

Economic Development Committee Meeting
Town of Bridgeville
Minutes
January 20, 2016, 9:00 a.m.
Heritage Shores Club – Conference Room

Attending: Diane Laird (DEDO), Rick Ferrell (Presenter-Retail Market Answers, LLC), Pat Correll (President, Town Commission); Committee Members: Lawrence Tassone, Ron Maas, Ralph Root, Brenda Rambo, Jeff Tull, and Ruth Skala

Absent: Charlie Smith, Jack Dalton

Minutes: minutes from December 16, 2015 meeting approved

Introductions: Diane Laird – DEDO Downtown Delaware and Rick Ferrell, Presenter by way of USDA Grant of Rural Community Development Initiative

Presentation: Rick Ferrell said that it was important to consider the community as a whole. Looking at the Muldrow study he stressed the importance of connectivity between downtown, the highway and Heritage Shores. We need to focus on a blend that works. To date we have been working with a broad brush creating an organization with a mandate including a vision and a mission. Now we need to concentrate on detail with a goal of minimal vacancy and development.

Some of the specific steps are:

Data Collection with extended radii to offset our lack of density that reflects access to customer base. We should look for regional and local businesses as national businesses put an emphasis on households, population, and income. He gave an example of Leidl, a German food company that is interested in Delaware. The company represents a smaller, nimbler food market. Pat Correll mentioned Denton, Maryland and its progress with economic development. Rick indicated that their success is due to ample large grants and small business loans that the town has made available to businesses. He advised that we have a conversation with Denton. Bridgeville needs to be able to **offer capital** to interested parties: whether it is through SBO or by way of USDA pass through loan that is available to the town at a low interest rate. There are printed federal requirements and unprinted methodology. Pursuit of this loan is feasible if you have interested investors.

A **Strategic Plan** needs to be created to compliment the current Mission Statement. It would be about ten pages long and provide the essence of what we are acting on in the next year or two. It would include the *connectivity* of downtown, the highway corridor and Heritage Shores. It would state *recruitment targets* as well as acknowledging what we have and look at *retention* and *expansion*. *Relationships* with and between realtors, property owners, bankers and the town should be embraced. Property owners' *expectations* (their dreams and aspirations for their property – what they want to see) should be discussed and who puts in the dollars. We should look for "Locovesters" parties interested in the locality. Rick briefly discussed the formation of a distillery in Smyrna in which he is a partner. We need realistic internal buy-ins

with emphasis on sites such as that being vacated by Dollar General that has potential as a food and craft beer location. We need to have outreach to the banking community such as Small Business Lending and the First State Loan Fund.

In order to draft the Strategic Plan, Rick has requested that every EDC member, commissioner and town staff provide him with ideas and things they want to see in the plan at his e-mail address rickferrell@hotmail.com no later than Monday, January 25. We are looking to develop an action plan with a framework and bullet points that reflect the big picture.

On Wednesday, February 10 at 9:00 a.m. he will meet with EDC to present a Strategic Plan draft at Heritage Shores Card rooms C and D.

Realtor Invites: It was agreed by the committee that we will proceed with the plan to have a roundtable with the realtors handling Bridgeville properties. Details will be decided at the monthly EDC meeting on February 17 at 9:00 a.m. Heritage Shores Conference Room.

Various:

- Brenda Rambo provided the committee an open current listing of commercial properties (Ruth has it if you are interested in reviewing it please let her know).
- Delmarva Power provided a brief statement that the downtown undergrounding of electricity would have an approximate cost of two million dollars. The committee voted to table the idea at the present time.
- It was noted that DEDO has paid for Bridgeville's network membership in the National Main Street Center that offers many informational opportunities to Bridgeville. A separate e-mail will be sent outlining the program.
- Twenty five branding banners and brackets have been delivered. Installation will take place as per Commissioner Correll.
- In mid-January CGI offered Bridgeville a streetscape banner program. Since we now have banners, the EDC voted to keep the offer on file for future reference.
- Ruth has accepted an invitation to join the Board of Directors of the Greater Seaford Chamber of Commerce representing the EDC.
- Georgetown's Design Guidelines have been sent to each EDC member for review and comment.

PLEASE NOTE:

- Send your ideas to rickferrell@hotmail.com
- Wednesday, February 10: Strategic Plan Meeting with Rick Ferrell
Heritage Shores 9:00 a.m., Card Rooms C & D
- Wednesday, February 17: EDC monthly meeting to plan realtor roundtable
Heritage Shores 9:00 a.m., Conference Room

Starting in March all EDC meetings will be held at Town Hall

Respectfully submitted, Ruth Skala, Chairperson, Economic Development Committee