



Milton Economic Development Committee  
Meeting Minutes – 4-9-2015  
WBOC Conference Room - 5:30 PM  
1 The Square, Milton

1. The meeting came to order at 5:32 PM. Bob Howard chaired the meeting.

2. The following people were in attendance:

Committee Members:

- Bob Blayney
- Michela Coffaro
- Mike Clark
- Steve Crawford
- Jim Crellin
- Alex Donnan
- Bob Howard
- Norma Kraus
- Ted Kanakos – Council Liaison

3. The agenda was agreed to as published.

4. The minutes of the 3/12/15 meeting were approved with a recommended change to correct the second sentence in Section 7.2 to read: Mark Carter, who had a scheduling conflict, and Richard Reed did not attend.

5. Announcements -

- Bob Howard announced that Norma Kraus, who is in attendance, was appointed to the EDC and is now a member to replace Alisha Broughton. Ted Kanakos and Esthelda Shelby-Parker have been appointed as Council liaisons to the EDC.
- Jim Crellin announced that the Farmer's Market is opening on April 17th.
- Bob Howard stated that the Garden Club is having their clock fundraising event on Sunday April 12<sup>th</sup>.

6. Old Business:

6.1 EDC Advisor for New Small Business – Steve Crawford reported that John Collier has reviewed the proposal with Kristy Rogers and that he has requested a meeting to

clarify some of the implementation details. Steve will work with Bob Howard to get a meeting scheduled. Michela Coffaro suggested that instead of 'advisor' a more correct word should be 'ambassador'. She also suggested that there be some training for EDC members as part of implementation to clearly define what EDC members in this role can offer. These suggestions will be considered as we move forward with this effort.

Bob Blayney asked if John Collier has implemented a process to provide for multiple scheduled committee meetings i.e. Planning and Zoning that would allow applicants an opportunity to submit requests and obtain approvals in a timelier manner. Bob Howard and Steve Crawford both responded that this is a work in progress.

Ted Kanakos offered that there will be some businesses that will not desire any involvement in the town or from the EDC. He mentioned the businesses in the Food Lion shopping center and particularly the new donut shop and liquor store that do not seem to want to be involved. He and Michela also mentioned a new pharmacy by the Golden Eagle, which nobody seemed to know about.

6.2 Signage Project Status – Alex Donnan reported that he is still working to finalize with Preswick Properties the placement of the large Welcome to Milton sign to be placed on Route 1 north of the Route 5 exit. He is also still working to get a final design on the Milton Riverwalk sign for the archway between Irish Eyes and the Mercantile buildings. He showed the attendees a picture of the proposed design that is being costed out. It includes two decorative poles so that the sign will not require attachment to either building. This will drive the cost up but there appears to be sufficient grant fund to cover the additional cost.

6.3 Status of Future Town Advertisements – Steve Crawford provided information about how the process of the EDC advertising is implemented; typically 2 weeks prior to the event and it is created by a volunteer (Linda Newton). As this is a voluntary effort, he stated that there he has a desire to keep the same format of the ½ page color ads but with different pictures and verbiage.

Steve offered to present at the next EDC meeting a proposed list of advertising opportunities to include dates for review by the Committee. After discussion about advertising for the proposed May 2<sup>nd</sup> town-wide yard sale, it was decided that we would not advertise this event. However, Steve will reach out to Bill Jones and get information about the upcoming fishing contest to be held in May. This may present an opportunity for an EDC sponsored advertisement in the Cap Gazette.

Michela Coffaro asked about any coordination of advertising with the Chamber of Commerce. Steve responded that there has not been any formal coordination but that when the EDC sponsored advertising is planned and if it is a Chamber sponsored event, he does talk to the Lisa Sumstine about the date of publication.

6.4 Sidewalks, Trees and Grates – Bob Blayney, Jim Crellin and Steve Crawford met to assess how to move forward with the issue of the restrictive nature of the sidewalks on Union and Federal Streets in the downtown area. Bob Blayney reported that Steve Crawford wrote a letter for EDC review for the purpose of sending it to the Town Streets

and Sidewalks Committee Chairman. Steve reported that Greg Wingo is the acting chairman of the committee. The letter was reviewed and approved by the EDC to be sent by the EDC to Mr. Wingo with copies to the Mayor and Council. The letter stated the concerns by the businesses and building owners of the current condition of the sidewalks re: lack of adequate space due to the existing fencing and trees in the sidewalk area.

Michela Coffaro read an email from Councilman Ed Kost that stated he is pursuing a Milton Memorial Park sign to be placed on the Milton Museum's vacant lot across from Chandler Street. He further stated that he is proposing repurposing the existing fencing that is now placed in the sidewalk areas on Union and Federal Streets for flower beds on the Museum's vacant lot. He asked for help in identifying a contact in the Historical Society so he can further discuss. Bob Howard will contact him.

Norma Kraus suggested that this effort as stated is putting the cart before the horse as there has been no decision to move the fencing.

Jim Crellin expressed concern that the use of the property by the Farmer's Market could be adversely impacted by the installation of any flowerbeds and fencing.

6.5 Status from Sustainability Subcommittee – Michela Coffaro stated that on April 11<sup>th</sup> the Milton Theater will be presenting two documentary films on sustainability and that Bob Howard will also be showing the sustainability pop-up displays in the lobby. Bob asked if the committee was still willing to offer to sponsor the Pop-Up program and the committee agreed that it was a good idea.

Jim Crellin offered the Farmer's Market on April 17<sup>th</sup> as an event to further display and disseminate information about sustainability. Norma Kraus asked if there were going to be people available to explain sustainability at each of the posters. This is something that could be considered for further events.

Michela provided a handout that defined sustainability and she explained that it is an effort to conserve our resources. She stated that the sustainability is directly related to economic development. She offered an example from the Main Street Conference about rehabilitating and preserving older buildings and making them more efficient instead of just tearing them down.

As Chairwoman of the Sustainability Subcommittee, Michela further reported she has reached out to Shelly Grabel, DelTech and that Bob Howard has enlisted Marie Mayor to work on a plan for sustainability opportunities as it relates to the Town and to report back to the EDC on those opportunities.

6.6 Report on National Main Street Conference held in Atlanta – Michela Coffaro handed out a write-up on her attendance to the conference. It stressed; Community Involvement, Creating Partnerships and Getting Volunteers. She reported that based on her experience at the meeting, she thinks that the business owners who are not part of the downtown area, i.e. on Route 16, are annoyed when there is advertising focusing on the downtown area. She believes that we alienate each other in this town because we lack communication between businesses and residents and we need to be more inclusive.

Michela suggested that we need an orientation for new people on the EDC so that previous ideas and suggestions can be shared. She stated that we need to understand each of our capabilities and be more open with communication among ourselves.

She stated that we need to manage change and asked what does this committee really want to do to change this town. She stated that people in the town do not know what the EDC is doing. She said that the EDC ought to be talking to businesses as ‘ambassadors’ for the town. She says we need a change in how we treat people in the town. She suggested that the EDC ought to be sending out ‘thank you’ notes to people who do good things for the town. Bob Howard had a concern about the EDC speaking for the town, as the EDC is a committee appointed by the Mayor and not charged with speaking for the town. As he noted that the EDC is not a main street organization and Milton is not a Main Street town.

Michela believes that we need a shift in how we manage our actions on a daily basis and suggested that there may be a need to talk to the Mayor and Council which Bob said he would do.

Jim Crellin thinks that the town ought to be more active in supporting new and existing businesses. He thinks that there ought to be some sort of follow-up to show support of businesses and recognizing that their presence in town is appreciated.

There was a discussion about the benefit of a merchant appreciation event. Ted Kanakos and Norma Kraus also offered her support for some sort of event to show appreciation of merchants. Norma told of a ‘Community Conference’ event in her past experience that brought merchants, politicians and others together for sharing of ideas and experiences.

Bob Howard suggested that we need to consider these ideas as possible ways to engage the community and merchants. He suggested that a subcommittee be formed. He, Norma and Jim will meet to consider opportunities for this.

6.7 Cost Estimate from Charlene Jones Re: July 4<sup>th</sup> Event – Bob Howard has talked to Charlene and that his time there is no available cost data. However, Charlene said to Bob that when there is a kick-off meeting he will be invited. This inquiry is a result of a suggestion by the Fire Department and the local businessmen that the Town ought to provide some funding for these town events since these events directly benefit the town and all the businesses.

6.8 Status of Emergency Notification Discussion – Bob Howard reported that he had a conversation with Mayor Jones about citizen emergency notification alternatives. The result of the conversation was Bob bringing this issue up at the Town Forum. He stated that the Town will attempt to notify the community prior to any possible service-affecting event but that options for notification when an event happens are limited. During a recent event, town hall phone lines were tied up with incoming complaints so no outgoing calls could have been made even if there was a process in place to make notification calls.

Bob explained how an email notification system could work but said that there was no interest at this point by the town to implement such a system. He said, however, he is going to bring it up again to the town.

## 7. New Business Discussion

7.1 Discussion on format of Monthly EDC Report to Council – Bob Howard stated that there was a suggestion to remove the names of the members associated with the items on the report. Michela Coffaro corrected Bob and suggested that all names should be included or all names removed. Unaware of this issue, Bob asked Steve to send the report out for member review prior to submittal to the Town. Steve will send the report out for member review prior to submittal.

7.2 Discussion on potential recommendation to Council re: Overbrook Town Centre Development – Bob Howard led the discussion about the potential impacts to Milton if and/or when the Overbrook Town Centre is built. Bob offered information about how the sewer plant capacity is being expanded already. Councilman Kanakos provided information about impacts to traffic (required traffic studies), impacts to the sewer plant (capacity issues) and how the Town and Council are addressing the issue. After a lengthy discussion, it was decided not to make any recommendation at this time, primarily due to lack of information about what the impacts will be to Milton.

7.3 Bob Howard asked Councilman Kanakos for assistance in getting information about two letters sent to Council. One was about a clarification on the ‘cash’ money from a previous bake sale and the other was on a recommendation for the Council to consider forming an ad-hoc committee now to start to work on a grant application in the event of another Downtown District Grant opportunity.

The next meeting is scheduled for **Thursday, May 14th at 5:30** in the WBOC Conference Room.

Adjournment – The meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:13 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Steve Crawford

Attachment: Action Items from 4-9-15 Meeting

- **Steve Crawford – EDC Advisory Proposal**
- **Alex Donnan – Current activities and status of Signage Project**
- **Steve Crawford – Status of Future Town Advertisements**
- **Michela Coffaro – Status Sustainability Subcommittee**
- **Bob Howard, Norma Kraus, Jim Crellin – Merchant Appreciation Event**
- **Councilman Kanakos – Status of Letter sent to Council**