC task force was created to define the purpose, activities and organization of the Economic Development Committee. Each member of the committee introduced themselves and provided a bit of background on their involvement with economic development. We then had open dialogue regarding each of these three topic areas. Each topic will continue to be developed in the coming weeks. The committee is to meet for 3 months, bi-weekly. At the end of 3 months we will make a presentation to the Red Hook Town Board. It will then be decided if we need more time to fully develop the topic areas.

Purpose of the Economic Development Committee (EDC)

- It was discussed that the EDC should present a multi faceted, multi functional approach towards economic development. No one facet of economic development should take precedence over another. For example, taxes are important as well as business development and farming.
- The EDC should have a mission statement to guide the committee. Ed asked whether there was an existing mission statement. Michelle answered that she believes there was however since the task force was asked to start with a clean slate we ought to do so and recreate this mission statement. The mission statement should be broad in nature allowing for the development of specific goals and objectives to be determined by the appointed members of the EDC.

- Discussion followed whereby all agreed that the EDC should focus on strengthening the local economy, determine the resources available to fulfill the goals and objectives, provide advocacy and information regarding governmental policy on both a federal and state level that would affect economic development and coordinate and encourage the development of local business.
- It was discussed that it is very important for the town committees to work together towards a common goal. There must be effective and productive communication between committees and the EDC could be the facilitator or the “quarter back” for town committees that are involved in development and local economy. All local entities should be involved in the economic development process including members of the governing boards.
- The EDC should assume responsibility for economic development and be accountable.
- A purpose or mission statement for the EDC was discussed. An example of which is as follows: An essential means for managing a comprehensive strategy to strengthen local economy and its social supports. To be broadly representative and focused on a multi-function, multi-faceted comprehensive program for economic development

Activities of the EDC

What should the EDC be doing to accomplish the above mission?

- Representation in each town committee.
- Government liaison to keep track of governmental changes on state and local level and how those changes may affect economic development
- Community Wide Visioning. Red Hook needs a vision. The idea of bringing together representatives from multiple organizations, residents, etc. to discuss the vision for Red Hook. If we don’t know where we are going, we aren’t going to know how to get there.
- Strategic EDC Planning (and updating)
- Networking / Partnerships with Local Organizations such as the Red Hook Chamber of Commerce and other chamber organizations.
- National and Regional Alliances such as Northern Dutchess Alliance
- Find and manage good consultants and advisors to assist in economic development
- Research different agencies to determine the resources available to fulfill the goals and objectives of the EDC.

Organizational structure of EDC

How should the EDC be structured to accomplish the mission statement and activities?

- It was discussed whether or not the EDC should remain a governmental organization or become a separate non-profit organization. Mention was made as to what that would entail such as a board of directors, by-laws etc.

- It was suggested by Jim Brudvig that the task force ask a representative from each of the other town committees to answer a list of questions about how they perceive economic development in Red Hook and their committees role in that development. It was decided that each task force member would research questions to ask committee chairpersons and this would be discussed at our next meeting.

D. Agenda for Next Meeting

The above topics will continue to be expanded upon. In addition, Mary Ann brought copies of the book entitled “Blueprint for Economic Development” recently published by the Northern Dutchess Alliance. We agreed to all review this book. Also, we agreed to come up with several questions to ask town committee chairpersons regarding their ideas on economic development and the role their committees play.

In addition, we need to finalize a mission statement.

Adjournment:

Meeting was adjourned at 10:45am by Michelle Martin. The next general meeting will be at 9:30am on March 12, 2009 at the Red Hook Town Hall.

Minutes submitted by: Michelle Martin