

TOWN OF WASHINGTON

MINUTES

Washington Economic Development Committee Tuesday December 21,2021, 3:00pm in person and virtual

Minutes are subject to approval of the Economic Development Committee

Members Present: Jim Brinton, Daniel Sherr, Fran Keilty, Wayne Hileman, Michael Jackson, Lisa Stein, Robyn Gray, Kristen Atlas, Trisha McMahon

Public Present: Joan Lodsins, Chris Charles

Michelle Gorra- Economic and Community Development Coordinator

1. Call to order- 3:02
2. Motion: To approve the WEDC minutes of October 19 and November 16, by Dan Sherr, seconded by Trisha McMahon. All in favor.
3. Report on activities of the Economic and Community Development Coordinator:
 - Attended the CCOM Convention Nov. 30. Attended 3 workshops, 2 of note. First was CT Trail Finder: Engaging Trails & Greenspaces for Economic Development & Public Health. Michelle since met with Brian at Steep Rock. Also went to an "Update on Affordable Housing & Land Use Legislation". Spoke with Shelley in Land Use and will follow up with Zoning and the COG.
 - Attended the CT Economic Summit in Harford on Dec. 2. Paul Romer, NYU Professor of Economics and Nobel Laureate, said one of the things government can do to help get people back in the workforce is to help provide childcare.
 - Affordable Housing Plan, working with the Housing Commission to start working on the goals put forth in the plan.
 - Sustainable CT, the committee is working with the nature Conservancy on a Community Resilience Building plan.
 - New home owner mailing for Nov.- 5 home sales.
 - The Newsletter went out on time first week of December. Extra copies were placed in Marty's which were gone within days.
 - Holiday in the Depot- Huge success. Great community building event with the participation of many businesses in the Depot. Having the decorated trucks down by the Pantry helped make that part of the Depot more a part of the festivities.
 - Depot Lights- Huge thanks to Arbor services and Wright Electric for repairing the existing lights so that they are all back on. The new lights did not come in but remain on order for next year.
 - Child Care- the architectural feasibility study is under way. The BoS and the BoF approved the \$8,400 expenditure to get to an estimate for the renovation of the first floor of the central office for the purposes of a day care. Dan asked if other uses might be brought forward. Michelle responded that she has not heard of any yet and that a child care is ideal due to the proximity to WPS for safety concerns.
 - Community Center- close to 20 members of the community have volunteered to work on the project and the fundraising should get started in January. Dean Sarjeant is leading that effort.

4. Old Business

- a. Guidebook update- the update is underway. Julia at Sandor Max has created a document that she shared with Fran and Jorge from the WBA as well as Michelle. Once a draft has been put together it will be shared with the committee. Thanks to Trisha for her very thorough comments. They have been shared.
- b. MOTION: to approve the 2022 calendar, by Kristen Atlas and seconded by Robyn Gray. All in favor.
- c. Kiosk update- After some feedback on the Kiosk from the community and the feeling of the Bryan Memorial Hall Trustees we have shifted our thoughts to creating more of a "Welcome Center" at the Legion Hall/Senior Center where the public restrooms are. There is a vestibule where a rack for literature can be placed. We will also consider a much scaled down map on the Plaza possibly between the Market and 5 Janes. We will consider some ideas at our next meeting. There was also discussion of the outdoor water bottle filler being considered for the Judy Black Park. We support this addition and Jim said there is money in the town budget for this effort.

5. Report of the WBA & Selectmen on items not on the agenda.

- The WBA is working on the update of the guidebook and have started a calendar for the quarterly socials for 2022.
- Wayne Hileman explained that the time has come to put together a Broadband Committee. The committee could start with considering if a Feasibility study or a Phase 1 Engineering study is appropriate for the town. This is an allowed use of ARPA funds. Jim asked if this would be a committee of Planning and Wayne thought maybe it would be a committee of the EDC but would give it more thought.
- Jim reported about the challenge for resiliency in our town is really Eversource. He also reported that part of the feedback from the Bryan Hall Trustees was drawing pedestrian traffic across the Plaza where there is not a crosswalk.

6. Visitors- no additional comments

7. Adjournment at 4:00

Respectfully Submitted,
Michelle Gorra

<https://youtu.be/C6RuD-2lhxY>