

Minutes of the Suffield Economic Development Commission  
Regular Meeting  
April 21, 2022

Members Present: Co-Chairs, Susan Thorner and Brian Banak, Howard Orr, John McGuire, Jack Henrie, Bob Kelly, Gayle Demko

Also Present: Director of Planning & Development, Bill Hawkins, Recording Secretary, Ellie Binns

1. Co-Chair Susan Thorner called the meeting to order at 8:34 AM
2. Minutes

Mr. McGuire moved to approve the minutes of the March 17, 2022 regular meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Orr and unanimously approved.

3. Public Input – None
4. Business Contact Committee Report

John McGuire stated that Leon Litvak a member of the Planning and Zoning Commission has joined the interview committee and there have been two more interviews with businesses this month. The contacts continue to be very positive and those interviewed have all indicated that they would like the Economic Development Commission to keep in touch with them. Mr. McGuire proposed that a thank you letter be sent to the businesses that have been interviewed and the commission members agreed to send out the letter that he had drafted. There was discussion on ways to help promote the businesses through the Town website and articles in the Suffield Observer.

5. Light Industrial Update

Mr. Hawkins reported that C & S Wholesale Grocers has moved out of the building on Harvey Lane. He will continue to reach out to them to try to determine their plans for the building. The Planning and Zoning Commission has received an application for a text amendment to the Zoning Regulations regarding cannabis establishments from LASA Extract, LLC. and set the public hearing for May 16th. Also on the agenda for that meeting will be a public hearing for a new package store at 809 Thompsonville Road. The town attorney is developing a tax abatement ordinance for the town and Mr. Hawkins will bring the draft ordinance to the EDC for review prior to beginning the adoption process. Mr. Hawkins stated that there has been interest in the Town owned properties on South Street, particularly 1100 South Street. There have also been a few inquiries on the former culinary school located at 1760 Mapleton Avenue. He met with the Larry Lauren and First Selectman Moll to discuss the prospect of making Ffyer Place a town road. Mr. Lauren stated that Lauren Enterprises is not interested in moving the alignment of the road to allow more room for screening in front of the town's highway garage. Mr. Hawkins stated they would now have Cardinal Engineering

complete the design and cost estimate for the improvements needed to bring the road up to town road standards.

## 6. Town Center Update

Mr. Hawkins noted that the grand opening celebration for Barista Café on April 8<sup>th</sup> was well attended and the café is being well received in the community. He also reported that the Planning and Zoning Commission and the school system are working to come up with draft zoning regulations for outdoor message board signs. Mr. Hawkins reported that the Mountain Road multi-use trail construction has started. The Town Engineer, Karen Isherwood is still working on plans for sidewalks in the Mapleton and Thompsonville Road area. She is also expecting to receive LOTCIP funds to make improvements to the bike trail in West Suffield and Bridge Street.

In other Town business, there will be a public hearing on the draft Affordable Housing Plan on May 4<sup>th</sup> as part of the Board of Selectmen meeting. The Facilities Master Plan and the Town Wide Traffic & Pedestrian Safety Study are expected to be completed in the coming months. The EDC has a line item in the budget for a part time Economic Development Coordinator.

Mr. Orr reported on the progress by Friends of the Farm at Hilltop (FOFAH) noting that the sign for the creamery that this Commission helped fund will be installed soon. The store will start opening on the weekends with the grand opening planned for Memorial Day Weekend. FOFAH has acquired 1606 Mapleton Avenue and work will start on renovating the house including connecting utilities. Mr. Orr stated that infrastructure work up at Hilltop will cut down on some of the children's activities at the farm this summer. There will be a "Monster Tag Sale & Flea Market" at Hilltop Farm on Saturday, May 21<sup>st</sup> from 9AM to 3PM.

## 7. Adjournment

With nothing further to come before the Commission Mr. Henrie moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:20 AM. The motion was seconded by Mr. Orr and passed unanimously 7-0-0.

Respectfully submitted,  
Ellie Binns, Recording Secretary