

**MINUTES
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
TOWNSHIP OF MONROE
OCTOBER 21, 2013**

The Regular Meeting of the Monroe Township Economic Development Commission was called to order by Chairperson Tony Langella at 7:02pm in the 2nd Floor Meeting Room of the Municipal Complex. Notice of this meeting was given as required by the annual notice of meetings.

Chairperson Tony Langella led the Commission in the salute to our flag. Christine Feggans offered the Invocation.

ROLL CALL

Present: Tony Langella, Christine Feggans, Jill Simmermon, Jared Valdez, Cncl. William Sebastian, Manny Bermudez

Absent: Aileen Wojciechowski, Mike Moto

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Manny Bermudez made a motion to approve the minutes as submitted of the Economic Development Commission Meeting of September 16, 2013. The motion was seconded by Jared Valdez and approved by all members of the Commission in attendance.

CORRESPONDENCE, REPORTS AND OTHER MATTERS

Tony and Jared spoke about the IEDC they attended. They composed a 10 point list of ideas that would help Monroe achieve the growth the commission would like to see. Need to seek out chain-lets, incentives with tax abatements and credits, need to seek out grants, look at resources the town already has, consider hiring Economic Development Consultant, resisting development puts the town going backwards not forward- must adapt to a changing economy or be left behind, cooperation and partnership is essential, fundraising firms can help with redevelopment cost in some cases, attend the yearly conference and other redeveloping conferences and have a plan for 2014 and review and learn from 2013.

Bill Sebastian agreed that a consultant would be needed to really help the town develop. Bill looked on the Winslow township website and said that their information for new businesses and incentives is easy to find.

CORRESPONDENCE, REPORTS AND OTHER MATTERS (cont'd)

They listed four reasons why new businesses should consider being located in Winslow: Access to major thoroughfares including Route 73 and the ACE, located halfway between Philadelphia and Atlantic City, full access to the Economic Development Team (which includes members from all major departments within the township to ease the development process) and that Winslow Township offers a tax abatement program to properties with commercial and industrial uses. Bill said that Monroe could say the same, but the website is not easy to navigate and some information is not on the website.

Others towns, (Glassboro, Wilmington) were mentioned as examples of redevelopment. It was also brought up that they have major contributors in their towns that helped with the cost of redevelopment. Jill said that we need to move forward with what we have. Jared asked if we need to look into a consultant first or if we need to have a plan first. He also asked if we could talk to consultant before getting approval. Bill said that he should get information from consultants first, their base salary and references, to present to council. Jill said that we should move forward with making the website easier to navigate and to include the information for new businesses. Bill brought up the fact that much of the redevelopment is partially hindered because of the pineland restrictions. Jill asked how could get started working with the pinelands to start developing in the pinelands area. Bill said that he has been working with the pinelands for years and that they are trying to sell the pineland credits. For homeowners it isn't as substantial, if commercial entities came in it may be a high dollar amount for the credits due to the amount of land they would need. Water and sewer also needs to be put in place for much of that property. Manny asked if there were any developers that had land ready to sell. Bill said the development committee was meeting soon with a group that had land that was ready for development, the group wanted to do the majority of the land as residential. He also stated that he would like to have the developer from Guzzo to come to a meeting since he is able to fill vacant stores quickly. Manny said that it would be good to talk to him or someone in a similar situation and to introduce them to the lots that are available.

Tony asked if there was a possibility of getting an office in the building to work on things and have meetings for redevelopment during the month. Bill said he needed to talk to Mayor Gabbianelli about it, but that most meetings, with a potential Economic Development Team, would probably take place in the mayor's office. The ED team would consist of a person from each department construction, zoning, public works and the MUA. Bill suggested getting the ED team in place.

CORRESPONDENCE, REPORTS AND OTHER MATTERS (cont'd)

Tony asked Manny how his spotlight on business went. Manny said that it went well and that he has been sharing the information about the spotlight with other businesses. Christine said that it went well, Manny did a great job and that the EDC was recognized.

Tony suggested that Carmine from the Tax card program do a presentation at a Business Association meeting and a Rotary club meeting. Christine said that she would talk about it with Steve, the president of the BA. Christine said that members of the Rotary asked about the EDC meeting and she invited them to the meeting. Christine said that she did not want to have Carmine come to the Rotary until we know more information about what we are doing with it. Tony and Jill both want to present the tax card program to the Rotary club.

Jill spoke to the mayor's secretary in Marlboro and said that she was very helpful and positive about the tax card program. Marlboro started with 20 businesses and now there are 50 and that \$20,000 has been given back to the residents. Only one business had to back out and that was due to them going out of business. She couldn't speak any higher about the program. Manny asked what type of businesses were signed up, there is a wide variety of businesses from dry cleaners to electricians. They used a town fair day to distribute the cards, which saves on postage. Manny suggested developing a list of businesses that could potentially join. Jill is going to send the information to Kevin Heydel.

Manny stated that he feels the committee wants to do so much and need to come up with a 5 year focus plan, involving the residents, local business, council and mayor, also to get information on a consultant. He also said that he feels the medium sized mom and pop shops are where the purchases are being made and where Williamstown is lacking and why residents are shopping in other towns. He feels that if we get those businesses we could attract more attention to Williamstown. Jill asked Bill if hiring a consultant was attainable, Bill said he would look into it and that it is a possibility. Christine said that Kevin will be a great voice behind the tax card program. Tony said that we need to make the tax card program part of our plan and bring Carmine to a business association and rotary meeting. Jared wants to get a consultant and move forward. Bill is going to scan and email an article in SJ magazine written by the developers of the Moorestown Mall.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to discuss, Tony asked for a motion to adjourn Jared made a motion to adjourn the Monroe Township Economic Development Commission Meeting of October 21, 2013. The motion was seconded by Manny; all in favor. Meeting adjourned at 9:07pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Jacquelyn Allen

The next scheduled Monroe Township Economic Development Commission meeting is Monday, November 18, 2013 at 7:00pm.

These minutes were prepared from excerpts of the tape-recorded proceedings of the Regular Economic Development Commission Meeting of October 21, 2013 and serve as only a synopsis of the proceedings.

Approved as submitted _____ Date _____
Approved as corrected _____ Date _____