

TOWN OF NEWTON
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
September 11, 2012
MINUTES

Chairwoman Logan called the meeting to order at 6:30pm. Mr. Russo called the roll: Dr. Clark, Mr. Zwahl, Ms. Joice, Mr. Prendergast, Mr. Russo, Councilwoman Becker, and Chairwoman Logan were present. Mr. Hayek was absent.

Chairwoman Logan stated that the Open Public Meetings Act had been complied with.

Approval of the May 8, 2012 minutes is carried to the next meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Taste of Newton - Mr. Russo gave a brief overview of the Taste of Newton that was hosted by the Greater Newton Chamber of Commerce and held on Monday, September 10, 2012.
2. New Business Development/Recruitment - Mr. Russo advised the EDC that a new Bakery will be opening on Spring Street. The *Seven Acre Baker* will have a grand opening on Friday and Saturday, September 21 & 22 at 183 Spring Street. Mr. Russo also advised that there is an interested party in the Bula Property. He will keep the Commission posted on the development.
3. Mr. Russo updated the EDC on the Town's plans to update the Vision Plan. As part of the process he asked the EDC the following questions:

a. What are the strengths of the Town of Newton? What are we doing right?

Response: Theater; Cleanliness; SCCC; Involved/Engaged-business & government officials; Functional infrastructure; Technology; Text-A-Tip Police; Web Texts; Facebook & Twitter; Thorlabs; Schools; Beautiful Town, quaint/elegant; Proximity to everything; Walking Town; New ordinances; Wayfinding; Pursuing creative financing for projects; Merriam Avenue; Public Works – Water & Sewer; Public utilities; Spring Street – weekends-energy & safety; Responsive solutions, Security cameras on Spring Street.

b. What are the weaknesses or shortfalls of the Town of Newton? What are we missing, or not doing right?

Response: Cleaning up Spring Street Clientele; Transient population; Renters; Jail; County Seat/services; Vacancies on Spring Street; Lack of additional liquor licenses; Lack of late night hours for stores; Drugs; Litter on Rt. 94; Speeding on Foster St.; Absentee landlords; Not attracting college kids to stores and restaurants.

c. What future opportunities do you see for Newton?

Response: There is a lack of notification of events, need promotion in NJ Herald on Fridays, Township Journal on Thursdays; Digital Sign at Town Hall and the Firehouse; PILOT for Historic District; Late night store hours; Owner-occupied condos above the commercial properties; more on-premise liquor licenses (need legislative assistance); Landlord responsibility – nuisance ordinance; Grants for improvements; BID/SID.

d. What future threats or problems do you see for the Town?

Response: Legislation; Lack of landlord support; Economy; Lack of funds for Town; Lack of qualified borrowers; Perception.

e. Is there any assistance or programs you would like to see the Town undertake?

Response: Grants for small businesses.

f. If you had three wishes granted for the Town, what would they be?

Response: Get rid of certain clientele; Better landlords – Spring Street; Later hours for stores; More residential involvement in the Town; More family-friendly businesses/activities; More diverse business offerings; Lose County Seat (no jail or services); More Hub businesses – things you travel for, i.e. theatre; Overhead lines moved underground; More for teens to do; More liquor licenses; Public transportation.

g. Is there any other input that you would like to provide?

No response.

OLD BUSINESS

1. TAP Advertising – October 2012 – December 2012 for \$300 - Approved.
2. Spring Street Merchants Group-\$300 – Approved.

Open to the Public - No one from the public spoke.

Cancel the November meeting – Approved unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn was made by Ms. Joice, seconded by Mr. Zwahl. All were in favor.
Motion carried.

Meeting Adjourned at 7:45pm.

Next meeting is January 8, 2013.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Thomas S. Russo, Jr.".

Thomas S. Russo, Jr.
Town Manager