

## **Economic Development Subcommittee**

**April 7, 2021**

**5:45 PM**

### **MINUTES**

**Members Present:** Councilors Melanie Hamblen, Glenn Jones, Andrew Bissanti, Cobi Frongillo

**Town Staff also in attendance:** Town Administrator Jamie Hellen, Chrissy Whelton - Assistant to the Town Administrator, Amy Love - Town Planner, Alecia Alleyne - Executive Assistant.

Councilor Hamblen called the meeting to order at 5:47 PM

#### **1. Lady Bugs:**

Lisa Piana, Executive Director of the Franklin Downtown Partnership presented a proposal for a Lady Bug Cultural and Historical Trail. She gave a brief overview of the project and explained how this will tie into Businesses, Historical sites and Cultural sites in Franklin and bring them all together. The Goal of this project is to encourage foot traffic in Franklin. Ms. Piana stated there are 25 proposed sites for the Ladybugs some of which are already completed. Twelve (12) of those sites are Businesses, six (6) are Cultural sites and seven (7) are Historical sites. Ms. Piana noted that the Partnership has begun to discuss the concept with business owners and community groups to come up with specific sites. Ms. Piana noted that the Ladybug became the State Bug due to a second grade class at the Kennedy School in 1974 petitioning a bill to do so. Ms. Piana explained that there are various partners and collaborators working on this project such as Franklin Businesses, Franklin Cultural District Committee, Franklin Art Association, Franklin Historical Commission and Franklin TV & Radio. She noted that they are hoping to have the unveiling of the trail sometime in Spring of 2022 and with that to start an annual Spring LadyBug Parade. Councillor Hamblen noted that she was in support of the project and bringing folks to the Downtown. Councillor Bissanti also noted that he supports the project. Councillor Frongillo stated that he was excited for the project and to see more public at. He also asked what the trail would consist of such as a path or sense of direction. Ms. Piana commented that it will not matter which way a person will want to go as they are trying to make the trail so it is easy to start from anywhere as opposed to one specific place such as the Town Common. She also noted the partnership was thinking of something similar to the Freedom Trail in Boston but was not sure if there may be some safety concerns. Councillor Frongillo stated that ladybug tracks would be a low risk trail option. Councillor Jones thanked all the volunteers who came up with the idea of this project and assisted in getting it started. He mentioned that he did not think that the tracks would be a hazard as Boston's Freedom Trail has raised bricks. Councillor Hamblen followed up by stating that she is

in favor of having these sites located on Town property and that it would be a wonderful addition to the town. Mr. Halligan, Vice Chair of the Planning Board stated that it was a great idea and as in years past he would offer his time, materials, and labor to clear coat these lady bugs in Automotive finish which prevents fading and protects them from weather damage. Mr. Bissant asked if there was an approval process for these lady bugs. Ms. Piana noted that most of the approvals will come from the Building and Business owners.

## **2. Franklin Branding & Business Guide:**

Ms. Tracey gave a quick update on the New Business Guide and where it is at. She explained that this guide is the result of many departments' assistance and input. Ms. Tracey noted there were only minor changes since the last presentation notably the Economic Development page and the Flow Chart as well as some additions to the Franklin Food Truck and Farmers Market pages. Councillor Hamblen asked what Design Review is within the Flow Chart. Councillor Bissanti stated that Design Review is a recommending Committee to the Planning Board. Councillor Frongillo suggested including live links to the sections within the Business Guide in the Table of Contents. Councillor Jones thanked Ms. Tracey on the remarkable work and all who assisted in getting the Business Guide together. Councillor Bissanti suggested adding in a zoning map to the variances page that links colors of the different zones to intensity of uses. Mr. Halligan noted he had been asking for something like this for 14 years and he is very happy to see that it has been created and notes how useful this guide will be to current and potential businesses. Mr. Hellen noted that they would include a hyperlink into the flowchart to link to the latest Zoning Map on the website. Councillor Frongillo commented that the Town of Franklin is competing with other towns to bring businesses and people to the Town, its shops, Art, and recreation and that there is a benefit to being cohesive across all communication across the community. Councillor Bissanti asked if Councillor Frongillo could list a few Towns who have something similar to reference. Councillor Frongillo said he would get a list together. Ms. Tracey noted that branding a Municipality is a huge project and on her radar. She also noted that she will need to get feedback from various stakeholders and the Community.

## **3. Community Planning Grant Program Discussion:**

This Discussion was postponed to the April 14, 2021 EDC meeting.

Councillor Jones made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Councillor Bissanti. Vote was unanimous by Roll call vote. Vote 4-0

**Meeting Adjourned at 6:44 PM**