

Economic Development Committee Task Force

Meeting Minutes

March 26, 2009

Opening:

The regular meeting of the Economic Development Committee Task Force was called to order at 9:30am on March 26, 2009 in the Red Hook Town Hall by Michelle Martin.

Present:

Jim Brudvig, Edward Pruitt, Beth Jones, Michelle Martin

Absent:

Mary Ann Johnson

Approval of Agenda:

The agenda was unanimously approved as distributed.

Approval of Minutes:

The minutes were unanimously approved as distributed with one exception. It was decided that after careful review, the task force should not declare a mission statement at this time. Once the purpose, activities and organization of the EDC has been determined, the mission statement will once again be revisited and decided upon.

Open Issues:

Michelle opened the meeting briefly reviewing what we had discussed at our first meeting. During this time, Harry Colgan stopped in to bring us an update on the progress of the sewer system. He informed the committee that the sewer system will allow for greater density and infill in the village. He also recommended the EDC speak with Brent Kovalcheck (sp?) for further information. The installation of the sewer system would allow for the potential development of the 50 acres south of Hannaford.

The meeting today focused primarily on determining the purpose of EDC and the activities needed to fulfill that purpose. It was once again discussed that it is imperative to find out exactly what the community vision is for the Red Hook area. What types of businesses does the area need? Want? The answer to this question will help to more fully define the purpose and activities of the EDC.

It was discussed that the purpose of the EDC should include the following:

1. The Economic Development Process for New Businesses. The EDC should be the first point of contact a potential business owner has when interested in establishing a business in the area.

The EDC should be involved in **attracting** new business to the Red Hook area. Through marketing efforts such as a website, the EDC should reach out to potential business owners. Information should be disseminated to interested parties regarding the type of businesses the Red Hook area is best able to accommodate. (TBD: the community vision)

The EDC should then **assist** potential business owners with the process of establishing the business. The EDC would welcome and present the potential business owner with a “kit” of information regarding who to contact for what they need. Available financing, potential commercial real estate locations for sale or lease, business planning utilizing SCORE and other services, legal assistance etc. would all be included in this kit and readily available to them. A representative from the EDC should be assigned to the potential business owner. This representative will then become the liaison, guiding them and assisting them through every step of establishing a business in the area. Introducing them to the zoning committee, the town board, etc. and attending meetings if necessary, with the potential business owner. (TBD: the actual process by which a business owner must proceed to establish a business)

The EDC should also offer a **business incubator** for new businesses. This would be program, not just an area / office space where new business could pool resources until they become enough established to make it on their own. The program would foster the start-up, evolution, growth and ultimate sustainability of the new or very early stage businesses. It will offer a set of helpful tools or services to local entrepreneurs. The specific goal and clear strategy of the incubator will be determined by the EDC.

2. The Economic Development Process for Existing Businesses. The EDC should first and foremost work very closely with the Red Hook Area Chamber of Commerce. As it will do for new businesses, so shall it also work for existing businesses. Assistance with financing, real estate locations, etc. should be available to existing business owners. The EDC should do all it can to retain business in the community. (TBD: the responsibilities of the Red Hook Area Chamber of Commerce vs. the EDC)

Adjournment: Meeting was adjourned at 10:35am by Michelle Martin. The next general meeting will be at 9:30am on April 9, 2009 at the Red Hook Town Hall.

Minutes submitted by:

Michelle Martin