

Minutes of the Suffield Economic Development Commission
Feb. 18, 2016 - Town Hall second floor Conference Room
8:30 a.m.

Members present: Roger Tracy, Gloria Smith, Kate Rietburg, Lynda Montefusco,
Absent: Howard Orr, Brian Banak

Also present: First Selectman Melissa Mack, and EDC Director Patrick McMahon

Vice President Roger Tracy called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.

Minutes: Ms. Thorner moved to approve the minutes of the January 21, 2016 meeting,
Ms. Smith seconded. The minutes were approved by unanimous vote.

Melissa Mack, First Selectman's update:

The Town Meeting approved all agenda issues.

She is searching for all possible grants; she will meet with USDA and will review possible grant applications.

Four Seasons is getting approvals and is on target for the Phase I, growing tomatoes hydroponically. It anticipated to break ground in March. Four Seasons will not compete with the local growing season of tomatoes. She thinks Ms. Mack thinks this is really good for Suffield. Ms. Mack is seeking to revise an ordinance that will support a new tax abatement program for all farmers.

Mr. McMahon stated that the Farm Transfer workshop was well attended – farmers need to know how to transfer farm property, within the family.

Ms. Mack stated that the Town has signed a contract with one contractor for all the environmental studies. We will have another TRI Board Meeting and then we will have a better idea hopefully in March to review costs and the needs of the Bridge Street School and the Town Hall. We do not want to miss the low rates; so we shall review the bonding schedule.

We are in the process of moving from Town Hall and await for the final approval from the State so we may move back into newly renovated Library.

Ff Tyler Place Redevelopment - Mr. McMahon stated that we are in the process of creating a district finance plan. Once it is drafted, he will share it with EDC. The draft would need to go to the Zoning and Planning Commission for an advisory opinion. We would need to hold one Public Hearing and then go to Town Meeting. He took architects through Ff Tyler Place hoping they would show some viable interest.

The Housing Authority project is almost complete. This was funded by a state grant. This project was most successful.

Mr. Tracy noted that young boys have created a hockey rink at the Stony Brook Park . They kept up the rink and maintained it; kept it free of snow. They had a great time, and were no trouble at all.

Conference Center #159/Mapleton – Ms. Mack noted that it had been a monastery and it also had been a cooking school. Could it be a hotel? Could it be a Community Center? It is on the market now. Would there be Town interest? It has many possibilities. Discussion followed. Ms. Mack suggested that the EDC tour this facility. Mr. McMahon asked if the EDC could take a tour before the next meeting. There is interest. He will keep the Commission updated.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:25 a.m.

Respectfully submitted, Bobbie C. Kling, Secretary

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