

2024 DEC -2 AM 9: 18

REC'D BY: EMR

Minutes of the Suffield Economic Development Commission
Regular Meeting
November 21, 2024

Members Present: Gayle Demko – Chair, Bob Kelly, John McGuire, Roger Murray, Jack Henrie

Also Present: Colin Moll – First Selectman, Chad Kuzontkoski – Economic Development Specialist, Ellie Binns – Administrative Assistant

1. Gayle Demko called the meeting to order at 8:30 A.M. and introduced Roger Murray as a new alternate member. The Board of Selectmen has appointed Jeff Girard and Maria Silvestri as full members and Jack Henrie as an alternate member. There were technical difficulties with the remote connection so Mr. Girard and Ms. Silvestri were unable to participate.

2. Minutes

The minutes of the October 17, 2024 regular meeting were approved with Mr. McGuire abstaining as he was not at the October meeting.

3. Public Input

4. First Selectman Moll discussed the role of the EDC in supporting current businesses that are already in Town and possibly expanding on the very successful Tax Increment Financing TIF program grants. He suggested that building owners be encouraged to participate in programs that can enhance their properties to attract and retain businesses. There was also discussion about finding funding sources and capital expenditures. Ms. Demko shared information on other towns and cities' programs that have been successful that the EDC could consider. She suggested the web site Saveyour.town that has ideas of "pop up events". There was discussion about partnering with the Parks and Recreation Department for programs and involving the Town's youth. There was discussion of ways to make use of the Bridge Street lot for events or a small park. An approach to consider is to start with one small area of Town to focus on.

5. Commission Projects Update

Ms. Demko provided an update on an educational series being planned in conjunction with The North Central CT Chamber of Commerce at Asnuntuck Community College in the spring. She and Mr. Kuzontkoski are continuing to work on a pamphlet of things to do in and around Suffield that would be distributed to places that visitors would likely stop in at. Ms. Demko is continuing to make progress on the informational kiosk by the library. The kiosk would have easily accessible information for anyone who uses it including police updates, suicide prevention, drug questions, local events, business listings, library, parks and recreation programs, town events, and historic walking tours.

6. Staff Report

Mr. Kuzontkoski distributed his written report which summarized the activities in the Light Industrial, Commercial and Town Center Village District zones for the month. Planning and Zoning approved the special permit for the change of use to a house of worship at 1380 Mountain Road. The Farm/Artist promotion update was given, 13 farms and 13 artists have been matched so far to create new farm stand signs and most are underway or completed. There was discussion about the TIF matching grant program. Mr. Kuzontkoski noted that there are two applications that have not been started. He will get in touch with the applicants to see if the funds should be reallocated to other projects since deadlines have already been passed, although extensions have been granted. Mr. Kuzontkoski reported that Suffield Market is working in conjunction with Suffield Community Aid to donate 10 Thanksgiving basket with turkeys and traditional side dishes to families in Town. Suffield Small Business Saturday Passports are being distributed. There are nineteen businesses participating. The program will run for a week rather than just one day. November 30th – December 8th.

7. Adjournment

With nothing further to come before the Commission, the meeting was adjourned at 9:50 AM.

Respectfully submitted,
Ellie Binns Recording Secretary