

North Smithfield Economic Development Commission
Meeting Minutes – January 13, 2014

- I. Call to Order** at 18:05 by Lucien Benoit
- II. Roll Call** – Present: Lucien Benoit, Al Puccetti, Bob Nault, and Scott Lentz
- III. Minutes** - The minutes of the December 9, 2013 meeting were unanimously accepted.
- IV. Officer Nominations and Selections** -
 - Bob Nault was nominated for Vice Chairman and was unanimously elected
 - Scott Lentz was nominated for Secretary and was unanimously elected
- V. Old Business** -
 - A) Update on Branch Village Sewers
 - Bob Nault summarized a response letter received today from the Horsley Witten Group that identified a \$280,000 reduction of cost on Alternative 2 of the Branch Village sewer system proposal.
 - Bob noted that the Horsley Witten Group letter stated that the RI DOT has planned a refurbishment/replacement of the Branch River bridge in 2016. This may provide an opportunity to include other roadway/sidewalk improvements in the scope.
 - Lucien Benoit presented drawings of the proposed solar farm on the Sam-Man Realty property. It was not clear if the area proposed would conflict with the Branch Village redevelopment plans. Note: later in the Redevelopment Agency meeting, it was noted that the area does not conflict with the Branch Village redevelopment plans.
 - Lucien Benoit pointed out that the commercial solar proposal was compliant with the new North Smithfield solar ordinance. However, for future development, the new solar ordinance prevents solar systems being installed on private property unless it is a Net Metering solar system. Lucien stated that this severely restricts the opportunity for solar systems, since they require large areas and the commercially zoned areas in North Smithfield are limited.
 - B) Update on Zoning Sec. 17
 - Lucien Benoit noted that the change in the approved Zoning Ordinance from “shall” to “should” on the maximum slope requirement relieved a severe restriction from commercial development, even in already commercially zoned areas.
 - C) Discussion on appointment of another new member
 - Lucien Benoit asked for recommendations for a new member to fill the existing vacancy.
- VI. New Business** -
 - The draft letter from Economic Development Commission and Redevelopment Agency to the Town Council re: Branch Village redevelopment was distributed by Bob Nault. Bob asked that the members review the letter and provide feedback and willingness to sign the letter to him.

Note: later in the Redevelopment Agency meeting, it was decided to proceed with the existing draft letter and the respective Chairmen would sign on behalf of the Commission and Agency. Bob Nault made the motion to accept the letter as is and have Lucien Benoit sign. The remaining Economic Development Committee members voted unanimously to support this motion (Lucien Benoit had already having left the meeting).

- Al Puccetti suggested that since this is budget season, it is time to transmit to the Budget Committee the requested budget for the Economic Development Commission. Lucien Benoit and Al Puccetti will develop the request.
- Scott Lentz provided the members with a 1st draft synopsis of an analysis of RI municipalities economic development incentives that he has started developing. He was interested in determining what the “competition” is doing. He asked the members to let him know if this was valuable to the committee and if they would like him to continue.

VII. Discussion on Nissan-Subaru Expansion Plans -

- Lucien Benoit presented the Anchor-Nissan-Subaru proposal to expand their facility on Eddie Dowling Highway. The latest proposal is acceptable to a residential abutters group, however it was not know if all abutters concerns were addressed.

Joining the Redevelopment Agency Meeting

Lucien Benoit invited the members of the Economic Development Commission to join in the Redevelopment Agency meeting that starts at 18:30 without adjourning. The Economic Development Commission members attended the Redevelopment Agency meeting, with the exception of Lucien Benoit departing at 19:15.

VIII. Adjournment -

Al Puccetti made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 20:02, seconded by Scott Lentz with all in favor.

The next Economic Development Commission meeting will be February 10, 2014 at the Town Hall.