



Meeting of the
Economic Development Committee
January 20, 2019
6:30 pm

Members Present

BJ Breish
Lisa Marie Brody
Denton Burnell
Alex Felts
Carrie Hawkins Charlton
Mark Ladley
Rege McKenzie
Richard Strahm
Bruce Schwartz

Members Absent

Also Present

John Ernst, Borough Manager
Bryan Poster, IT/GIS Coordinator
Eric Goldstein, KOP Business Improvement District

Approval of Meeting Minutes

Mr. Strahm made a motion to approve the minutes from the November 18, 2019 meeting minutes, Mr. Schwartz seconded, and the Committee voted 9:0; the minutes have been approved.

APPOINTMENT OF OFFICERS:

Mr. Ladley made a motion to appoint Carrie Hawkins Charlton as the Chair of the Economic Development Committee, Mr. McKenzie seconded, and the Committee voted 9:0.

Mr Ladley then made a motion to appoint Richard Strahm as the Vice Chair of the Economic Development Committee, Mr. McKenzie seconded, and the Committee voted 9:0.



COMMITTEE BUSINESS ITEMS:

Eric Goldstein Place Management/Business Improvement Proposal

Mr. Goldstein was before the EDC in September to share his experience with the King of Prussia Business Improvement District and since then he and Mr. Ernst have continued discussions on how he could help the Borough. Mr. Goldstein submitted a proposal detailing how he could compile many of the efforts that have taken place in town along with further interviews with stakeholders to truly see the perception of business in town. After compiling all data and feedback, he would supply a list of next steps for the EDC and the Borough. Mr. Strahm asked if it was possible to have the Borough pay for a portion of the fee as this could potentially take away from funds dedicated to the Façade Improvement Grant Program. The committee also discussed how the creation of a Business Improvement District (BID) is not always the best idea—specifically if there is not a substantial budget to be utilized for the BID. Mr. Goldstein shared that the deliverable of his proposal would be a road map for the EDC with various options on how to move forward.

Mr. Breish voiced his concern that the scope of the project is too narrow as it only focuses on Main Street and also shared his opinion that taking this step may be out of order as there are other issues that need to be addressed including parking and how to attract businesses to Lansdale.

Following all discussion, Mr. Strahm made a motion to recommend the Borough engage Eric Goldstein pending the approval from Borough Administration & Finance Committee for financial assistance in funding the proposal. Mr. Schwartz seconded. Mr. Burnell then stated that we can certainly ask Borough Council to share the cost, but if the EDC believes that this is the appropriate next step, we should be willing to fund it 100% even if Council is not willing to designate any funding to this project. Mr. Burnell then amended the motion to recommend the EDC and/or Borough Council engage the services of Eric Goldstein to continue research of place management/business improvement and provide next steps for the Borough and the EDC. Mr. Schwartz seconded the amended motion, and the committee voted 9:0. The proposal will be forwarded to the Admin & Finance Committee and will be discussed at their upcoming February 5, 2020 meeting.

Façade Improvement Grant Applications

No new applications were received.

New Businesses

As the EDC did not meet in December, Mr. Ernst shared the following new businesses that obtained their permits during the months of November and December:

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Business of the Month

Ms. Hawkins Charlton shared a list of procedures for Business of the Month presentations to assure that all committee members are on the same page. A copy of those procedures will be put in Dropbox should any members need to review the document.

MARKETING

Gatefold Marketing Piece

In the interest of time, the conversation on the marketing piece has been moved to the February 10 meeting.

BOROUGH/DISCOVER LANSDALE EVENTS

Restaurant Week

Restaurant Week will take place in the Borough from February 3 – February 9 with 13 restaurants participating at the time of the meeting. Visit Discover Lansdale’s website for the list of restaurants as they are added before the event.

OLD BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Ladley asked for clarification on the Façade Improvement Grant Program recipients and if a Community Center would qualify. Mr. Ernst said that we will investigate this and get back to the EDC.

Mr. Breish also broached the topic of parking within the Borough. He has been in touch with a business owner on Main Street who shared that the current parking situation is confusing to many and there is concern that if someone comes into town and cannot figure out parking, they will not stop or come back to town. Mr. Schwartz also shared that he is universally hearing from businesses in town that there are issues with parking enforcement, the kiosks not working properly and lack of wayfinding for available parking. Mr. Poster did let the EDC know that the “glitches” in the kiosks have been identified and are currently in the process of fixing those problems. Mr. Burnell stated that the Parking Authority is considering options on how to possibly improve the parking situation so a representative from the EDC may want to consider attending the March Parking Authority meeting to hear what initiatives they may consider pursuing.

PUBLIC COMMENT



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None

The next Economic Development Committee meeting will be held on **Monday, February 10, 2020**