

Town of Montville
Economic Development Commission
Regular Meeting Minutes for February 17, 2016
7:00 p.m. – Montville Town Hall – Room 102

1. Call to Order
Vice-Chairman Protz called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. after establishing a quorum.
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Roll Call
Present were Commissioners Walter Hewitt, Christopher Napierski, John Protz, Jim Toner, and Dianne Williams. Absent were Commissioners Karl Butzgy (leave of absence) and Marge Gatheral. Also present was Town Council Liaison Joe Rogulski.
Martha Shanahan, *The Day*, was introduced.
4. Remarks from the Public regarding items on the Agenda (3 Minute limit) – *none*
5. Alterations to the Agenda – *none*
6. To Consider and Act on a Motion to approve:
 - a. The Regular Meeting Minutes of Wednesday, January 20, 2016
Motion made by Commissioner Williams, seconded by Commissioner Toner.
Discussion: None. Voice vote, 5-0, all in favor. Motion carried.
7. Unfinished business
 - a. EDC Website Design (Commissioner Protz)
Vice-Chairman Protz met with Town Planner Marcia Vlaun regarding the Commission's ideas for the EDC Website and received positive feedback regarding highlighting the Town's recreational opportunities. Not being a real estate office, she questioned the ability of the Commission to post all of the available properties, in all due fairness. The Commission felt that the posting of select available properties would be beneficial and provide a good resource for potential businesses. The question of whether those seeking a location for their business would seek out such information on a Town website was raised. Though it may not be mobile-friendly, the page can also include an interactive map.

The Commission agreed that the website should periodically be updated and refreshed. Another item discussed with Town Planner Vlaun was Town branding and the need for all of the information offered on the site to be related to the Town of Montville, rather than its boroughs.

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b. Blight Ordinance

1) Organizations assisting with blight clean-up (Commissioner Hewitt)

While Commissioner Hewitt has located a number of resources available to aid businesses in remedying blight, the question of whether it is within the Commission's purview to contact and offer assistance was raised. The Town may need to officially appoint a representative or group of representatives to work with the businesses and obtain resources and grant/development funds to reach their goals. It is believed that other Towns have established such agencies to aid businesses. Vice-Chairman Protz and Commissioner Toner reported that, in speaking with Town Planner Vlaun, the Town's Zoning Enforcement Officer (ZEO) can take over the enforcement of blight-related issues. A letter of communication written to the ZEO regarding the blighted properties may be helpful. She also supported the idea of a blight campaign via such avenues as *The Montville Times*, Town/EDC website, etc. Beginning the campaign on a positive note, e.g. Spring Cleanup, and sending positive communication to other business owners regarding surrounding businesses as well as offering to help them clean up the property was suggested. The ZEO's awareness of all of the existing resources and whether the Commission is re-creating a system that already exists was raised. With that in mind, Commissioner Toner suggested that one of the Commissioners meet with both Zoning/Wetlands Officer Liz Burdick and Building Official Vern Vesey to enquire as to the process and the tools and resources they are currently utilizing, the length of time, and the role the EDC could/should play. Commissioner Hewitt agreed to set up a meeting to discuss blight with both ZEO/WEO Burdick and Building Official Vesey.

c. Tax Incentive Plan

Councilor Rogulski will introduce the Tax Incentive Plan to the Town Council at their next meeting. The Plan has also been copied to iBooks.

d. Communications Plan

An outstanding working session was held on Monday, February 1. Vice-Chairman Protz introduced a working copy of the Communications Metric, which will be used to establish regular communication with the Town Council, Town Offices, and residents, for discussion at their next session on Monday, February 29, 2016, 7:00 p.m.

8. New Business

a. Town Planner meeting (Commissioner Protz)

Vice-Chairman Protz reviewed a map of the Rock-Tenn property with Town Planner Vlaun, who is interested in the town identifying potential developers (based on what is

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best for town) when the property when it goes on the market. The property, which includes the Oxoboxo Lake area, has access to a deep water port – large enough for a cruise ship, is approximately 20 acres, and is equipped with all of the utilities and fiber. She requested the Commission’s help in seeking out appropriate developers who might/would be interested in utilizing the property. It was noted that the Subase may be interested in utilizing the port to conduct actions and procedures requiring undisturbed waters. Town Planner Vlaun has been contacting Rock Tenn monthly to determine when the property will be available for sale. The property will need to be posted on the website with the appropriate contact information. The item will be added to the Agenda. The Commission could also view such brownfield properties from a marketing perspective. The Commission’s ability to help the Planning Department in such a manner will not only allow the Commission to provide assistance to, but also aid in the ongoing growth of their relationship with the Department in a positive way.

- b. Strat Comms Working Group update (Commissioner Protz)
Vice-Chairman Protz reminded the Commission regarding the Special Meeting on Monday, February 29, 2016, 7:00 p.m.
- 9. Status of Businesses – *no updates*
 - a. Existing Properties/Businesses
 - 1) Drive-in Property
 - c. Report on New Businesses (Commissioner Toner)
 - d. Lost Businesses
 - 1) Targeted Mailings
 - e. Prospective Businesses
 - 1) Water Park Rumors
- 10. Feedback from the Townspeople and Businesses – *none*
- 11. Proposed Recipients for Business Recognition Award – *none*
- 12. Report from Town Council Liaison Joe Rogulsky
Councilor Rogulski discussed the recent referendum for an Independent Police Force in Montville. Commissioner Toner stated that there is no existing data to support the idea that a police presence would bring new businesses into Town, with the exception of the Town of Plainfield, which also is home to a dog track.
- 13. Communications – *none*
- 14. Remarks from the Public (3 Minute limit) – *none*

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15. Remarks from the Commissioners

Commissioner Williams stated that she is planning to speak with Montville Police Lt. Leonard Bunnell regarding a recent comment she overheard on the radio, which she felt was insensitive.

16. Adjournment

Motion made by Commissioner Hewitt, seconded by Commissioner Protz, to adjourn the meeting at 8:35 p.m.. Voice vote, 5-0, all in favor. Motion carried.