

Willington Economic Development Commission

Meeting Minutes - July 14, 2021

IN ATTENDANCE: Richard Maloney, Cheryl Mitchell, John Guskowski, Matt Clark, Bill Rankin, Samantha Hills;
Meeting was called to order @ 6:30 PM

Cheryl made a motion to approve the minutes of June 9th; seconded by Samantha; Motion carried

Willington Rail Project

Bill provided Jon with drawing; Bill walked the property preliminarily; accessed through Knight Construction; 18 acres (not ideal) abuts to 84 rest area (access off Route 32 off Knight or private location) best approach at this time - another walk through of property. Can push Desiato gravel pit to start common efforts and introduce to the town to get the process started; will be looking for a risk free investment; needs to be access for trucks but has not spoken to Mr. Desiato yet; push it as best option on the table right now. Capacity is very tight right now as example Logan Aluminum, Russellville, KY is looking to forward inventory by rail - 80,000 annual tons of coiled aluminum used in the Northeast for beverage canning industry; this won't fit in currently but what we are banking on is happening in the market now. John Guskowski will work with Pete Parent to turn Bill's sketch into a first draft site plan.

Old Business - South Willington Village

Still working on South Willington Village regulation

Rick had an idea to extend the South Willington Village District to extend the district to Route 195 - Mansfield line; John will revise South Willington Village District map to extend down to 195; then in would go to Planning & Zoning; they would hold a public meeting

Rick made a Motion to extend the South Willington Village District line to Route 195 - Mansfield line; Bill seconded; (would run North of Mill- Fish & Game Club toward Eagle and beyond to Route 195); Motion carried *for the record, Samantha Hills abstained from voting on this motion

New Business

John spoke about the hybrid caveat of meeting in person; Resident in meeting, Melissa, indicated she watched the Board of Education meeting and it seemed okay; Public Meetings need to be recorded if we meet in person; Cheryl will check it out further at BOS meeting on Monday the 19th and let commission know.

We will plan on being in person for the August meeting.

Incentives for small businesses/start ups/assistance for existing small businesses discussion. American Rescue plan gave 1.7 million to Town over several years; Discussion about possible survey for new businesses; what was the COVID impact; our commission should come up with the criteria; make application to our commission; we can make a recommendation to the Board of Finance to provide them with relief; Samantha brought up a great point that we should universally give to all businesses; stops people from having to meet criteria and fill out paperwork. Provide the money to administer the grant to John & Mike to distribute; could do a very simple "Five Step Test" - get it out on the webpage; then apply to us

Board of Selectman created a committee to administer these funds; we can make a proposal to Board of Selectmen - someone from EDC should sit on this committee; we can work on how we want to work with John & Mike; possible tax abatements; Matt volunteered to check out other towns' information and how it works (towns in our area) to help develop a plan; Bill indicated from a marketing stand point we could come up with a list of possible candidates; will out on agenda for next meeting

Samantha made a Motion to Adjourn Meeting at 7:27 PM; Bill seconded; Motion carried and meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted: Cheryl Mitchell

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