



MORRIS TOWNSHIP
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
Monday, July 19, 2021 – 6:00 P.M.

CALL TO ORDER

The July 19, 2021 meeting of the Economic Development Advisory Committee was called to order by Liam Gallagher (EDAC Chairman) at 6:04 P.M., via Zoom.

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ATTENDANCE

Mr. Ken Bariahtaris
Mr. Robert Berns
Ms. Jessica Brennan (absent)
Mr. Randall (Randy) Emond
Mr. Liam Gallagher
Ms. Elizabeth (Beth) Kujan
Mr. Jeffrey Mueller (absent)

APPOINTED OFFICERS

Mr. Jeffrey Grayzel, Mayor
Mr. Timothy F. Quinn, Township Administrator
Ms. Kathy Viarengo, Tax Assessor (absent)

ALSO PRESENT

Rick Alcantara, Princeton Strategic Communications
Mark Daley, IT Support
Ms. Cathy Wilson, Township Committeewoman

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PRESIDING OFFICER'S STATEMENT RE: ADEQUATE NOTICE – O.P.M.A. – (RECORD INSERT)

Liam Gallagher issued the following statement of adequate notice:

“Adequate Notice” of this meeting of the Township Committee of the Township of Morris was given as required and defined by the Open Public Meetings Act, as follows:

Written Notice was given on January 15, 2021 to the official newspapers, Morris County Daily Record, by email at least 48 hours prior to the date of this meeting, and a copy of the Notice was posted on the Bulletin Board in the Municipal Building of the Township of Morris by th



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Township Administrator, and a copy of the Notice was likewise filed in the Township Clerk's Office. Copies of this Notice were mailed by Certified Mail to all persons who have requested Individual notice, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 10:4-19, all of which Notices were given at least 48 hours prior to the date of this meeting, and said notice will be retained in the Office of the Township Clerk.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Liam Gallagher led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

On a motion duly made, seconded, and carried by the votes as indicated, the readings of the 05/03/2021 and 06/07/2021 meeting minutes were approved as circulated.

GENERAL BUSINESS

The first component of the meeting consisted of a guest presentation by Rick Alcantara from Princeton Strategic Communications (PSC) which is affiliated with the Princeton Public Affairs Group. He is PSC's communications director and has 30 years of experience working in public affairs. He has been with PSC for three years. Rick announced his plans for the survey and interviews for property owners on the Madison Avenue Corridor (MAC). He stated that between 10 and 12 property owners will complete the survey, while between six and eight will be interviewed via Zoom. The survey will take approximately five minutes to complete, while the interviews will be scheduled for 50 minutes. The interviews and surveys will not consist of the same questions and the interviews will be recorded and transcribed. The transcripts will be provided with the final report. The surveys will not reveal businesses' names, but rather the types of businesses, as surveys usually guarantee anonymity. Results will be shared with property owners. Rick set a goal to have the survey and interview questionnaire completed by the end of the week and to have the interviews completed in three weeks. Liam stated that he hopes that the data from the surveys and interviews will be ready to present at the September 20th EDAC meeting.

Liam stated that the next steps after the report is delivered to EDAC is to disseminate the info to the public. Mayor Grayzel stated that this most likely would take place through the Municipal Messenger which is a monthly newsletter that the Township Committee uses to communicate with residents. He also indicated that he wants the Restoration Hardware (RH) Gallery at the Abbey to be out of zoning review by September to coincide with the completion of the sur



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vey and interview results. Committeewoman Wilson expressed her concerns that the public does not know what EDAC does. Rick stated the importance of the public understanding what EDAC is going to do with the survey results. Mayor Grayzel agreed that EDAC must show that the project is good for the entire Township and not just the MAC property owners, as well as that they will use the survey and interview results to improve the MAC for everyone's benefit.

GENERAL BUSINESS (CONTINUED)

The topic of the conversation returned to the format of the survey and interviews. Rick stated the survey will consist of both open-ended and closed questions and that the introduction to the survey will include the purpose of the survey. He and Liam will work together to ensure that the survey is what EDAC desires. Randy expressed the need to ask probing questions and to obtain results that will help formulate a long-term strategy for the MAC. Randy also wanted to ensure that the interviews and surveys will include questions regarding how the businesses benefit from their locations. Rick stated that other towns indicated in their survey results that security, reasonable taxes, and cleanliness were the top three priorities. He also stated that EDAC should reach out to the local media regarding this project and suggested that Mayor Grayzel can make videos for the Township website. Ken hypothesized that it will be in the Township's best interest if as little time as possible elapsed between the start of the project and communication with the residents regarding the project's goals. He also stated that residents need to know that "positive, future-oriented" work is happening.

Liam stated that the public will be invited to join the September 20th EDAC meeting and that some form of communication regarding the meeting will be shared with the public by August 20th. Rick concluded his portion of the meeting by stating that he will send a rough draft of the survey to Liam by the beginning of the following week (week of July 26th). He also indicated that using Survey Monkey as a platform is a possibility. He left the meeting at 6:39 P.M.

The second component of the meeting consisted of a PowerPoint presentation by Randy regarding an analysis of RH neighbors across the country. There are 100 RH locations in the United States and Canada. He had studied a national database of other stores that RH customers also shop at in six non-mall locations (as the RH Gallery at the Abbey will be). The database consisted of survey responses from 20,000 people. Stores that RH shoppers also frequently shopped at included high-end stores such as Peloton, J. Crew, Lululemon, Apple, Vineyard Vines, Williams Sonoma, and Tiffany. The survey responses also indicated that mostly females shop at RH. Ken asked if there is a non-retail vision for the corridor. Committeewoman Wilson echoed a similar sentiment, as she is concerned that retail is "being pushed on the corridor." Randy believes that RH will potentially inspire property owners to rethink what they want to do with their properties. Ken mentioned the importance of considering post-pandemic



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office plans and schedules, as employees may potentially return to satellite offices in the NYC suburbs as opposed to NYC itself and that the vacant office space on the MAC could potentially be used for that purpose. Mayor Grayzel stated that a question pertaining to proximity to the Convent Train Station should be included in the survey.

The public commentary component consisted of Amy Merl of 3 Old Glen Road stating that Township residents should find out about this project sooner rather than later. She also expressed her concerns about 299 Madison Avenue by stating, “It’s not just about what is built, it’s also about how it’s built and where it’s built on the lot near my house.” She had also expressed her concerns regarding these matters in the June 7th meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

The July 19, 2021 meeting, with no further business, was adjourned at 7:01 P.M.; next to convene at 6:00 P.M., September 20, 2021 via Zoom.

Nicole Donohue
EDAC Secretary