

Economic Development, Business & Redevelopment Commission Meeting Minutes
October 22, 2020
Virtual Meeting via GotoMeetings

Meeting was called to order at 7:05 by Council Chair, Brian Livesey

Attendance:

(Present)	Deana Gunn	Linda Martin
	Brian Livesey	Jennifer Jordan
	Jay LoBosco	Anthony Caltabilota
	Dean Fazio	
(Guest)	Cathy Zavorskas	
(Absent)	Nick Reeve	Lainey Acosta

Minutes of Oct. 1st meeting presented; Jen made motion for approval, Anthony seconded, all approved

OLD BUSINESS

Chamber of Commerce

- Linda reported that the Chamber is on calls with NJ Chamber of Commerce and US Chamber of Commerce to keep updated on what is going on with Congress as well as the State of NJ. The NJ Grant Phase 3 is being offered to restaurants and small businesses with pre-registration this week. Phase 4 of Stimulus Package is in limbo. Per Anthony, the process for forgiveness on the first rounds of PPP loans has been made an easier process with a one page application.
- Chamber had a few outdoor networking events which were successful and hope to have a couple more while weather is still good. They will then go back to virtual events although the participation in these type events is not what it should be. The money-making events are all on hold, like B2B and Matawan Day.
- Renewal of Membership is going better than expected.

Lakeside Dining

- Cathy reported on the success of lakeside dining. Over 550 people participated over the weeks the dining was ongoing. More of the restaurants in town are interested in doing it in the Spring. Cathy wants to work on it through Winter so the restaurants are set up beforehand.
- The only negative she knew of was that some of the tables were damaged and/or not kept clean. They will look into charging a security deposit next year.

Reports on Feasibility Study and a Matawan Flyer Realtors/Landlords

- Jen sent out the one-pager prior to the meeting which she prepared for presentation to realtors and incorporated the suggestions made by other members of committee. She wants to get better photos and clarification on how long The Edge has been in town and when the Town Center will actually open. Deana will check on The Edge. The general consensus was that the Town Center was not going to start leasing until 2021 although signs are on the building now.

- Jen expanded the list of resources and would like to add a map. Cathy will talk to Borough Administrator about a map. This would require approval by Council and Legal.
- Jay sent out a detailed and well-thought-out proposal for Main Street & surrounding areas which would incorporate the arts and music into the town thereby making Matawan attractive to visitors. Some of the things proposed were a band shell, perhaps behind the Community Center, or at First Presbyterian Church who already does presentations by the Spotlight Players. We could present a variety of music like a jazz night, classical night, etc. and expand on Lainey's Make Music Day. Brian mentioned that the stage and gym in Community Center were viable options.
- Brian working on a spreadsheet of realtors/landlords.
- Parking Issue – there is a perception that parking is an issue downtown when there is ample parking although not directly on Main Street. If the town offered what people wanted, they would come.
Suggestions (1) a shuttle to go through town from the train station perhaps help with funding by the apartment buildings in town. (2) better parking signs so people know where parking was available. Deana felt this was possible. (3) The aforementioned map could incorporate areas for designated parking.
- Spotlight on Business – Cathy reported that Anthony's spotlight captured a lot of attention and will work on continuing this with other businesses.

NEW BUSINESS

- Wreath Decorating Contest – fell by wayside with so many other things being handled by the Rec Dept. Perhaps we will rethink it next year.
- Businesses may want to get involved in the House Decorating Contest being considered by the Borough. The general consensus was that not enough businesses are physically open to actually make a difference. Businesses are concerned with the immediate future of their business rather than the long term. The goal will be to keep them engaged with things like the one-pager (Matawan flyer)
- Santa up and down Main Street? We already have the Santa runs by the fire department and he will also be at the tree lighting ceremony – a toned down 1 hour version of past years. Santa will appear at end to light the tree.
- Small Business Saturday – Brian will check in with Lainey
- Turkey Trot is on this year with limited physical participation and hopes for a good virtual turnout. Proceeds will be to beautify parks in town.
- Jen distributed a bill being proposed by Senator Vin Gopal and initiated by Heirloom Kitchen in Old Bridge where it is being proposed to loosen restrictions on alcohol at restaurants where some restaurants could offer beer/wine since it is so hard to make money; Per Brian - backlash will come from restaurants who pay huge fees for their liquor license.

- New Businesses in Town – Winzer Therapeutics, Sunflower Counseling, Center for Aesthetic Medicine

Next meeting Tuesday, Nov. 24th

Meeting adjourned at 8:25

Respectfully Submitted,

Linda Martin
Recording Secretary
Economic Development Business & Redevelopment Commission of Matawan