

BOROUGH OF BERLIN
ECONOMIC RE-DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
MINUTES
June 14, 2011

Flag Salute:

Roll Call:

Councilman Nick Maccaroni Absent

Kevin McHugh Present

Mike Mrvica Absent

Joe Adolf Present

Bob Suchowierski Present

James Knight Present

Councilman Jim Bilella Present

Rita Christenson Absent

Drew Straub (Alt. 1) Absent

Dottie Trait (Alt. 2) Present

Minutes:

A motion was made to approve the minutes for Aril 12th, 2011 by Jim Knight, and seconded by Kevin McHugh. All members voted aye.

Discussion:

Carl Atwater addressed the board. He represents a national firm, Pizza Hut. Pizza Hut has started an express chain, with take out and delivery all in one. There is one in operation in Bridgeton that is successful; they are looking into Hammonton, Berlin, and Lindenwold. The requirements are for a 1,000 sq. ft. building, single story with parking, room in the back for loading and unloading and trash pick up. It would take 4 to 5 months to be up and running. Mr. Adolf gave Mr. Atwater our brochure. Mr. Adolf informed Mr. Atwater of a building across the street that is 1200 square feet, and a single story building that is vacant. There was discussion of the Kepple's Carpet/Blockbuster area. Councilman Bilella asked if it needed to be a stand-alone building. Mr. Atwater stated they really are looking for location, more downtown, with a lot of pedestrian movement. They will be selling pizza, wings, etc. They are not concerned with other Pizza shops in the area. A vanilla space to fit out would be \$150,000 to \$200,000. They like to bring the historical pictures of the town into the décor of the store, ie. photos of the community etc. Regarding Kmart shopping center, Mr. Atwater has a company that takes older

facilities and renovates the buildings. Councilman Bilella informed Mr. Atwater that there is a company that is in a situation of an owner that if approached with the right number, with the economic downturn may be interested. Currently it is all commercial, and in a Redevelopment Zone. Initially they wanted all residential, and now has to keep the front portion commercial, and the rear portion residential. Mr. Atwater informed the board that this company took over the Shore Mall, and it is currently surviving on it's own now.

Joe Adolf addressed the board regarding the Camden County Arc building. 3 weeks ago he spoke with Peggy Englebert, and there was a possibility of \$3,000 for assistance on the project, she is still pursuing other areas as well as Senator Beech. It was suggested to Peggy to break down the cost from the contractor.

Mr. Adolf also mentioned the Jiffy Lube site. It is boarded up, and Mayor Armano informed Mr. Adolf that he is trying to get them to paint the building. Dottie asked since the site is contaminated, how are they able to leave the site in that condition? DEP has to be contacted. Also, Berlin Chrysler has been occupied by Carbone's, and Berlin Auto Body is expected to be occupied by Rocco's Collision. We have not heard from Rocco's as of yet, no one knows if they actually purchased the building, as of March the building had not been sold yet. TD Bank is still empty, they have not responded to any calls.

Mr. Adolf added there is not much going on, so we will not hold any summer meetings for July and August. Our next meeting will be in September. In September Mr. Adolf asked the board members to think about new signs for the Borough, how big, color, what we want them to say, etc. Bring ideas!

Mr. Adolf discussed the S.J. Chamber of Commerce, and it appears the Borough will be joining that in the next few weeks. They have monthly meetings, for just businesses in Camden County, and Mr. Adolf plans to attend and have our brochure available.

Mr. Adolf spoke to Councilman Bilella regarding the existing businesses, and working on a format. Councilman Bilella said he is working with Rita on that. If we could get a report on new Mercantile Licenses, we could send a "form" letter, welcoming them to Berlin. WaWa, and Dunkin Donuts were able to make a noticeable "Grand Opening", some of the smaller businesses can't do that. There was discussion of recognition of new or existing businesses, the Borough could give them a plaque, list them on the website as a form of recognition.

Also, Rita will need to email a PDF file version of the Brochure so it can be placed on the Borough Website. We need to utilize the Borough website as much as possible.

Dottie mentioned as members of the board drive through small towns, take a look around and see what makes the town look so nice. Dottie mentioned the businesses putting up awnings. It gives a downtown area a classy look.

Adjournment:

Jim Knight made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Bob Suchowierski seconded the motion. The motion was carried by the assenting voice of the board.

Respectfully Submitted,

Debbie Simone

Cc: Charleen Santora, RMC, Business Administrator