

TOWN OF SALEM, CT.

Economic Development Commission

Regular Meeting, June 20, 2016, 7:30 p.m. Salem Office Building, Room 2

Minutes

Meeting called to order at 7:37 pm by meeting chair Frank Sroka.

Members present:

Frank Sroka

Wendy Mikolinski

Elby Burr (Alternate)

Paul Robillard (Alternate)

Members not present:

Andy Lightner

Ken Bondi

Visitors:

Kevin Lyden (First Selectman)

Stu Gadbois (Board of Selectmen Liaison to EDC)

Amanda Hutchinson (Reporter for The Day newspaper)

1. Reading of Agenda – chairperson

Frank Sroka presented agenda. No changes to agenda as presented.

Motion: Frank Sroka moved to approve the Minutes for the 05/16/2016 meeting. Seconded by Wendy Mikolinski. Unanimously approved.

2. Communications

None

3. Public Comment

None

4. Reports

a. Selectman / EDC Liaison:

First Selectman Kevin Lyden discussed a number of current Salem issues with the EDC Committee. He reported that Salem Feed & Grain has been sold and was in the process of converting from a retail store to a construction-type operation.

He informed the EDC that Colchester based Colchester Construction, owned by Bob Gagnon, recently purchased a parcel of land off Witter Road (behind R&W Heating), and was considering a number of uses for the land including self-storage units.

The first selectman also indicated that a new tenant was finalizing the agreement with the landlord of 24 Hartford Road, so a new operation was expected in the currently vacant location.

Lastly, Mr. Lyden discussed the new “blight ordinance” recently passed in East Lyme and its impacts on their community. The selectmen’s office is considering a similar ordinance be proposed for Salem.

b. P&Z Liaison: None (position currently vacant on EDC)

5. Old Business

- a. The EDC has decided to repeat the article in the Salem Our Town newspaper soliciting responses for the Salem Business Owners Survey. To incentivize participation, respondents will be entered into a drawing for prizes of free advertisement(s) (funded by the EDC) in future Our Town Salem publications. Additionally, the EDC will fund a direct mailing program to all current Salem businesses of record to enhance participation. After the Business owner’s survey responses have been gathered, production of the Salem Business Data Base will begin.
- b. The Commission continued discussion on developing a list of non-residential zoned land in Salem. The First Selectman has made Salem’s Assistant Town Assessor Mike Kapinos available for assistance with this project. Frank Sroka will work with Mike Kapinos and Kevin Lyden and will present the data at an upcoming EDC meeting. Paul Robillard presented a suggested layout for collecting and displaying the information from this effort. We should also make every effort to include home-based businesses in the list, to the fullest extent possible.

6. New Business

- a. Frank Sroka and Wendy Mikolinski informed the EDC committee that a discussion had taken place with First Selectman Kevin Lyden regarding the use of professional marketers to produce a “campaign” designed to encourage economic expansion of Salem. Five hundred dollars of the EDC’s budget will initially be directed toward this project. Area citizens with a proven track record in marketing will be solicited for the project. Those interested will present a general concept (with materials) to the EDC committee at an upcoming meeting. The committee will then choose one marketer to produce a full campaign for Salem.
- b. Wendy Mikolinski informed the EDC committee that Chelsea Groton Bank is offering free publicity assistance for any Salem business in the form of an indoor presentation table. The business is allowed space in the common area of the bank (approx. 3’ x 6’) to display their business offerings in any way they choose. The business does not have to be a customer of Chelsea Groton Bank to participate. The EDC agreed this information should be included in the Our Town Salem publication and the direct mailer mentioned in paragraph 5a.
- c. The EDC members discussed the absence of medical facilities in Salem, and the vacant building at 24 Hartford Rd which is zoned for that use. This topic will be discussed further at an upcoming EDC meeting.

7. Next regular meeting is scheduled for Monday, July 18, at 7:30 p.m. in Salem Town Hall, Room 2.

8. Motion by Elby Burr, seconded by Paul Robillard to adjourn the meeting. Carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 9:14 p.m.