

Minutes of the Economic Development Commission
November 17, 2016
Suffield Town Hall - 8:30 a.m.

Members present: Howard Orr, Roger Tracy, Arnie Magid, Kate Rietberg, Brian Banak, Susan Thorner
Absent: Gloria Smith
Also present: EDC Director Patrick McMahon, First Selectman Melissa Mack

Chairman Howard Orr called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.

Minutes of the October 20, 2016 meeting: Mr. Tracy moved to approve the minutes of the October 20 meeting; the motion was seconded, and the minutes were approved.

Public Input – Mr. McMahon introduced Mr. Sal Trinchillo, CFO of Champion Containers, who is here to request a tax abatement for 5 Firestone Drive. Mr. McMahon stated that Mr. Trinchillo is here to inform the Commission of Champion's plans for the future here in Suffield. Chairman Orr welcomed him to the meeting.

Mr. Trinchillo: Champion Container Corporation is a distributor of containers, from little to large. They are the biggest distributor in the northeast. They plan to double their sales in the next 4-5 years. Now they have 14-15 employees; the number of employees will double as the sales double. This is a family-owned business that sells containers and packaging. They do not manufacture and will not use the rail line. They will have approximately four trucks a day; they go and return to the building by 3:30 p.m. Their trucks will turn left onto Austin, go down Route 75 to Route 20, and on to Route 91. Mr. Trinchillo noted that the building needs substantial work. They will fix the floor, upgrade the office area and also install a new sprinkler system. Everything they do here is for long term. Mr. Trinchillo stated that they hoped to install solar panels in the future like they have on their other existing facilities.

Mr. Orr thanked Mr. Trinchillo for attending the meeting.

The Commission discussed the tax rebate program; it was noted that the Board of Selectmen can be flexible in the timing based on the amount of investment in town. Mr. McMahon stated that the Town provided a 3-year 50% tax abatement to Designs for Health and recommended the same for Champion. Based on the current assessment Mr. McMahon stated that the abatement would represent approximately \$22,355 per year for a total abatement of about \$67,000. Champion invested \$1.8 million in the acquisition of 5 Firestone which was vacant for over a year and will be investing \$1.05 million in the facility.

Kate Rietberg moved a motion to support this new business with a tax abatement of 3 years at 50% on the real estate portion of their taxes. The Town would receive 100% of the tax starting in the 4th year. Mr. Magid seconded. The motion was approved by unanimous vote. This recommendation now goes to the Board of Selectmen for their consideration.

Downtown Tax Increment Financing District –

Mr. McMahon distributed a draft downtown TIF district master plan and discussed the procedure for adoption.

Ffyer Place – We have made application for a state brownfields grant of \$700,000 to DECD; \$525,000 for soil remediation and the remainder for demolition of the buildings. We do not have high expectations for this grant, but we should keep Suffield’s need before DECD.

We are working on a conceptual plan for a multi-use trail on the abandoned railroad bed adjacent to Ffyer Place. It looks promising but we need to look at its feasibility and possible grant funding.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:40 a.m.

Respectfully submitted, Bobbie C. Kling, Secretary

EDC.Min.Nov.17.201