



Minutes: Revitalize 209 Committee July 25, 2023

The reorganization meeting of the Middle Smithfield Township Revitalize 209 Committee was held on July 25, 2023, with James Brechbiel (Economic Development Manager – Recording Secretary) presiding, followed by Bob Early (Chairperson) presiding once reorganization was established. The meeting was called to order at 5:36 pm

Committee Members: Deborah Emin, Michael Coffey, Ralph Dinkle, Sonny Murray, Nick Theofilos, in person, and George Kuchek, via Zoom.

Absent: None

Township Staff: Annette Atkinson, Township Supervisor, and James Brechbiel, ED Manager, in person, and Mike Dwyer, Township Supervisor, via Zoom.

Township Residents/Guests: Bob Huffman and Rick Porvaznik

Reorganization

- As there was more than one nomination, James Brechbiel took a ballot vote for Chairperson and the committee selected Bob Early on a vote of (4) to (3) for Deborah Emin.
- Bob Early made a motion to elect Deborah Emin as Vice Chairperson. Sonny Murray seconded the motion. The Motion passed 7-0.

Agenda

- Deborah Emin made a motion to accept the agenda. Nick Theofilos seconded the motion. The motion passed 7 -0.

Public Comment on Non-Agenda Items

- Sonny Murray noted to the committee that he had sent questions about Resolutions 03-2023-1 and 03-2023-02 to the Board of Supervisors (BOS) and Township solicitor, Pat Armstrong, and reviewed some items with the Committee. Bob Early and Deborah Emin noted that this would be better suited for a discussion between Sonny Murray, the Board of Supervisors (BOS), and Township Solicitor.

Correspondence

- Letters of interest from businesses in applying for the Revitalize 209 grant were submitted for the committee to review (noted under New Business – Review Letters of Interest for prospective projects).

New Business

- **Metrics to evaluate Letters of Interest:**
 - Bob Early confirmed to the Committee that consultant/professionals (e.g. engineer, architect, etc.) costs are not covered by the grant.
 - Deborah Emin noted to the Committee that the projects cannot exceed \$20,000 / project. Annette Atkinson noted that anything over \$20,000 would trigger bidding, prevailing wage, etc., which is why the Grant Program will not exceed \$20,000 / project.
 - James Brechbiel noted to the Committee that the Resolution requires that a project submitted by a tenant must have a letter of approval from the property owner as an accompaniment to the tenant's Letter of Interest/application.
 - Michael Coffey suggested that the Committee consider a scale of 1 to 5 for each point (noted below) as a metric. Bob Early made a motion to accept this, seconded by Deborah Emin, and the motion passed 7-0:
 - What is the project?
 - How will it improve the appearance and/or safety of Route 209?
 - How will your project have a lasting impact?

- How is your project sustainable?
- Bob Early and Deborah Emin confirmed that the Committee does not inspect the projects, but merely reviews Letters of Interest and applications and makes recommendations to the BOS. Ralph Dinkle noted that inspections would be the Township's Zoning Office to do.
- The Committee discussed that their role is to review Letters of Interest and give feedback as to whether, or not, these projects would fit into the scope of the passed Resolution and be for the BOS to consider. From there, recommendations/questions based on the Committee's review would be made by the liaison (James Brechbiel) to the applicant as to whether, or not, they should submit their applications to the BOS for consideration.
- The Committee reviewed page 2, section A, paragraph 2 of Resolution 03-2023-1.
- Bob Early noted that sidewalks and signs are not listed within the scope of the Resolution as funding for such projects may be offered through future programs.
- Annette Atkinson noted that the Committee can recommend the BOS review a Letter of Interest should a project not fall within the scope of the criteria listed on the Resolution, but be one that they would like to see considered.
- **Review Letters of Interest for prospective projects:**
 - There was a discussion about the process for reviewing Letters of Interest. Nick Theofilos noted that reviewing the Letters of Interest received at the meeting and having notes ready for the next meeting would be the suggestion for the Committee to consider as a method. Bob Early made a motion to accept the method, seconded by Deborah Emin. The motion passed 7-0.
 - George Kuchek asked that the Committee consider the timeline for a decision to be made could be 3 months, or longer. Bob Early noted that the methods of reviewing Letters of Interest can be revised based on the Committee's recommendations in the future.
 - The Committee reviewed the following letters of interest:
 - Church at 5146 Milford Rd. (Route 209) to replace windows.
 - Dr. Nails at 5124 Milford Rd. (Route 209) for paving, benches, and landscaping.
 - Pocono Café at 5237 Milford Rd. (Route 209) – 2 submitted (1 for paving and 1 for roofing).
 - Richards Tree Farm at 5064 Milford Rd. (Route 209) to replace windows.
 - Scotty's Plaza at 5126 Milford Rd. (Route 209) for landscaping, power washing, and painting elements.
 - Michael Coffey made a motion for the Committee to see a sketch plan of the Dr. Nails project, seconded by Sonny Murray. The motion passed 7-0.
 - The Committee discussed that, should Committee members be addressed by the property owners, they can respond with their committee membership, their knowledge of the Letter of Interest to receive funds for the project, and their review of the property for reference.

Old Business:

- None

Announcements:

- Mid-Year Report is on Thursday, 7/27/23. Committee members invited to attend as members of the public.

Public Comments:

- None.

Meeting adjournment: Bob Early asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:03 pm. Deborah Emin seconded the motion. Motion passed 7-0.

The next meeting will be held on August 22, 2023, at 5:30 pm at the Township Municipal Center.

Respectfully Submitted,
James Brechbiel, Middle Smithfield Township