

TOWN OF WASHINGTON

Washington Economic Development Committee

Tuesday July 20, 2021 at 3:00 pm in person and virtual

Minutes are subject to approval of the Economic Development Committee

Members- First Selectman Jim Brinton, Daniel Sherr, Tony Bedini, Michael Jackson, Robyn Gray, Fran Keilty, Wayne Hilleman

Public: Susan Branson, Chris Charles, Joan Loadsine, Carole Matteo, Lance Reynolds

Michelle Gorra- Economic and Community Development Coordinator

1. **Call to Order:** Michelle Gora called the meeting to order at 3:05
2. Motion was made to approve the minutes of June 15, 2021 by Wayne Hilleman seconded by Dan Sherr, unanimously approved
3. **Report on Activities of Economic and Community Dev Coordinator**

Affordable Housing. The plan draft is completed and is being finished up. The plan is to present it at a Public Hearing during the October 6 Planning Commission meeting. During August and September members of the committee will go out into the community with a simple flier to educate about the housing in Washington and invite them to the hearing.

Sustainable CT- We have submitted enough work for Bronze certification and are close to the Silver level. We have decided to go for Silver next year. In the Fall the EDC can discuss priorities for next steps in the categories of "Thriving Local Economies", "Vibrant and Creative Cultural Ecosystems" and "Inclusive Engagement, Communication and Education"

New Preston Sidewalks- Phase 1 of the New Preston sidewalks have been bid and the bid is about to be awarded. The plan is to start in the late Fall.

Titus Concept Plan- a Public meeting will be held July 21st at 5:30 in Town Hall. The engineers will be there to gather information before they start on the design.

New Home Mailing- 10 letters were sent

Farms in Washington. A conversation with local farmers happened on July 19 at Waldingfield farm. The farmers were appreciative and had some ideas on things that would help them. Looking at the signage regulation was discussed as well as temporary housing and Agritourism. Members of the EDC asked for some research on the Economic impact of farming on the community. When people visit the vineyards and orchards where do they come from?

Shepaug Valley Children's Center- Work is continuing to establish a non-profit to run the center and architects have been approached to design a plan that can be used to get bids on the renovations required. The selectmen feel this could be an appropriate use of the ARPA grant money.

4. New Business

a. POCD 2023 discussion- Wayne Hileman

- The Planning Commission is starting to hold conversations with residents about the next plan. They want to hear about concerns, questions and issues.
- What you'd like to see more of, what you'd like to see less of. What we'd like to know really what is on your mind about the plan.
- This information comes largely from the department of labor, get labor data by town.
- The right to farm; times are changing. Some of the farming community wants flexibility, town needs to think about where to we set the guard rails- needs to be discussed. We're a right to farm community
- To identify potential site for new businesses and to Actively recruit businesses to these sites. Gathering data for new businesses
- We're starting with the existing plan looking at what we did accomplish and going to look at things that haven't
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Old Business

- a. Updated map is on Explore
- b. Passport- we have 2,000 left. The committee asked Michelle to distribute to the Hopkins Vineyard, the Spring Hill Arts Gathering and the Pavilion for Shakesperience. We do not think ARPA money can be used for a reprint but will keep it in mind as the guidelines come out.
- c. Arts Mailer- A postcard was mailed to all households and 1,000 extras were printed that have been distributed around town to businesses and non-profits for visitors to pick up.

Report of WBA & Selectmen on items not on the agenda-

New Businesses- Flemming Brown has bought Hidden Valley which will continue as a restaurant, Depot Dog is planning to open in August, the new dermatologist in New Preston is planning to open in August, Steep Rock offices are moving to their building at the Macricostas preserve and Sweeny Associates has moved into the former Kelly Law offices.

Visitors

Adjournment- made at 4:32 Motion made by Wayne Hilleman and seconded by Dan Sherr

Respectfully Submitted,

Amanda Reale

Selectmen's Assistant

<https://youtu.be/qq-0SnrtY0c>