

Economic Development Committee

**Town of Berlin
Municipal Office Building
108 Shed Road
Berlin, Vermont 05602**

Tuesday, September 22, 2015

6:30 p.m.

Unapproved Meeting Minutes

Committee Members Present: Wanda Baril, Dan Cambra, Jeremy Hansen, Keith Robinson.

Absent: Paul Irons

Advisory: Sam Anderson-Central Vermont Economic Development Corporation

Town staff: Dana Hadley, Town Administrator

Attorney for Berlin Mall: Chuck Storrow-arrived at meeting approximately 6:55 p.m.

6:30 Call to order-By Selectboard Member Hansen

The meeting was called by order by Selectboard Member Jeremy Hansen

Election of Chairman

Jeremy Hansen was nominated as Chair by Member Cambra.

Being no other nominations a vote was taken to appoint Jeremy Hansen as Chair.

Vote in the affirmative.

Public Comment

The Chair asked if there was any public comment. Sam Anderson stated that she would be happy to attend meetings to offer advice and reminded members that she is not a voting member. She would also like to see meetings scheduled consistently. Members discussed possible available times. By consensus the Committee will meet on the fourth Tuesday of the Month. The next meeting will be held on October 27th. The meetings will begin at 6:30 p.m. and it is expected that the meetings will be kept to an hour in duration.

Addition of any agenda item

The Committee referenced a list of potential projects that had previously been developed. That list was not available for this meeting and will be procured for discussion of uncompleted projects at a subsequent meeting.

Discussion of uncompleted projects

- Local Option Tax

The Committee has been exploring the possibility of recommending a local option tax and abandoning the Merchandise and Equipment Tax. There were discussions of how the tax base would be impacted by this action. It was noted that presently this tax impacts businesses and not retail operations. There are concerns of how the local option tax will impact adjoining towns and if it would discourage shoppers. This will be a topic for further discussion. Dana will obtain the total revenue realized from the M&E tax.

6:55 Review of Tax Stabilization Application received from Berlin Mall, LLC.

The committee discussed the application for tax stabilization at the Berlin Mall, LLC for the new building that will be occupied by Kohl's. Chuck Storrow came to the meeting to answer any questions that the committee might have relative to the Berlin Mall Tax Stabilization application. Jeremy Hansen noted that the Berlin Tax Stabilization requirement approved by voters specified that applications must be received and approved prior to the commencement of any construction on the project. This construction has begun and is currently in process. Chuck Storrow noted that they are working to meet a deadline for Kohl's due to their schedule for store openings. Committee members Keith Robinson asked when the actual construction started. Chuck Storrow stated that it was in early August. He asked if any exception could be made to make this work. Committee members noted that this committee does not have authority to change the any of the requirements. The language in the policy is clear in its intent. Sam Anderson said that the committee could express to the Selectboard that they leverage all possible means if the committee wished to see the application go forward. There was discussion as to why the policy wording was constructed in the way that it was.

Committee members agreed that other than this issue, the application is complete.

Motion: Robinson/Baril other than the stipulation in regard to the construction date, the application is complete and for it to be forwarded to the Selectboard for their consideration.

Vote in the affirmative.

Motion: Robinson/Baril

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Meeting adjourned at 7:26 p.m.
Respectfully submitted,

Dana I. Hadley
Town Administrator