

Economic Development Committee

Meeting Minutes – May 20 2024

Attendees: Sue Clary John Bardwell
Larry Haber Brenda Levey
Kay Tomasi Robert Berger

Guest Speakers: Jill Nadolski – Town of Hebron
Josh Dranoff – Capital District Regional Planning Commission

1. Guest Speakers

Jill Nadolski was invited to update us on the work and funding Hebron has completed in identifying and implementing Clean Energy and Climate Smart Community projects. Jill is going to share some documentation with us and has agreed to consult with us as we go forward.

Josh Dranoff spoke about the grant process for Climate Smart communities and identified what grant levels Salem has already qualified for (\$5k and \$10k) and how close we are to the \$50k level. Josh is also going to provide a spreadsheet where he keeps our progress so we all know our current status.

2. Sue on ongoing initiatives

- i. Linke Properties – County is proceeding to placing properties up for auction. Sue is continuing to reach out to our local representatives to see if there is any possible assistance they could provide to allow Salem to acquire the properties before auction.
- ii. The County has now stated these properties will have to go through two auctions. As these properties have already been through two previous auctions, Sue is trying to find out if these prior auctions can be applied in order to get the properties off the upcoming auction
- iii. Shushan Bentwood property: this is now on hold for the following: the county has identified the demolition of the at \$1.5M with the town to fund 10%; and there is an existing EPA fine (@\$185k) which would need to be addressed before anything can be done. Talks are continuing.
- iv. NYS is looking to standardize the Sales tax to 8% affecting Saratoga, Warren and Washington counties. Discussions are proceeding
- v. A new site for the Sewer plant has been identified and acquisition talks are underway.
- vi. A potential developer for the Vale Street old paper mill has been identified.
- vii. HHH received their building permit from the County and work is proceeding on schedule. The rocks from the blast site will be utilized in rebuilding the river

embankments around the Georgi and will be moved to a holding area until work is started. All of the rocks, movement and storage will be at no cost to the town.

3. Project Updates

1. Georgi – Brenda

- i. Town Board agreed at special Georgi Meeting to proceed with establishing a 501C3 and retain the legal firm which has started the process. As establishing a Charter which requires 5 Board members, the following were proposed and accepted: Sandra Haber, Laura Dunham, Brenda Levy, Mary Menard, and Larry Haber. A deed showing the Georgi property is jointly owned by the town and the former Georgi organization was discovered. The new Georgi Board has offered to Quick Claim the Georgi portion back to the town which fulfills the original wishes of the will.
- ii. The Plant sale netted about \$11k.
- iii. One bid on the ADA work has been received for approximately \$29k. This has been deemed to be excessive, and we will need to discuss an alternative bidding process.
- iv. Roof repair and HVAC projects have been deferred.
- v. Event planning at the Georgi is continuing.
- vi. The fallen hydrangea tree will be stood up for replanting to see if it will survive.
- vii. The current Georgi laptop will be issued to Sandi.
Work to obtain an estimate to repair the roof is continuing.

2. Sewer – Kay

- i. See above for information on new location.
- ii. Sewer Map is undergoing additional changes, therefore the planned Public Referendum voting date is now thought to be around February/March 2025

3. Climate Smart – Yvette\Sam

- i. No representation again.

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4. Economic Development - Larry
 - i. Linke properties - Larry reached out to Elise Stefanik's and Jake Ashby's staff for possible support as well. I was informed that there is nothing they can do unless the properties are no longer up for auction
 - ii. Planned Meeting with Cambridge Co-Op
 1. Met with Kathleen Quinn (Manager) and Michael Ammaturo (Co-Op Board Head). After discussion, it appears that the Co-Op will be more internally focused for the near term, meaning no potential for a joint venture at the time. Larry will pursue the Salem residents (the Wilson's) to see if they remain interested in creating a Salem Co-Op.
 - iii. Historic Salem Courthouse Meeting
 1. Larry spoke with the Historic Salem Courthouse Board to introduce the Economic Development Committee and goals. It went well, and the Board would like to help where they can.
 - iv. Remote Working Meeting
 1. Have not met with Andrew Flynn from Cambridge on Remote Working. However, Michael Ammaturo will be establishing a Remote Working location in Salem. Opening date is TBD.
 - v. YMCA
 1. Larry is following up with the YMCA to obtain information on next steps and what programs might be of interest to Salem.
 - vi. FEMA Meeting
 1. Attended the FEMA meeting to better understand the impact.
 - vii. Salem Community Fund
 1. Met with Dan Snyder to understand the fund's objectives and how it will work.
 - viii. Met with Chuck Barton of IDA (a group which provides new business funding opportunities for Warren and Washington Counties) along with new Chestnut farm ownership (Russell). As they have also provided funding for Sewer projects, I am going to meet with Chuck and ask him to review the Delaware Engineering grant opportunities and potentially identify any additional grantees we might utilize.
 - ix. Spoke about the need to establish a town-wide communications. Will plan on talking with Sue about forming a committee to work on this.
 - x. Continued to schedule and talk with Salem Town Board members on their views of what and how to maintain and grow Salem and Shushan. To date, have met with Tom and Wyeth. Have reached out to Howard and will schedule with Brenda.
 - xi. Discussed Economic Development strategy with Dennis Yushak.

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5. Next Steps

- i. Identify participants for Salem/Shushan Vision document
- ii. Continue to schedule meetings with other groups
 1. Library
 2. Firehouses/Rescue Squad
 3. Real Estate companies (in progress)
 4. Salem School
 5. Town Board Members