



**Ridgefield
Economic &
Community
Development
Commission**

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Arnold Light
Chairman

Rudy Marconi,
First Selectman
Ridgefielddevelopment.com

John Devine, Vice Chair, Secretary
Amanda Duff
Paul Levine
Geoffrey Morris
M. Augustus Ryer
Karen Sulzinsky

**Approved RECDC Meeting Minutes
November 5, 2018 at 6:30pm
Small Town Hall Conference Room**

In Attendance: Arnold Light, Paul Levine, M Augustus Ryer, John Devine, Karen Sulzinsky, Geoff Morris, Amanda Duff

Guests: None

Meeting was called to order at 6:31 pm

ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. Next meeting December 3rd, 2018 – this will be the final meeting in the 2018 calendar year
2. Approval of October minutes
Motion: Geoff M. Second: Gus R. One alteration: when the RECDC went to executive session, the minutes stated that a vote was held, but gave no further details. The minutes were amended to reflect that the vote was taken to elect Amanda Duff to the Commission. Unanimous approval to approve minutes as amended.

GENERAL DISCUSSION.

1. Website Update – Amanda D. and John D.
 - a. Moving forward without Michelle but using Art S. when needed. Amanda has picked up a lot of the work and is keeping the events calendar and marketing materials current. For the previous events, the RECDC boosted off the FB page. Amanda D. is now tying the boost to the website. John D. believes it is time to start looking at major changes (e.g navigation, aesthetics, etc.) to the website, namely the real estate and the business pages.

Ridgefield Economic Development Commission: November 2018 Minutes

2. Review for RIFF – Geoff M.
 - a. The event went very well. About 2,500 individual people attended for about 4,000 seats filled. Many of those were out-of-town visitors. John D. thinks the event has a lot of potential for future years. He reported seeing many people who had never visited Ridgefield.
 - b. Arnold L. noted that many of those visitors might have stayed if Ridgefield had more lodging. John D. seconded that notion, based on conversations with guests.
 - c. Geoff M. notes that scheduling was tight, but overall it was very successful. The Ethan Allen lounge on Catoonah Street was very popular.
3. Hospitality in Ridgefield – John D. and Arnold L.
 - a. Arnold L. has been speaking with a boutique hotel developer and is putting him in touch with various parties in town to gauge interest.
4. Art Space Survey – John D. and Arnold L.
 - a. John and Arnold are in touch with Arts Council, who has released a survey to measure member interest in an art studio product. Once the Council has the results, they plan to join the RECDC at a meeting to share their findings. The survey was sent to all the arts organizations in town.
5. Commercial Vacancy Follow-up – Gus R.
 - a. Gus R. shared listing service info, and concludes that CERC seems like the best option for now. It was determined that he should start negotiations with CERC and bring the results to the RECDC for discussion/approval.
 - b. John D. is speaking with the Ridgefield Association of REALTORS to determine if they are interested in sponsoring part of the real estate page.
 - c. Gus R. described the commercial vacancy study internship and draft description. There was a discussion about internships and what should be included/excluded from the project, as well as if there are ways to make it more efficient. Determined that he should proceed to meet with the Assessor and start promoting the program. Karen S. volunteered to be liaison with RHS.
6. FB Placement – John D.
 - a. John D. gave a report for the RECDC social media promotion. So far he has reached almost 90,000 people, with almost 40,000 engagements. He provided a granular report that showed how each post performed. The Commission discussed the ad details and why some were more successful than others.
 - b. Karen S. asked if there is a way to track the results in dollars (i.e. a possible metric reflecting relationship between social media and economic stimulus). John D. is bringing traffic to the website, which should help gain more granular data. There was a discussion about tracking online results. Amanda D. noted the RECDC can track users and visitors on a much more detailed level than we are currently doing. Specific online infrastructure needs to be added to the website and would require cooperation from various partnerships (e.g. RIFF would need to provide RECDC access to their website in order to see traffic information). Karen S. suggests we also develop an algorithm to estimate how our social media impressions translate to visitors and possibly an economic measurement.
 - c. John D. asked for any video of last year's Holiday Stroll – they are starting promotion for the 2019 event and need media.

New Business:

7. Discussion for Social Media and Website Guidelines:

A religious organization in town asked the RECDC for help promoting a religious event that was competing with a major heavily promoted event.

 - a. See draft of the Social Media and Website Guidelines at the end of these minutes.
 - b. There was a discussion about what events can qualify for RECDC promotion and what would not qualify. It was determined that we should discuss the matter with the First Selectman's office.

Ridgefield Economic Development Commission: November 2018 Minutes

Town of Ridgefield has a Social Media policy. Arnold L. and John D. will procure a copy, from which the RECDC can develop a policy, to be discussed at our next meeting.

8. P&Z Application by Joe Ancona for Redevelopment of Branchville
 - a. Joe A. has already been to P&Z for a retail/housing redevelopment. He may be seeking an 8-30G development. John D. notes that we should speak with him about the Branchville master plan.
9. BOF/BOE Review Request
 - a. John D. is requesting to review the BOE budget as a private citizen. He will report back to the RECDC.
10. Application for Thrift Store Funds
 - a. The Ridgefield Thrift Store donates money every year to non-profits in town, and the RECDC should apply to be included. Arnold L. will investigate.
11. Project for Nick Ktorides (BID)
 - a. Nick K. is willing discuss a project with the RECDC. One of the ideas that came out of the downtown study was a BID. A Ridgefield BID has been discussed, but no one has been willing to move forward. John D. thinks Nick K. is a prime candidate to develop an organization similar to a BID that would make downtown work more efficiently. John D. will discuss the details with him and report to the RECDC.
12. ECDC/BOS Semi-Annual Update
 - a. John D. requests the RECDC ask the BOS for a place on their December agenda, so we can provide an update, metrics, and data for our various projects.
13. Paul L. suggests that all Commissioners bring to the December meeting our 3-4 biggest assets they can bring to the town.

A motion was made by Karen S. to adjourn at 7:59 p.m. and seconded by Geoff M. Unanimous approval.

Ridgefield ECDC

Draft Policy - RECDC Social Media Pages and/or Website

Revised 12/3/18

Website: www.ridgefielddevelopment.com

Facebook: *Ridgefield Economic & Community Development Commission*

Items that can be posted

Grand opening announcements/businesses moving to town

- Educational events/seminars (especially those with a business focus) from local organizations and businesses
- Major community events.
- Non-profit arts and cultural events
- Accolades and awards with a business/art/culture focus given to local businesses/individuals
- Articles written about Ridgefield in newspapers, magazines, online publications, etc.
- Posts meant to engage the community with the RECDC, including polls (i.e rank the top reasons to own a business in Ridgefield; what kind of business would you like to fill X storefront; etc.)
- Posts that promote the accomplishments of the RECDC
- Posts that encourage civic engagement
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Items that will not be posted

- Advertisements and sale announcements
- Going-out-of-business announcements
- Posts meant to promote a single individual/business, without a clear community focus (i.e open houses)
- Posts of any political nature

All posting decisions are made at the discretion of the ECDC.

NOTE: ALL POSTS MUST BE SUBMITTED TO THE RECDC 60 DAYS IN ADVANCE; jpeg files only