



**Ridgefield
Economic &
Community
Development
Commission**

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Arnold Light
Chairman

Robert DeFalco
John Devine, Vice Chair & Secretary
Paul Levine
M. Augustus Ryer
Stephany Sanderson
Karen Sulzinsky

Rudy Marconi,
First Selectman
Ridgefielddevelopment.com

Approved RECDC Meeting Minutes

August 7, 2017 at 6:30 pm.
Small Town Hall Conference Room

Attending: Arnold Light, Chair, Robert DeFalco, Paul Levine, John Devine, Stephany Sanderson, Karen Sulzinsky

Guests: Mack Reid, Ridgefield Press, Alison Greeley, Allison Stockel

Arnold Light called the meeting to order at 6:33 pm.

Arnold invited Allison Greeley and Allison Stockel to discuss with the Commission the evolving policies and procedures regarding banners hung throughout Ridgefield promoting arts events.

There are 20 banner locations from Main Street to Copps Hill. Brackets are permanently installed at all locations. Applications from arts organizations to put up banners will be reviewed jointly by the Arts Council and the ECDC for approval.

The group further discussed planning for a possible Jazz Festival in August 2018.

Alison Greeley and Allison Stockel left the meeting at 7:10 pm.

Announcements

1. Chairman's Report

a. At Arnold's most recent meeting with Rudy, they discussed leadership training to enhance planning for the Branchville TOD, Wayne Addressi's ideas for PR to support downtown economic development, the ECDC's continuing development of the Senior Gold book, and first floor retail report.

b. The next meeting of the ECDC will be September 11, 2017

2. Approval of minutes

a. John Devine made a motion to approve the minutes of the June meeting. Bob DeFalco seconded the motion. The minutes were approved unanimously.

General Discussion

1. The Commission discussed ECDC support for a marketing campaign initiated by Wayne Addressi. \$15,000 has been raised in private donations from downtown merchants. At the August 23rd BOS meeting, a town revenue account for these funds will be discussed. The ECDC will hold off further discussion until we have a chance to hear the proposals from two media marketing agencies at our next ECDEC meeting on September 11th.

2. Senior Gold Book

a. Bob DeFalco reported that 113 merchants have signed on to participate thus far, with a goal of 120+ by the printing date. Squash's will do the printing. In addition to the book, the ECDC will have produced window clings for participating merchants, and foil-coated cards for seniors to carry.

b. Bob informed the Commission that there is now a functioning Gold Card section on the ECDC website, which features categories for easy searching.

3. First Floor Retail

a. Karen Sulzinsky distributed the updated FFR ECDC proposal for review by the Commission. The ECDC will present to the BOS on September 6th. Rudy has promised to send financials generated by Al Garzi, so those numbers can be included in the proposal. Karen will incorporate the financials into the proposal in advance of the BOS meeting.

4. Library Business Series Update

a. John Devine updated the Commission. The library has decided on their Fall curriculum. Per recommendation by the ECDC, they will run a WordPress series for small businesses, led by a professional instructor. There are many other exciting offerings, including 3D printing, Shark Tank, and a workshop about copyright and trademark. The ECDC will promote these programs to merchants to motivate them to

General Discussion (cont'd)

attend so they become more digital and social media knowledgeable with the hope they will apply to their businesses.

5. Website Update

a. Bob DeFalco presented a report of the ECDC website analytics. The ECDC site comes up on page one of a google search when “Ridgefield CT Business” is searched. Bob reported that the town calendar is a heavily visited page. Arnold suggested these results be presented to Rudy at the next “Rudy” meeting.

6. Retail Prospects

a. Stephany has reached out to Naked Greens, an organic salad restaurant, with locations in Norwalk and Wilton. She is awaiting response. Bob suggested the Commission consider the SCRE report to inform continued discussion about what kinds of businesses the town needs.

New Business

1. October 5th/6th training by the Regional Planning Association (RPA) and the Partnership For Strong Communities (PSC) for Branchville TOD. Rudy contacted Arnold regarding this training. There will be an informational/introductory phone call on Thursday, August 10th at 3pm. Arnold will inquire about a conference bridge so Commissioners can participate by phone.

2. Bob DeFalco made a motion to nominate John Devine for Vice Chair of the ECDC. Gus Ryer seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

Meeting adjourned at 8:45 pm. Motion by Paul Levine and seconded by Bob DeFalco, Unanimously approved.