

Economic Development Commission

Regular meeting 7:30 PM November 19, 2012 Salem CT Town Offices

1. Call to order:

- a. 7:35p.m.

Attending: Ada Vail, Nicole Gadbois, Larry Stevens, Frank Sroka, Jenifer Lee, Vincent Howe

2. Approval of Minutes:

- a. Motion to approve: Larry
- b. Seconded: Jennifer Lee
- c. Discussion ensued, minutes approved as amended.

3. New Business:

- a. No update on charter regarding the planner.

4. Selectman's Report:

- a. Frank spoke on behalf of the selectmen about the Zemko property which is for sale and the town is thinking of buying it as an ideal location for storage for the public works department. There will be a town meeting regarding the town purchasing the property on November 28th. EDC will be approving this decision because it is a great opportunity for the town. Larry Stevens mentioned that this is a great buy for the town, but thinks people will definitely raise questions about the cost.

5. Communications:

- a. The pharmacy will be opening up the day after Thanksgiving.
- b. Simply Flowers moved to Colchester because she didn't have enough business here in Salem. She is working on establishing herself in Colchester.
- c. Farm to Hearth- They are opening up in Haddam. According to Larry Stevens, they were frustrated with the system and decided to leave. Frank will seek more information from Kevin Lyden.
- d. The owner of Subway would like to come back and meet with the commission to discuss forming a committee of the owners of the businesses at Salem four corners.

6. Reports:

a. Salem Farmer's Market-

- i. Suggestions for advertising: Larry suggested putting a sign at the landfill and a sign at the ramp for route 11.
- ii. Jennifer suggested putting the farmer's market in the community calendar.
- iii. Nicole talked about the most recent farmer's market meeting: a new member was elected Jeff Sevitsky who is a market manager at two other farmer's markets. We will have advertising in the form of postcards and inserts in the Lyme Tymes.
- iv. Nicole will check with the farmer's market committee about sending out notices to "feature businesses"

b. Planning and Zoning-

- i. Ada (our P&Z liason) went to Planning and Zoning meeting: they discussed the vocabulary of creating a "lean-to" on the Salem walking trails. The meeting covered the proofreading of the town village documentation.

c. Holiday Craft Fair: Ada would like to have EDC support a holiday craft fair in Salem. It is most important to have it before Christmas so that people have the opportunity to purchase gifts for Christmas.

d. Frank would like to change the focus of what we are doing here in EDC- it is important for EDC to make a bigger contribution in terms of actually doing something instead of dealing only with discussion. EDC should change our focus from process to finding ways that we can make Salem more business friendly. We should be reaching out and attracting businesses that will suit Salem and can tolerate the fact that we are not as built up as other towns. How can EDC make a contribution to the town by helping to maintain the town character while also keeping in mind environmental factors and other things that are important to the town. Challenge: over the next couple of months all members should think up one or two things that we can do to enhance the town, ways that we can make connections with people in business and marketing. Frank, for example, is going to meet with Kevin to discuss the relationship between the selectmen and EDC to foster more productive relationships. Frank also suggested that we change our meeting location to a room where we can sit at a rectangular table so that we can see one another and foster a more productive meeting time. There will be an

opportunity for brainstorming and group decision making to decide which projects we would like to take on, and then make them happen. We need to have a better process to helping businesses that would like to remain in town or come to town but are having difficulties going through the motions of making it happen.

i. Brainstorms:

1. Larry and Jennifer mentioned Todd Burnett and inviting him to our meeting and seeing if there is any way that we can help him. Jennifer mentioned having a forum for local businesses to meet with town leaders and let them know what is going on in their businesses and ways that the town can help to facilitate the growth of their business.
2. Larry also mentioned inviting the new pharmacy owners to the meeting and making a big deal of the fact that they are opening up in Salem.
3. Jennifer mentioned helping to facilitate ways to keep businesses in town by reaching out and finding ways to help they stay in town and show them that we are on their side- we are here to do something positive for them.

7. Adjournment:

- a. Motion to adjourn: Larry
- b. Seconded: Jennifer
- c. Our next meeting is December 17th .