



**Ridgefield  
Economic &  
Community  
Development  
Commission**

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John B. Devine, Jr., Chairman

Rudy Marconi, First Selectman

Geoffrey Morris, Vice-Chair  
Amanda Duff, Secretary  
Cameron Cole Carcelén  
Bob Knight  
Glori Norwitt  
Vacant

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Secretary  
Secretary

Geoffrey Morris, Vice Chair &  
Amanda Duff,

**Approved Meeting Minutes  
Economic & Community Development Commission  
March 2, 2020, 6:30 pm, Town Hall, Small Conference Room**

In attendance: Glori Norwitt, Geoffrey Morris, John Devine, Cameron Carcelen, Bob Knight via conference call.

Absent: Amanda Duff.

Meeting was called to order by Chairman Devine at 6:36 pm.

**Announcements**

1. Next Meeting April 6, 2020 6:30 pm
2. BOS, Wed March 4, 7:30 Town Hall Large Conference
3. Chamber Breakfast March 13, SSCC, 7:30 a.m. - ECDC has a table at the annual Chamber Breakfast, State of the Town address.

**Approval of February 2, 2020 Minutes** Motion: Geoffrey Morris, second: Glori Norwitt.  
Unanimous approval (5-0).

## General Discussion

**EV Update** - Geoffrey and Cameron led a discussion of ROI calculations. ECDC has calculated that if each charger gets 14 hours charging per day (7 hours per hose) charging \$1.50 per hour, we can break even assuming \$200/mo lease. This will be the thrust of the EV initiative presentation at BOS meeting 3/4/2020. Bob added ancillary benefits of community vision, in addition to EV chargers as potential revenue stream. John asked about additional gold stars to be awarded to Energy Task Force if EV chargers are installed. Geoffrey to confirm with Dr. Ben Oko, Task Force chair. John reported he has corresponded with Urstadt Biddle and will continue that conversation after ECDC has presented EV initiative to BOS.

**Wi-Fi** - Bob reported he has been in touch with many stakeholders via Community Needs Assessment. John suggested Ballard Park may be a good soft target for WiFi initiative. John reported there is an opportunity to apply for a grant from Our Town, which could be used for Wifi project specifically at Ballard. John to request Ballard deed documents from Parks & Rec for ECDC review, per BOS suggestion. John and Bob to collaborate on Wifi Project.

**Cultural Districts** - Glori reported on progress to apply for Cultural District status. She shared the to-do timeline for application. Glori and Geoffrey had prepared an *Inventory of Cultural Assets and Facilities* and *Public Infrastructure and Amenities* within the Cultural District. Letter of Intent has been filed. There was discussion of next steps, expected timeline. One requirement is to form an Advisory Council Subcommittee. Glori and Geoffrey have been in touch with several possible candidates, and will follow up with them and others. They will schedule a meeting prior to April BOS meeting. Subcommittee must include representatives from:

- Town
- Local cultural council/Arts Council
- Cultural Organizations
- At least one artist who lives and/or works in the district.
- Organizations that represent artists
- For-profit creative business
- Local business and/or Chamber of Commerce

**Marketing Update** - John reported on ECDC Marketing Summary Report. Budget has increased but correspondingly, cost per click decreased. This year most of FB advertising has been for Restaurant Week, which is still running. Demographics: 55% women, 45% men (except food events, which is reverse). Age breakdown:

- 18-25 - 5%
- 25-34 - 14%
- 35-44 - 18%
- 45-54 - 20%

- 55-64 - 20%
- 65+ - 21%

**Ridgefield Restaurant Week** – John reported he has been trying to get participating restaurants to post their menus. Discussion of how important it is, and that this should become an annual event.

**New Domain** - Geoffrey reported on status. Domain has been purchased. Geoffrey has been working with Andrew Neblett, Town IT Director, to transfer domain, migrate website. Some technical difficulties but they appear to be resolved.

**New Candidate Discussion and Meeting** - Discussion of potential candidate for ECDC vacancy.

### **New Business**

1. Glori reported on conversation with Cathy Savoca about whether there are state regs on **vacation rentals**. Cathy had indicated that per her knowledge, all regs are local.
2. **Our Town grant** - Glori reported on meeting with a representative from Compassionate Project, to determine whether they have a project that could be funded by Our Town grant. They do art projects every year, and would like to do a mural at each school. Discussion of using Our Town grant for Ballard improvements as well. Discussion about how Our Town grants must be matched by funds from town. Bob suggested Meg Walker of Projects for Public Spaces, a consultant that could help activate Ballard Park. Discussion of how to problem solve perceived parking issue if Ballard Park were to have more programming.
3. John mentioned the need for a transportation link from Branchville Train Station to Main Street. Discussion of how to make Branchville a multi-modal transportation hub. Bob shared that Metro-North has reverse commuting studies, which may be instructive. Geoffrey suggested meeting with businesses to assess needs, see if they have ideas about how to address the challenge of getting personnel to Downtown.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:07 by a motion set forth by Bob Knight, seconded by Geoffrey Morris, and approved unanimously.