

## RICHMOND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

September 14, 2016 - Minutes

Call to order: 8:13 am

(MOTION: Joe Sheehan / 2<sup>nd</sup> Dave Woodmansee / All in Favor)

MEMBERS PRESENT: Joe Sheehan, Josh Comerford, Larry Casey, Meredith Westner, Dave Woodmansee

GUESTS: Karen Pinch

No Motion on Minutes of March 2016 and July 13, 2016 meeting as minutes were not previously distributed to the group

### OLD BUSINESS:

#### I. Richmond EDC Community Marketplace

The marketplace has had a few good days, several bad days with the upcoming few weeks expected to be a struggle with a surge in fall festivals in other places. A Fall Festival is planned for October 1<sup>st</sup> with a bigger influx of vendors and several free activities for children. The market will likely close early due to the dwindling supply of produce due to the drought. It was also mentioned that the town insurance underwriter is doing a review and may contact Meredith Westner if there are any questions about the market insurance.

#### II. Commercial vacant property discussion

Links to the currently available commercial vacant properties will be posted on the new website

#### III. Website and marketing update.

A new logo has been developed. The website is still not publicly available but will be soon. A new Facebook page has been created. URL's for both are listed below:

website: [richmondriedc.wordpress.com](http://richmondriedc.wordpress.com)

facebook: [facebook.com/richmondriedc](https://www.facebook.com/richmondriedc)

The new Business Information Packet was distributed for review – members are to review and provide Josh Comerford with feedback and updates. This will be commercially printed when ready – 2 quotes are required for printing and the lowest quote used

#### IV. Current commercial property vacancies.

The current vacant commercial properties for sale are as follows: Stagecoach House, 5 acres on Route 138, Residential vacant lot on West Shannock road. Current Leases: Cycle Brothers, Walgreens

### NEW BUSINESS

#### I. Rt. 95 Welcome center status update.

- a. The Welcome Center reopened last week. There is a septic system issue so indoor toilets are not functional – the porta-johns filled up faster than anticipated so it is a very popular stop. The building is currently open but empty. The open issue with not allowing commercial sales off of interstates in Rhode Island still exists – there needs to be work at the federal level to change this. There is a meeting coming up with the town about the welcome center were some of these issues may be discussed. There was additional discussion of issues with center at Exit 1 with the local opposition to that project.
- b. There was some discussion of a current effort to link the Welcome Center to private land for a facility proposal instead of the Exit 1 proposal. There was also additional discussion about a former project conducted at URI that created a vision of an evolution of Richmond. Josh Comerford will try to find the information for the next meeting.
- II. Commerce RI Grant – Vote on the RI Business License Municipality Application initiative.
  - a. The proposal is not what the group believed it would be and will not address the true needs of Richmond.
  - b. MOTION: Reject the proposal from Commerce RI (Larry Casey/ 2<sup>nd</sup> Joe Sheehan/ All in Favor)
- III. Review EDC Welcome letter to existing businesses.
  - a. Note that items III, IV, and V were discussed as part of Item III in Old Business.
- IV. Review EDC / New Business Information letter for Clerks office.  
See above
- V. Approve business form/letter for EDC website business registry.  
See above
- VI. Discussion on having the Decoppet Estate land and trails (Hillsdale / Old Mountain Trail) added to all hiking trail websites and possible parking spots.
  - 1. How to further promote Richmond Eco-Tourism
    - a. Larry Casey suggested a map that identified attractions to be posted somewhere visible to visitors. It was also discovered that the Richmond Conservation Commission has its own website promoting hiking in Richmond and details this specific location. There is an ongoing issue in Richmond with disconnect between different departments and commissions.
  - 2. There was a discussion of geofencing and how this may be used to attract people travelling on I-95 to Richmond. Further investigation into this technology is required.
- VII. Chamber of commerce discussion.  
Josh Comerford recently e-mail Lisa Kanicky at the Ocean Chamber of Commerce and invited her to the next EDC meeting
- E. Open forum  
Note that Larry Casey will be absent January through April. Josh Comerford to investigate the impact this may have on the minimum required for a quorum and the impact of alternates.
- F. Adjourn 9:31 (MOTION: Larry Casey /2<sup>nd</sup> Joe Sheehan /All in Favor)

Next Meeting: October 12, 2016 8:00 am