

SALISBURY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

OCTOER 21, 2021 – 4:00PM (VIA ZOOM)

Call to Order. Present: Ward Belcher, Janet Graaff, Robert Schaufelberger, Tom Shachtman and Bruce McEver. Absent: Kitty Kiefer, David Maffucci and Richard Block.

Approval of Agenda. So Moved by T. Shachtman, seconded by R. Schaufelberger and unanimously **Approved.**

Approval of Minutes of September 23, 2021. So Moved by T. Shachtman, seconded by B. McEver and **Approved.** Discussion: J. Graaff asked that on page 3, point 5 (Lime Rock Team), in the line beginning: J. Graaff suggested...”ideas are important” should be struck, as vague.

Approval of Schedule of Meetings through December 2021. There was discussion about the next 2 regular meeting dates, November 18 and December 16, 2021 at 4:00pm. Any social holiday gathering might be held separately. **A Motion to Approve the Meeting dates of November 18 and December 16, 2021 at 4:00pm** was made by J. Graaff, seconded by R. Schaufelberger and unanimously **Approved.**

Approval of 2022 meeting schedule – Not approved at this time. Dates are to be determined.

Team Reports and Discussion:

- Broadband Team – R. Schaufelberger expressed that he is hoping to get additional information about the additional build-out by Comcast with the State of CT; getting a Federal subsidy could enable Comcast to monopolize the market. The Commission would like to find out more about competition and what other areas of the State are doing.
- Funding/Financing Team – This group wants to find out more about possible available grant funding. Pocketknife Square (Lakeville) was discussed. W. Belcher mentioned that prospective buyers have faced environmental issues there. T. Shachtman brought up the old Railroad Station, which is owned by the Town, as having possible purposes, if upgraded. He mentioned the idea of a small business “incubator” for digital businesses; a shared facility. The members discussed the matter at length. W. Belcher will send out some of the documents he has to the members, for their information. T. Shachtman suggested that start-ups need help with the initial overhead and that people do better in a collaborative workspace than on their own; he added that fostering an environment where people want to come to the towns is important. R. Schaufelberger expressed that all ideas deserve attention; this Committee could come up with achievable goals using their expertise. B. McEver offered that the incubator idea is tough, without the technology hub; something is needed to draw people to that space. T. Shachtman suggested developing a list of possible projects by January to recommend to the Selectmen.
- Communications/Visioning Team – R. Schaufelberger talked about the SEDC mailing list for email blasts; he would like to find ways for more people to opt-in and inform the public of meetings and other announcements. W. Belcher agreed that the SEDC wants a broad base of support.

- Living Where You Work Team – No report yet; W. Belcher hopes to meet with Bob Palmer soon.
- Lime Rock Team – W. Belcher indicated that he had discussed with R. Block the possibility of bringing one of the principals of Lime Rock Park into the SEDC process; information will be sought about other major companies in Salisbury.

New State Regulations: Implications for economic development with a view to participating in ongoing P&Z process.

- J. Graaff suggests that this Committee should have an SEDC member liaison with the P&Z and she volunteered to be the liaison person. Current legislative issues such as accessory apartments and outdoor dining have economic impact. J. Graaff suggested reading up on the legislation, discussing it and perhaps forming an opinion letter of recommendation to the Board of Selectmen and P&Z. T. Shachtman agreed that kind of input might be helpful. J. Graaff will send some P&Z Documents to the SEDC members for review.

State required 10 Year Town Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) due in 2022: How SEDC will contribute to study and report.

- J. Graaff mentioned that there are some elements of the POCD that are economic concerns. She noted that P&Z has funding to hire an outside agency to do focus groups. She suggested that the SEDC use this as an opportunity to gather useful information; W. Belcher agreed that certain economic ideas could be put in place in the POCD. The SEDC will continue to discuss those ideas; W. Belcher wants to involve all of the SEDC members.

Feedback from Recent Selectmen and Board of Finance Meetings

- J. Graaff talked about ideas the Board of Selectmen have for using the first half of the American Rescue Plan funds which include: support for some non-profits, the repair of the bridge at the sewer plant, a sidewalk from the library to Salmon Kill Road, pre-development funding for the Pope property and installation of technology at Town Hall to enable hybrid meetings. T. Shachtman pointed out that none of those things enhance economic activity. There was further discussion about the Town budget, allocations and developing a list of items to address.

Public Comment – None

The meeting was adjourned by W. Belcher at 5:25pm.