

Economic Development Committee
8:30 a.m.-9:30 a.m., Thursday, May 12, 2011
Meeting Minutes

Present: Dan Budd, Chris Klose and Ben Shute, members; Micki Strawinski, Town Board liaison; and guests: Ed Blundell, Red Hook Village Mayor; Brent Kovalchik, Deputy Mayor; Juliet Harrison, Red Hook CAN (Community Arts Network); Todd Baright, Baright Realty and Foam&Wash.

Not Present: Beth Jones

Call to Order: Chris Klose, interim chair, called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. A quorum was not present.

Approval of Minutes: Lacking a quorum, the chair tabled the minutes of 04-28-11 until the committee meets next on Thursday, May 26.

Roundtable Discussion:

Micki: Bard College student employment manager; Town Board member/liaison to the EDC; need to connect Bard/students to the Town/Villages (Tivoli, Red Hook) and vice versa; focus on new-student arrival August 12, secure time on the orientation program to present Red Hook.

Ed: Generate a new trend in living; Red Hook as a walkable experience; shop local. Tactile Needs: 1. \$1,000 marketing budget (from pooled, monthly contributions); 2. Develop a slide show/multi-media presentation introducing Red Hook on August 12 to incoming Bard College students featuring local people – Neko's/your friendly local drugstore; Ben Shute/local farmer who grows your food, for example.

Brent: Been working on long-term goals for years, including sewer and water systems; created a new TND (traditional neighborhood development) for the north end of the village, updating zoning regulations to be more business-friendly; best advertisers for Red Hook = feet on the streets; people walking, talking, window shopping and buying local.

Ben: 1. As a member of the Town Ag & Open Space Committee, been working on a business improvement district; conducted farm tours to improve understanding of agriculture/growing local; and 2. As a member of the National Young Farmers Organization, helped conduct a national survey of 1,000 young farmers on policies to improve farming. Could do a similar survey for/about Red Hook, focusing on why people should buy local (Why not Red Hook instead of Kingston?)

Juliet: Artist and experienced business person; CAN is a coalition of artists, writers, performers, musicians, local government officials, educators (Bard), and others with goal of developing an “official” ID for Red Hook as an arts community/destination. Woodstock east? “Red Hook: Creative, Connected and Caring”(?); arts as a tourism draw, including, for example, partnering with Bard Summerscape to attract people, or “Arts on the Farm,” placing local musicians at Red Hook’s various farm stands (“Farm Stand Meets Music Stand”); through its members CAN can network with property owners/businesses/farmers to draw people to Red Hook.

Dan: Taste Budd’s; Vermonter, CIA student, NYC 10 yrs, RH 16 yrs; stay-at-home-dad; 6 yrs owning/operating Taste Budd’s: “One of the luckiest people in the world... work hard at making it work.” Been able to attract people through support of the visual arts/musical performances; 20 full- and part-time staff (50 in the summers due to the DC Fair); practical business/entrepreneurial experience to offer.

Todd: Baright Realty and Foam&Wash CEO; 120 employees; car washes, oil change businesses stretching from Hudson south to Newburgh, on both sides of the river; “marketing is my portfolio...; I don’t care how much you know until I know how much you care!” should review past EDC vision produced by Doug Moat/focus on specifics.

Chris: Reporter/editor/communications and marketing; people sell people, need to showcase Red Hook’s strengths; volunteer my writing/editing/marketing skills to help get specific projects done.

Suggested Action Items:

1. Develop multi-media introduction to Red Hook for August 12 Bard new-student orientation; Ed, with Chris and others.
2. Create an EDC roster, including phone numbers/email addresses, and, especially, specific professional experience or service you would provide *gratis* to prospective new businesses (for example, Dan consults one hour a month, sharing what works to attract and keep customers); CK, all others.
3. Convene a small group meeting to identify the kinds of businesses we want to attract to Red Hook; Brent, Juliet, Dan, Ben, others (?)
4. Develop a “Red Hook Successes” inventory of thriving businesses, featuring their owners/satisfied customers, to market Red Hook in print and online; Todd, Chris, others (?)
5. Identify, contact and network with all key economic development organizations in the Town and Dutchess County to strengthen cooperation and avoid duplication (the EDC as clearinghouse); Juliet, others

Next Meeting: Thursday, May 26, 2011 at the Village Hall