

**TOWN OF ASHFORD
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
5 TOWN HALL RD ASHFORD, CT 06278
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
WEDNESDAY, MAY 25, 2016**

PRESENT: J. Calarese, M. Chatey, W. Darcy, R. Fenn, M. Gantick, G. Lawrence,

- 1. Call to Order - 7:45 PM**
- 2. Seating of Alternates - None**
- 3. Approval of Minutes – Darcy/Lawrence; passed**
- 4. Budget**
 - a. \$1,310 funds are still left of the \$1,950 original budget. Will use all of balance for the website. Still hope to get small amount of additional funds (less than \$250) from BOS as per discussion last month.
 - b. Motion to accept report –Gantick /Fenn; passed
- 5. Communications and Announcements**
 - a. Announcements -
 - i. Commission member W. Darcy will likely be attending just one more meeting before relocating.
 - b. News from Other Commissions
 - i. Conservation-Aiming to gather all the Forest Legacy applications from qualifying residents by June 1 to ensure they are complete and ready for filing by June 30 for this federal program.
 - c. Ashford Our Town-Our Future Project (see below)
 - d. ABA News
 - i. ABA meeting June 2 at 6:30 at Midway
 - ii. Car shows will resume again in May on the last Thursday of the month each month until September volunteers and raffle prizes needed
 - e. Correspondence and Meetings
 1. none
 - f. Presentations - none
- 6. Old Business**
 - a. Website Modifications (Darcy, Chatey, Gantick) -
 - i. Chatey/Darcy reported on meeting with Kyle Dostaler of MadCom to begin website. R. Williams had clarified financials and billing needs for yearend by email with MadCom. Chatey encouraged commission members to report on any websites they particularly like of as guidance.
 - b. Our Town-Our Future (Fenn, Gantick).

- i. The A1 station beautification project sketches are in place. No need for signage permit. Fenn/Gantick to ensure all painters have signed release forms as required by property owner.
 - ii. Arts Council has published a brochure and tabled at Ashford PTO's Spring Jamboree to promote itself. Featured OT-OF prominently.
 - iii. Discussed report from BOS that OT-OF should be a committee of AEDC, and that this is not appropriate for the scope of the OT-OF work. Gantick will follow up seeking a formal acceptance of the OT-OF as an ad hoc committee reporting to the BOS.
 - iv. M. Gantick reported follow-up on the UConn Landscape students' visioning project. To advance concepts proposed, committee agreed that a key benefit is safety improvement along 74/44. There may be state/DOT funding available for improvements. Map provided indicates the frequency of accidents on this corridor, and the traffic-slowing and infrastructure improvements could enhance safety to pedestrians and autos traveling in Ashford's enterprise zone. Next step is M. Gantick to prepare a report to OT-OF committee with proposal.

- c. Retail and Services Enterprise Zone (also includes Branch Bank Solicitation Project (Chatey, Lawrence, Williams)
 - i. Bank Solicitation – no report
 - ii. Enterprise Zone – (See OTOF iii above)

- d. Wagon Shed Property (Darcy)
 - i. No report of further progress asking for legal opinion as AEDC proposed to BOS.
- e. Buy Local Initiative /EDC Marketing and Communications (Chatey/Williams)
 - i. To the issue of selling the benefits of economic development efforts, M. Chatey identified three stakeholder groups to communicate with about AEDC's goals, planned initiatives and why they are important for our community: other Boards and Commissions, Ashford business owners/prospects and Ashford residents. The strategy will be different in communicating to each group about what economic development can do to help Ashford. Two documents on how small towns can use local assets to boost their economies were distributed which may be useful in drafting a simple strategic plan. M. Gantick emphasized that a demonstrated success, such as bringing in a new business to vacant space, will be the best way to show the benefits of AEDC's efforts.

7. New Business

- a. Discussion whether AEDC should attend each BOS meeting, either as members of the public or as invited member of AEDC to report on projects and follow up
- b. With departure of Commission member Darcy, AEDC will have two vacancies. Group committed to reaching out to residents who have expressed interest in serving.
- c. R. Fenn raised issue that the document Doing Business In Ashford should be looked at again and refreshed with updated information. No committee assigned to review.

8. Input from Public - None

9. Member Input for Next Agenda - None

10. Adjournment - 9:25 PM

Prepared by M.J.Chatey, Vice Chair