



Minutes: Economic Development Advisory Committee February 13, 2023

The regular meeting of the Middle Smithfield Township Economic Development Advisory Committee was held on February 13, 2023 with Joe Memoli (Chairperson) presiding.

Board Members: Jared Acosta, Tom Marchesani, Ed Regina, and Deborah Emin in person. Beverly Brown and Gina Bertucci via zoom.

Absent: Annette Atkinson

Township Staff: James Brechbiel, ED Manager.

Township Residents/Guests: Vinny Bianci

Meeting called to order at 5:32pm with Joe Memoli presiding.

Minutes and Agenda

- Joe Memoli made a motion to approve the January Minutes and February Agenda. For the minutes, Deborah Emin seconded the motion, followed by Gina Bertucci. Motion passed 3-0. For the agenda, Gina Bertucci seconded the motion, followed by Deborah Emin. Motion passed 3-0.

Correspondence

- No correspondence

New Business:

Business Updates:

- James Brechbiel reviewed the following updates on new businesses in the area:
 - Mama's Fish and Chips in Liberty Plaza has closed and Mi Casa es Tu Casa Restaurant is projected to go in said location. The new restaurant will have Puerto Rican fare and will open in the spring of 2023.
 - Clarity Nutrition in the Crossings at Marshalls Creek Plaza is expecting to close at the end of February as their lease is up. There are no new updates with who will be going into said space.
 - There is a new owner for the Crossings at Marshalls Creek Plaza (Empire CNY – Not Maula's group). Ed Regina asked if there was a new property manager and James Brechbiel noted that the property will still be managed by Keller Williams – Dan Perich Group.
 - Kutzville USA Barbershop will be going next to the Pocono Café and are waiting on finalizing licenses with the state. They are projected to open in the spring.
- Ed Regina and Deborah Emin asked if LVHN was still slated to be going in the old Royal Asian Buffet building in the Crossings at Marshall's Creek Plaza. Both reported seeing activity in the location. James Brechbiel noted that all is still on task for LVHN to go into that location as permits were issued and they are transitioning a restaurant into a health facility.
- Ed Regina asked if American Magnetic Energy (AME) was still working with Marshalls Square Shopping Plaza. James Brechbiel noted that AME needs a property that was move in ready and the location at 5224 Milford Rd. had work to be done before that could transpire. The property manager and AME were still in contact. Joe Memoli noted that Guy Lestician, AME's founder, is a local resident and has developed a brilliant product.

Community Updates:

- James Brechbiel directed the committee to review the listed events on the bottom of the page of their agendas and spoke briefly about the following upcoming events:
 - 1 Million Cups at Northampton Community College is every third Wednesday of the month and is a Resource for small business showcases.
 - AARP Tax Help at the MST Community and Cultural Center (C&CC) @ 9am at C&CC every Tuesday in February and March.
 - Healthy Steps in Motion @10:30am at C&CC every Thursday in March.
 - The Board of Supervisors Preview of 2023 will be on Thurs., 2/23/23.
 - The Pocono Chamber of Commerce (PCC) Legislative Luncheon is 3/9/23 from 11 am – 1 pm at Stroudsmoor.

Old Business:

- **Reorganization of Committee for 2023:**
 - Joe Memoli addressed that the committee needed to conclude reorganization for 2023 and assign the position of secretary. Gina Bertucci noted that she would be relinquishing the position of secretary that Tom Marchesani had noted he would take up tentatively at the January 9, 2023 meeting. Gina Bertucci made a motion to accept Tom Marchesani as the secretary and Ed Regina seconded the motion to take a vote. Motion passed 7-0.
- **Broadband Initiative:**
 - James Brechbiel noted that the Township had corresponded with April Niver from Rep. Matt Cartright's office regarding the "Internet for All Initiative." April noted that all funds would pass through the PA Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) Broadband Authority and would be released through the DCED. Ed Regina asked how soon the Township would see funds become available and Joe Memoli noted that, most likely, there would be a two year turn around.
 - James Brechbiel noted that the Township met with Stroud Media to review alternative options to businesses for broadband in the interim. Beverly Brown noted that she had reached out to Stroud Media for a price comparison and would let the committee know what here feedback was.
- **Revitalize 209:**
 - Ed Regina and Deborah Emin noted that they would like to be considered to represent the EDC for the Revitalize 209 Committee once it is formed. Joe Memoli noted that the committee would table the decision of who would be selected until a later session. Jared Acosta noted that he would like to contribute by canvassing the businesses on the 209 Corridor about the availability of the grant once the program becomes available. James Brechbiel noted that whoever becomes part of the Revitalize 209 Committee would not be canvassing. Ed Regina and Joe Memoli noted that perhaps apps, or programs to provide renderings to businesses for landscaping, or improvements could be used for this process.
 - Deborah Emin asked if an application was available to see and James Brechbiel noted that all the paperwork is in with Pat Armstrong. Once all is reviewed, changes will be noted and follow up with accordingly.

Announcements:

- Ed Regina discussed that he would like to be notified should the Township have money available to subsidize AEDs for all businesses.

Public Comments:

- Vinny Bianchi asked how many businesses would be awarded funds to make improvements and what the process would be with an influx of inquiries. James Brechbiel noted that all would be based on the criteria that the program enacts and the recommendations made by the committee.

Next meeting date: 03/20/23 at 5:30pm. Meeting adjourned at 6:21 pm.