



APPROVED MINUTES

Regular Meeting

Economic Development Agency

Tuesday, September 13, 2016 at 6:30 p.m.

Community Center, Room D

40 Dyer Avenue, Canton, CT

CALL TO ORDER: 6:33 pm

ROLL CALL: Robert Bessel (chair), Bill Volovski, Steve Roberto, Anne Hunter (alternate – 7:00 pm), Neil Pade (staff)

PUBLIC COMMENT NOT RELATED TO AGENDA ITEMS: none

OLD BUSINESS:

1. Marketing

- a) Graphic Project – Bob reported on progress with the marketing brochure. New copy had been written and photographs taken to better reflect the needs of current and prospective businesses and developers. Bob met with the designer to review the copy and strengthen the business emphasis. A second draft was unavailable for the meeting.
- b) Market Data – No news.
- c) Outreach
 - i. Chamber of Commerce – Bob reported on the informal meeting with the Chamber's Advocacy Committee on September 6. The meeting focused on extending utilities on Route 44. Gary Roman recounted the Chambers' previous efforts to convince the town to consider extending utilities on Route 44. This included a survey of about one third of the businesses on Route 44 to understand which utilities were available to them and which were actually in use. Bob remarked that this would be a good project to undertake with the Chamber and that the EDA should consider submitting a request for funding in the 2017 town budget.

Anne Hunter presented "Digital Marketing: Your Customers Want to See You" at the August 18th Chamber After Hours event. Anne was very well received. Rachel Baugher, chair of the Chamber's Education Committee, asked if the EDA could follow up with additional programs on market data and public relations. We said yes!
 - ii. Canton Main Street/ Collinsville Merchants – No report.
 - iii. Route 44 Merchants Group – Covered in the Chamber of Commerce report above.
 - iv. The Shoppes at Farmington Valley – No report.
 - v. Additional Influentials – No report.

2. Strategic Initiatives

- a) Town Areas

- i. Collins Company – Bill Volovski reported that the TIF committee is wrapping up its work. A full report of options available to the town should be available by the next meeting of the EDA.
 - ii. Canton Village – Bob and Steve reiterated their support for joint funding for a Canton Village master plan in the 2017 town budget. Neil thought that the town could apply for a grant to help defray the cost. Bob suggested that the town and property owners contribute to the master plan effort, thereby giving everyone “skin in the game.”
 - iii. Route 44 – See the Chamber report above.
 - iv. Industrial Park – No report.
 - v. Bike Trail Linkage – No report.
- b) Design Regulation Project and POCD Implementation – no update.

NEW BUSINESS: 2017-18 Budget Request

Neil provided a timeline for the EDA budget: proposals should be presented at the October meeting and voted at the November meeting so that they can be considered for the Board of Selectmen budget request. Members indicated that their budget priorities this year would include:

- Canton Village Master Plan
- A Route 44 Utilities Study
- Additional marketing, such as advertising and attendance at appropriate trade shows where businesses are looking for potential sites.

Members discussed the use of surveys and focus groups to ensure that the marketing materials convey the intended message to the target audience. Steve was concerned that surveys can be costly and misleading. Bob and Anne said that experienced focus group leaders can do the job for very little and get accurate feedback.

OTHER BUSINESS:

1. Review and Approval of Minutes from the July 12, 2016 Regular Meeting. Motion made by Bill Volovski, seconded by Steve Roberto. Approved – 3 in favor, none against.
2. Member Assignments – none.

ADJOURNMENT: 8:05 pm