

Economic Development Committee
Wednesday, October 6, 2021
Meeting Minutes

Present: Kristina Dousharm [KD] (Chair), Amanda Bodian [AB], Chris Klose [CK] (Secretary), Ken Migliorelli [KM]. Maarten Reilingh, [MR], Emily Sachar [ES], Vanessa Shafer [VS], Jacob Testa [JT] (*ex officio*), members; Kim McGrath [KMcG] (Red Hook Area Chamber of Commerce), Victor Feldman [VF] (Red Hook Daily Catch); George Jahn [GJ], Nichola Gray [NG]

Call to Order: With a quorum present, Chair Dousharm called the meeting to order at 8:36 a.m.

Minutes: On a motion by Dr. Reilingh and second by Ms. Bodian, the Committee unanimously approved the amended Minutes of 09-29-2021.

Old Business:

Cannabis – KD: Planning Board meeting Monday re: reviewing any Town actions relating to the LWRP; Board did not act because it disagreed with Local Law E to opt “out” of cannabis; will do so at their 10/18 meeting; Town Board meets 10/12; Planning Board sentiment appears to favor cannabis in the town (PB does not rule on the Villages); PB wants more influence on the Town Board on issues like cannabis; KD: Town planner Michelle Grieg did a good job advising that the LWRP is consistent with local law but the Board did not agree;

KD: EDC survey showed business majority want to opt “in”, which jibes with other POVs, as opposed to Town Board’s apparent favoring of opting “out.” Town Board public hearing on the issue to come; JT: have to wait for the Planning Board to rule on the LWRP impact; MR: MG made the case for the law as it applies while the PB sees it as leverage in the debate with the Town Board; how the two boards resolve the issue may influence discussion and action on Short Term Rentals (STRs); JT: opting “in” is automatic, so no local law needs to be passed, while opting “out” keeps the town’s options open for more consideration; Board wants more public input – many letters received to date and are available for public review; KM: must the TB confer with the PB on every proposed law? KD: yes, as they apply to the LWRP but it is unclear when and how review is triggered; KM: like to see the Village opt “in” to get the revenue from the business;

JT: will try to clarify when the LWRP process pertains; also, Communications Committee is meeting on the Town’s website, other media, to broaden and deepen the community’s awareness of issues and potential involvement; NG: noted that Rhinebeck opted “out” and wondered why; KD: understand that the Town of Rhinebeck was considering opting “in;”

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ES: what obligation does the Town Board to listen to the Advisory Committees?
JT: the Board can listen and still disagree; people make up their own minds; broadly, the committees' inputs are accounted for but they are not legally required to act upon; commend to the EDC: reflect on how the EDC consensus is seen as "personal," so think how the EDC position is made; EDC has made its positions on cannabis and STRs clear, so the discussion needs to move on to other issues as "additive" and not "responsive;" anticipate and research issues so that the EDC can advise the Town Board as to the particulars involved as the issue unfolds in the Town of Red Hook; VS: EDC does a lot of work and feels as if the Town Board doesn't listen; feels like the Town Board is opposed to business development; KMcG: Jacob has given us good advice; we do spin our wheels, so his suggestion to submit our positions and get on with business is good; EDC should be focusing on working with the business community to support existing ones and attracting new ones; KD: makes sense, so let's consider issues to focus on going forward;

EDC consensus: slim majority for dispensaries, ditto against lounges;

10/12 Town Board meeting so EDC members need to participate; JT to inform the EDC about the Zoom link; Town's decision on cannabis locations important to the Village's consideration

Next Meeting: 8:30 a.m., Wednesday, October 13, 2021, via Zoom.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 9:50 a.m.

Respectfully submitted: Christopher Klose, Secretary