

Florence Twp Economic Development Committee Minutes 3/5/24

Florence, New Jersey

The Florence Township Economic Development Committee held a regular meeting on the above date in the header at the Municipal Complex, 711 Broad Street, Florence, New Jersey. Members of the public were invited to attend the meeting in person. The minutes reflect the meeting held on Tuesday, February 6, 2024.

The meeting was called to order by Mayor, Kristan Marter at 7:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL OF MEMBERS

Upon roll call the following were found to be present:

Present: Lisa Filippine, Katie Wittkamp, Tina Lloyd, Rich Popso, Councilman Nick Haas, Joan Geary

Also Present: Mayor Kristan Marter, Martin Eckert Jr.

Absent: Marvin Wainwright, Parth Patel, Melissa Bond

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Katie Wittkamp was motioned to serve as Chairperson for the committee by Filippine and Second by Lloyd. All members in favor of Katie Wittkamp to serve as 2024 Chairperson.

Lisa Filippine was motioned to serve as Vice Chairperson for the committee by Wittkamp and Second by Lloyd. All members in favor of Lisa Filippine to serve as 2024 Vice Chairperson.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- Regular Meeting of December 5, 2023

Motion of Geary, seconded by Filippine to approve the minutes as submitted.

COORDINATORS REPORT

- Mayor Marter and Marty Eckert introduced information associated with an upcoming 30 Mayors / 30 Developers Network Event scheduled for June 5, 2024 at Rowan College. The event is a continuation of previously held events of the same prior to the Covid-19 pandemic. The event allows for municipalities and developers to understand opportunities that may exist for development purposes. It is recommended for a municipality to place a booth showcasing available land, upcoming projects and what makes a town an attractive option for development.

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The committee agreed that identifying locations to build out an information packet would be excellent in sharing vacant businesses and properties that have been previously identified. Marty shared that Mark Remsa's recommendation to place such properties on the township website would not be an appropriate direction without consent from the owners of the properties. All agreed that making attempts to reach property owners to inquire as to future plans for properties and to receive approval to add locations to a packet for the June event would be a great start. Larger parcels along Route 130 that could be available for pad site development would also require consent from those property owners. Lastly, the Roebing Mill property would be a property to discuss further to possibly include at this event.

COMMITTEES

- **Vacant Business Properties:** The committee revisited the various commercial properties in town that are currently unoccupied. Councilman Haas will forward a excel spreadsheet that was prepared by Mark Remsa which identifies the properties. It did not appear that Mark Remsa identified property owners in the report, so the committee will review and put together a plan to identify the owner of record for each property then discuss the best means to contact and what questions will be appropriate to ask as we attempt to determine the future vision of the properties.

CORRESPONDENCE, EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

- **Roebing Mill Fair/Roebing Carnival/Patriotic Celebration:** Marty shared with the committee various upcoming events within the community. The fair at the Roebing Museum is not a township sponsored activity, but an agreement between the Roebing Museum and the Burlington Mercer Chamber of Commerce of whom had managed a similar event in Bordentown City for many years. The township will certainly provide support in placing trash and recycling containers and will coordinate a point of contact between police and fire departments so that the event coordinator may discuss the plans for the event including parking and traffic control.

The Roebing Carnival returned in 2023 after a hiatus due to Covid and was a great success. This year's event will take place from Wednesday, May 29th through Saturday, June 1st. Several local organizations are interested in participating and groups are working together to bring back the 50/50.

The Annual Patriotic Celebration will be held of Saturday, July 6th and the parade will travel directionally from the Oak Street Circle to E 5th Street to Olive Street to Delaware Avenue, then turning right onto Broad Street until its conclusion at the municipal complex. Evening activities will commence at 5pm where food vendors and activities will take place and continue until the fireworks display begins around 9:15pm.

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NEW BUSINESS

- The committee agreed that in creating an identity for the committee moving forward is important. The group will share local updates, but will focus on specific goals such as researching the unoccupied properties and begin to prepare opportunities to assist property owners to realizing potential of their land or business.

OLD BUSINESS

- The former Roebing Steel Mill property was discussed by the committee. The group touched on the previous rfp process which was an attempt to attract developers to consider the ground for future development. Tina Lloyd shared that whether it be the mill property or Main Street in Roebing or Front Street/Broad Street in Florence that if we looked at the positive result recently in Burlington City where commerce and residential are thriving near the riverfront, it may be something to strive for as we look at opportunities. In Hamilton Township similar development has been successful.

MEETING OPEN FOR PUBLIC COMMENT:

No members of public present.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Wittkamp, second by Popso – 8:25pm