

Town of Barkhamsted
Economic Development Commission
Special Meeting Minutes
January 19, 2017

Meeting called to order at 7:36 PM

Attending members: Ross Herzog, Ginny Apple, Bob Pulford, Kevin Noblet, Tim Deschenes-Desmond, and Kathy Williams. Also present was Don Stein, First Selectman.

Public Comment: Kerri and Ray Donahue (Black Sheep Farm) and Sheila Groneman (Briarwood Farm) attended the meeting to discuss the possibility of starting a Farmers Market in Barkhamsted. Points that were discussed included:

- Norfolk's Farmer's Market is Saturday from 10:00-1:00, and includes farm vendors, specialty foods, music, baked goods and arts and crafts vendors. The market manager is paid by the Town to run the market, and it is viewed as an event, more than just a place to buy farm products. Everything has to be produced within 50 miles of Norfolk.
- Winsted does their event on Friday afternoon, Torrington on Tuesday and Saturday, Collinsville on Sunday, and Granby is restarting one, but the farmers were not sure which day. New Hartford had one on the Pine Meadow green, but it appears that it will be restarted at the pavilion behind Town Hall by the Farmington River.
- Other local farms include Sweet Winds Farms (Arlo Case), Barden Farm (Anita Barden) and Grassy Knoll Farm.
- A good draw for a market is about 250 people, but it takes time to build to that level and to achieve success.
- A committee should be formed to determine the focus of the market, when to have it, and the types of vendors (local veggies, food vendors, flea market, etc.)
- There was also discussion on where to hold the market (Town Garage, drive-in theater, Riverton) and it was suggestion that we talk to Peter Greenwood and Leslie DiMartino.
- Ginny agreed to take the action to put a poll/survey on Facebook to help pick a day and frequency for a market and to determine if there was interest in the town having a market.

Review of minutes: On a motion made by Ginny Apple, seconded by Bob Pulford, and passed unanimously, the minutes of November 17, 2016 were approved. Kevin and Tim abstained as they were not at the previous meeting.

Discussion:

- The discussion of putting a “Little Food Pantry” next to the Little Free Library by Town Hall was tabled until the next meeting, when the folks interested in this possibility can come to the meeting.
- Don Stein provided samples of maps and a brochure from Berkshire Brochure Display, who does tourist maps for communities, and who is working on one for Winsted. Kevin Noblet is also working with a friend who may be able to do a map for the town and Don Stein will get costs from Berkshire. A decision on this subject was deferred to the next meeting.
- Don Stein informed the Commission that Ron Coleman will be holding a walk-through for a few individuals knowledgeable in commercial development to see if a strategy can be developed for the Hitchcock building in Riverton. That will take place in mid-February. There is also an individual from New Hartford who will be organizing a music festival at the Riverton Fairground on June 24, which will include local bands, a Karaoke barn, arts and crafts and wine/beer garden at the Fairgrounds. It will be called the Still River Music Festival and will also benefit a charity named AIM (Aim for a Better Tomorrow). The Commission will provide assistance as required, and it was suggested that could be the kickoff date a farmers market.
- The Northwest CT Economic Development Forum is being held at the Litchfield Community Center on January 30. Summit topics/resources will include: Best practices of local economic development committees, arts and culture based economic development strategies, resources for entrepreneurship and small business development, and growing the agricultural economy in NWCT. As of the EDC meeting time, Don Stein, Ross Herzog, Tim Deschenes-Desmond, Kathy Williams, and Tim Sullivan will be participating.

It was also noted that because this was a Special Meeting and it was not on the agenda, new officers and the 2017 meeting schedule could not be voted on. These will be on the next agenda.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:05 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Don Stein
First Selectman