## Town of Barkhamsted Economic Development Commission Meeting Minutes May 21, 2015

## Meeting called to order at 7:36 PM

Attending members: Bob Geiger (phone), Ross Herzog, Kevin Noblet (phone), Ginny Apple, Mark Mahoney and Bob Pulford. Also present was Don Stein, First Selectman.

**Review of minutes:** A motion was made by Ginny Apple, seconded by Bob Geiger, and passed unanimously to approve the Minutes of the April 16, 2015 meeting. Kevin Noblet and Mark Mahoney abstained.

## Discussion:

- The Commission discussed the meeting with Jason Giulietti from the Northwest Chamber and the economic development seminar attended by Ross Herzog and Don Stein that was put on by CERC (CT Economic Resource Center).
- They agreed that Don should approach Jason to discuss next steps and also to reach out to Bob Santy, the Executive Director of CERC, to determine his availability to help the town.
- Some of the strategies that were discussed included the use of the state tourism website (action Bill/Ginny), historical property tax credits, a welcome kit for new businesses, an inventory of available properties, a list of major businesses, using the town website to promote businesses, and creating a buzz about the town through events, thereby creating marketing opportunities.
- The Commission also felt that a visitation plan to the major businesses should be implemented to get feedback on how to help them and to develop strategies to attract new businesses.
- Don Stein reported that he had met with Ron Coleman, who owns the Hitchcock properties and that he is very interested in moving the old warehouse site since it is a revenue generator for the business. Don and Bob Geiger will follow up on this action, including having a meeting with Dave Hurley of New Hartford who is currently renting out the old Ovation factory, now that it is vacant.
- The Commission reiterated its interest in starting the project that would create a walking bridge across the River to connect Peoples and American Legion State Forests.

## **Events:**

• Earth Day – the day was a big success despite the dreary, cold weather, with an estimated attendance of about 400 people. The free food was a big plus and Bill Bowles and his family were huge contributors to the success of the event. Ross took notes on the set-up and the action was taken to set up a committee before next year's event and to work on lighting and other areas for improvement.

- "Halloween Riverside" Mark Mahoney reported that the Riverton Fairgrounds would not be available since they rent out their barns for boat storage, which is a major source of income to the Association. Don Stein will call Ron Coleman to see if he would let the event take place in the front part of the old Hitchcock showroom, similar to Christmas in Riverton. It may be possible to use People's Forest, but typically the State doesn't allow its use after dark and there is no real shelter there in case of bad weather.
  - Bridge Lighting Don Stein took the action to talk to the Town's Eversource rep about power availability if the lighting was to be installed and also he has talked to the CT DOT about an encroachment permit for installing the lighting on the PV Bridge.

**Brochure/Walking Map** – Ginny said that the artist is working on it and should have a proof to look at in the next month. On a motion by Bob Geiger, seconded by Mark Mahoney and passed unanimously, the Commission voted to pay \$200 out of the current year's budget to the artist, once a proof is available and approved.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:36 PM on a motion by Bob Pulford, seconded by Ginny Apple.

Respectfully submitted,

Don Stein First Selectman