

TOWN OF CHESAPEAKE BEACH

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

SUMMARY OF MEETING OCTOBER 29, 2018

The Town of Chesapeake Beach Economic Development Committee (EDC) held a meeting on Monday October 29, 2018 at 7:00 pm in Town Hall Council Chambers

Attendees: Michelle Doell, Tiffany Geare, Larry Jaworski, Jeff Krahling, Greg Morris, Bob Munro, Anne Nicholas
Representing Calvert County Department of Economic Development: Danita Boonchaisri, Business Development Director. Hillary Dailey, Director of Tourism
Representing Calvert County Chamber of Commerce: Bob Carpenter, President/CEO

Discussion Items:

- Calvert County Department of Economic Development – Ms Boonchaisri reported the Department is now almost fully staffed and has completed their move to new office space on first floor of same building. There are now two Opportunity Zones located in the County. The purpose of these zones is to support and encourage further economic growth in the County. Ms Dailey reported she is starting up the Department of Tourism and looks forward to working with our EDC to stimulate further tourism across the County.
- Calvert County Chamber of Commerce – Mr. Carpenter reported that the Chamber includes 425 businesses in the County of which about 80% are considered “small businesses.”
 - Discussed how to encourage appropriate economic development in the Twin Beaches and across the County. Attendees had a detailed discussion about various “barriers” that currently exist and discourage economic development. These barriers include zoning restrictions that make it very difficult to locate new businesses in our Town. Group agreed there is need for a “Navigator” to assist prospective businesses in finding their way through the process. Staff at Town Hall should be trained to encourage prospective businesses in how to negotiate the process. There should be a package of information provided to prospective businesses that helps them find their way through the process. This package should include contact information for additional resources such as Ms Boonchaisri at the County. There should be a link on Town webpage to direct prospective businesses to additional resources.
- Update of Town’s Comprehensive Plan. Work is underway to update the Town’s Comprehensive Plan. Next meeting of the Comprehensive Plan work group will be Wednesday November 14 at 7:00p in Town Hall. This update links directly with previous discussion of how to encourage appropriate economic development in our Town.
 - It was suggested that the EDC should work with Town Council to determine how willing the Council is to undertake potentially significant changes to the Comprehensive Plan. It was reported by several attendees that previous attempts to update Comprehensive Plan fell short when previous Town Councils were unwilling to accept recommendations from the planning group.

- It was suggested that the planning group contact Ms Jenny Plummer-Welker, Long Range Planner with the County Department of Planning & Zoning for possible assistance in the update of the Comprehensive Plan.
- It was suggested that Town could do more to assist local businesses. A specific example given was the signs posted in Town Hall parking lot prohibiting parking 24 hours per day except on Town business. Another example was the long abandoned “white building” on east side of Bayside Road (Route 261) immediately before entering Town of North Beach. It was discussed that there should be some way to encourage/support development of this property which has remained empty for over 10 years
- General discussion –
 - Mr Munro mentioned the upcoming issue of permitting for 5G internet service. This issue has been discussed and there are strong feelings on both sides. Positives are the increased competitive market for internet services (currently only 1 option) and increased reliability. Negatives are the visual impacts of multiple transmission boxes around town given the limited distance signals can travel.
 - Group discussed possible Small Business Forum. This idea has been discussed at previous meetings and purpose is to provide additional assistance to existing local businesses to help make them a success. Possible dates are late January/early February

NEXT MEETING OF EDC: TO BE SCHEDULED