

## Economic Development Committee Minutes

September 9, 2015

**Committee Members in Attendance:** Chairman Doug Callantine, Jim Marshall, Bruce Goodman, Dave Mulvey, Charles Kahn Jr., Randee Elton, Bill Meyerowitz, Karen Wiley Sandler, Judith Kratka, Christopher Lionetti, Mike McPaul, Barbara Nye, Michael Markman, and Tara Wehmeyer.

**In Attendance:** Commissioner John Spiegelman, Larry Matteo

**Excused:** Jack Loew, Richard Gaglianese, Wendy Klinghoffer, Peter Brandow

**Not In Attendance:**

**Note:** The EDC is strictly an advisory committee and takes no action on township matters required under state legislation. EDC meetings are essentially a workshop environment for ED policies, programs, or projects which develop over a considerable length of time. When finalized, programs and projects are presented for public discussion to the Commissioners under the Public Affairs agenda. As such, minutes are summary in nature and not verbatim.

### **Agenda Item EDC - 1: Welcome**

Chairman Doug Callantine opened the meeting by welcoming the committee and Commissioners in attendance. Doug mentioned that EDC member Peter Brandow has relocated to Florida, so his seat on the committee will become available.

### **Agenda Item EDC - 2: Abington Shopping Center**

Michael Markman, on behalf of BET Investments, presented updates on the Abington Shopping Center (ASC). ASC, which was blighted for the last 10 years, has now turned viable thanks to all of the positive changes that have been made to the shopping center. The hope is that Abington Shopping Center will turn into a focal point as it is the first main trade area outside and closest to Philadelphia. The ASC has excellent exposure to Old York Road, with a traffic count over 30,000. Sports Authority will open on October 9<sup>th</sup> and has its Grand Opening is scheduled for October 17<sup>th</sup>. Other future businesses within the shopping center will be the Corner Bakery, which will open before the end of the year, and Smash Burger plans to open in early 2016.

### **Agenda Item EDC - 3: Old York Road / Susquehanna Road**

The Multimodal grant application was submitted on July 31, 2015. The grant will support the vision of the Old York Road / Susquehanna Road project which will address the alignment of the intersection, enhance traffic flow, and have better access in turning onto Old York Road. In order to successfully do so, the project involves acquiring the following properties: 1100, 1102, 1104, 1106 Old York Road and 1907 Susquehanna Road. After acquisition, the Township will pursue demolishing the structures of these properties so as to facilitate road widening on Susquehanna Road, allowing alignment of the intersection, creation of a left-turn arrow on Susquehanna Road to northbound Old York Road, improving turning movements at the corner, and providing better access to the surrounding businesses. The project will support re-development of the major intersection in the township, allow for pedestrians to feel safe crossing the street or waiting for the bus as they walk, ride a bike, or even push a stroller.

The grant was submitted on July 31, 2015 and successful grant recipients will be notified on November 10, 2015.

### **Agenda Item EDC - 4: EDC Community Grant Program**

The EDC voted to accept grant applications from the Roslyn Valley Business Association for holiday lights along Easton Road, Keswick Village Business Association for a new 'Welcome to Keswick Village' sign, and to local businesses that wish to apply for the Town Revitalization grant. Karen Wiley Sandler made a motion to confirm the EDC contributing matching funds for the EDC Community Grant Program; Barbara Nye seconded Karen's motion and the EDC agreed unanimously.

### **Agenda Item EDC - 5: Business Resource Guide**

The EDC has a goal to update the current business resource guide and to create a quick reference guide for local businesses and those interested in opening a business in Abington Township.

### **Agenda Item EDC - 6: Old Business**

#### **a. Penn State Housing**

An overview of the Penn State Housing project was discussed since the 'economic impact study' was presented to the EDC on the evening of June 2<sup>nd</sup>. The Board of Commissioners approved the proposed ordinance at a special meeting held on June 24<sup>th</sup>.

Larry Matteo informed the group that the land development process will be the next step for the project. There will be neighborhood meetings and meetings with Rydal Park and other neighboring commercial businesses regarding the land development. Final approval of the entire project will then go to the Board of Commissioners.

**b. Montgomery County Planning Commission Walkability Audit**

Abington Township was a grant recipient chosen by Montgomery County Planning Commission (MCPC) as a focus area for a transit oriented development audit for MCPC's new Walk Montco project. The audit took place on June 30<sup>th</sup>. The group initially met at Curds and Whey for refreshments and hors d'oeuvres. The audit itself involved splitting into two groups. One group walked around the Noble station area, along The Fairway and north on Old York Rd. The second group also walked the Noble station area and south on Old York Road into Jenkintown. The two groups gathered back at Curds and Whey to discuss their walks and to address some of the areas that might have impediments to walking and a need for improvement.

An interactive map welcoming comments and feedback is available online at:

[wikimapping.net/wikimap/walkmontco.html](http://wikimapping.net/wikimap/walkmontco.html)

MCPC will submit a report in September 2015.

- c. Roslyn Valley Business Association (RVBA)** - Leadership roles were voted on and monthly meetings continue with great positive motivation. RVBA would like to have holiday lights in the trees along Easton Rd in the area of the Roslyn Valley Shopping Center. This will be a phased approach as more funds are raised to purchase additional lights in future years. RVBA will set up a vendor table at the Roslyn Valley Car Show & Fall Festival to help gain members and spread the word of the association.
- d.** A list of potential presenters for upcoming EDC meetings was created. The idea was designed to find out what the future plans are for the presenter/business, what their thoughts and ideas are moving forward, how we, as the EDC, can cooperate the vision into our future plans. The list, subject to additions and not limited to, is:
1. Willow Grove Park Mall - PREIT
  2. Rydal Park - Nov. EDC meeting
  3. Abington School District

4. Baederwood Shopping Center
5. Developer's Diversified
6. Standard Press Steel (SPS)
7. YMCA
8. Penn State
9. Jim Scully
10. Abington Hospital
11. Franklin Residential - Steven Balin
12. Abington Art Center
13. ~~Abington Shopping Center - Sept. EDC meeting~~

**Next EDC Meeting: Wednesday, October 6, 2015 at 7:30AM**

**Respectfully Submitted:**

**Tara Wehmeyer, Assistant Township Manager/Economic Development Director**