



VILLAGE OF BARTLETT
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION MINUTES
JANUARY 10, 2022

1. CALL TO ORDER

Commissioner Erickson called the regular meeting of January 10, 2022 of the Economic Development Commission (EDC) of the Village of Bartlett to order on the above date at 7:04 PM

2. ROLL CALL

PRESENT: Commissioners Erickson, Gorski, Gudenkauf, Hughes (via phone), LaPorte, Lewensky, Perri, Smodilla

ABSENT: Commissioner Kubaszko

ALSO PRESENT: Economic Development Coordinator Tony Fradin, Assistant Village Administrator Scott Skrycki, Management Analyst Joey Dienberg

3. APPROVAL OF NOVEMBER 8, 2021 MEETING MINUTES

Commissioner Smodilla moved to approve the November 8, 2021 meeting minutes, seconded by Commissioner Gorski.

AYES: Commissioners Erickson, Gorski, Gudenkauf, Hughes, LaPorte, Lewensky, Perri, Smodilla

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Commissioner Kubaszko

MOTION CARRIED

4. PUBLIC COMMENT

NONE

5. BANBURY FAIR BEDA APPLICATION

Mr. Fradin stated that Banbury Fair has been the retail anchor of downtown Bartlett for the past thirty-eight years. As the downtown has continued developing and numerous businesses have come and gone, one constant since the early eighties (1983) has been Banbury Fair, which was originally located at the former building at 121 Railroad Avenue and then later expanded and relocated to its current address in 1987, where the Suffern's have owned and operated this highly unique business ever since.



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As one of the longest-tenured businesses in the village with two of the oldest building structures in the area, the Sufferns have succeeded in keeping their business viable and timely, having added tenants including a candy store, children's parties, antiques in the barn, small retailers within their own designated areas, a coffee shop and more over the years.

Bruce, Jan, and their associate Sandy Braun have remained nimble and have also sponsored and participated in nearly every downtown area event including fashion shows, Ladies Nights Out every month, Heritage Days, Small Business Saturday and much more. Banbury Fair is truly one of the most iconic businesses in the village.

In 2020, the Sufferns decided to upgrade the 120-year-old historic barn on the (adjoining) property and convert it from a barn structure housing antiques into a stand-alone wine and/or food business.

After promoting the opportunity via a widely-publicized video on YouTube and word-of-mouth, Bartlett resident and successful restaurateur Rakesh Chopra began pursuing the potential for redeveloping the barn into an eating and drinking establishment.

The Village Board approved Mr. Chopra's concept for Le P'tit Resto Bar Tapas at its July 20, 2021 meeting including its site plan, special uses for serving liquor, outdoor seating, and live entertainment and a variance for a parking reduction. Some of the preliminary work commenced soon thereafter in preparation for this project.

Because the buildings on the adjoining properties are so old and lack the necessary infrastructure to meet current Building and Health Codes, the project became more costly and numerous upgrades were required.

The main items that required upgrades for this first phase of the project are plumbing-related and include a massive amount of concrete work, bringing water and sewer to the property from Hickory Avenue, and general plumbing.

The attached proposal from Stark & Son Trenching and from Mark Leffler of Skillcraft Construction includes extensive details on many more items also including non-plumbing items such as soil work, curb repairs, roofing, labor costs around \$40,000 and more.

The grand total for the total project is \$242,548 not including the architect and surveyor, which have not been added to the BEDA program as eligible costs. Including those, the cost for phase one of this project is over a quarter-million dollars.

Please note that this first phase does not include complete interior buildout for the tapas lounge/wine bar that will be paid for by Mr. Chopra. Those costs and the associated BEDA application will be submitted by Mr. Chopra at a later date and will be specific to the barn property, which is a separate PIN and will be issued its own address.



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This much-anticipated improvement and redevelopment of the Banbury Fair property will set the stage for the next decades of this key business.

Considering the massive investment that is being made in the property for this project and the proven long-term success of the applicants, staff recommends a maximum grant amount of \$50,000, to be paid upon completion of the items listed in this application and submittal of proof of payments made.

Commissioner Smodilla stated that she is grateful for the Sufferns dedication to the community and the diversity of goods and services that they bring to the community. She also asked the petitioners the status of the property, if it would be going up for sale anytime soon, the flexibility of the space if the business ever changes in terms of bringing in future businesses as well as the projected number of parking spaces.

Mr. Suffern stated that it is not currently for sale. He stated that due to the pandemic, they had to let the previous renter of the barn go. The pandemic has changed their long-term business plan, especially the viability of antique sales. He stated that they are looking to take advantage of the building of MORE Brewing, and are looking at creating a desirable destination, and by adding a restroom and improving the space, it keeps the barn viable for any other businesses to comply with the current codes and standards. He emphasized that the improvements being made would be applicable to any business that would want to go in. He added that the indoor capacity is 48, and the outdoor area is 60. He added that they also want to renovate one of the outbuildings for an additional use as a waitress station.

Commissioner Perri thanked the petitioner for staying in Bartlett, and for spending the money to keep the business viable. He also asked what the business relationship will be with Mr. Chopra as far as this building is concerned.

Mr. Suffern stated he has known Mr. Chopra since he opened his first restaurant in Bartlett and that he has always thought he has done a superlative job. He stated that there have been talks of them doing business together for many years. He added that he then recruited him to come look at the barn to think about it, and they agreed that the concept would be great. Mr. Chopra asked for a long-term lease that will change dramatically due to the expense of the buildout. All of the cooking will be done offsite at Bovino, and the barn would just be prepping and dishes, rather than cooking onsite. He also added that the event would be able to host small outdoor events/wedding receptions.

Commissioner Perri asked if they had enough parking.

Mr. Suffern stated that they have plenty at the moment. He added that there be challenges when MORE is open, and that if it becomes a problem, there is plenty of nearby parking. He added that he is looking forward to having that challenge.



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Mr. Skrycki added that there are over 700 free spots available in the METRA lots that are free after 11 a.m. and on weekends.

Commissioner Smodilla stated that she would like to further discuss METRA parking issues at a later meeting, adding that many METRA spots are blocked off in the winter.

Mr. Skrycki stated that is a cost savings measure, due to the lack of need for the spaces at this time. He stated that they let residents/commuters know via the Bartletter and signage. He added that this measure is to limit the amount of spaces that are plowed in the winter, and that when more parking is needed, they would make the necessary changes.

Commissioner Perri moved to recommend a BEDA grant in the amount of \$50,000 to Banbury Fair, Seconded by Commissioner Gudenkauf.

ROLL CALL VOTE

AYES: Commissioners Erickson, Gorski, Gudenkauf, Hughes, LaPorte, Lewensky, Perri, Smodilla

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Commissioner Kubaszko

Commissioner Erickson stated that she has toured the barn and it looks great. She wished them the best of luck.

6. MERRY & BRIGHT RECAP

Mr. Dienberg stated that in an effort to create a succinct overall brand for all holiday events throughout Bartlett, partnering with the Bartlett Area Chamber, the Bartlett Park District, the Bartlett Library District, Bartlett Rotary Club, and the Bartlett Lions, the village hosted the first Merry and Bright celebration. Merry and Bright brought all of the events, old and new, from all of the different taxing bodies and organizations participating under one concise brand.

He continued stating that the first year of the program was undoubtedly a success. At the Holiday Tree Lighting, there were a projected 2,000 people in attendance. The event featured a meet & greet with characters from Frozen, lit up holiday cars, a carriage ride through the downtown, beautiful downtown lighting, carolers from Arts in Bartlett, branded merchandise and even a marriage proposal in the gazebo. Over 40 gallons of cocoa were consumed, over 1,500 cookies from Rebecca's Cakes by Design were given out as well as 600 hot dogs by the Dogfather. The same success can be attributed to the sold-out Cocoa Crawl, which saw over 190 "crawlers" visiting 25 different Bartlett businesses.



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Staff is giving out 3 gift cards to individuals selected in a random drawing to a business of their choice. There was also a holiday decorating contest for both businesses and residents in which first place went to Town & Country Gardens for the business category. Staff will be conducting surveys and having a post event meeting to further improve these events in future years. Mr. Dienberg concluded, stating that the event wouldn't have been possible without the help from the Chamber, Library and all of the other civic groups and taxing bodies that contributed.

Commissioner Smodilla stated that she heard many great compliments on the event, and was happy to hear people were spending money and that it was a great success. She stated that she hopes the nuts and bolts of this event are firmly in place that it can be replicated in other seasons. She complimented all of those that contributed to the event, and added that it is proof that event marketing works, especially for bringing people downtown.

Commissioner Erickson stated that she also received great feedback, and heard from many people that they went to businesses they normally wouldn't frequent, and stated that they would like to go back. She also stated that she heard there was a lot of money spent in the businesses.

Commissioners Smodilla stated that she saw many businesses also took advantage of offering specials and sales.

Mr. Dienberg stated that when reviewing the passports, many individuals made a point to attend most, if not all, participating businesses.

7. NEW BUSINESS

Commissioner Erickson asked if staff had any plans to replicate the previous Small Business Emergency Response Program in light of recent pandemic surges.

Mr. Skrycki stated that they are not at this time He stated that sales tax numbers are up, indicating good business around the village, and added that the BEDA program is being heavily pushed, and added that staff's phone lines are always available if there are further questions by any businesses. He added that staff continues to push out county and state level programs that offer many other forms of pandemic relief.

Commissioner Smodilla asked what the village's stance was on the new Cook County Vaccine Mandate.

Mr. Skrycki stated that the village has been practicing "Enforcement by Education" since the beginning of the pandemic, stating that the village informs businesses of the policies. He added that since the mandate has been implemented, the village hadn't received any complaints thus far.



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Mr. Fradin added that the village employs a full-time health officer that would field those complaints.

Commissioner Perri asked for an update on West Bartlett and Route 59.

Mr. Fradin stated that after going out to bid, a new homebuilder is stepping in and picking up where Pulte left off a few months ago, and stated that he would bring more details when they are available. He stated that staff is hopeful and optimistic on the project.

Commissioner Perri asked about the construction on that corner.

Mr. Skrycki stated that it's been approved on the capital budget for IDOT, and are going to begin sometime in 2022, to some degree.

Commissioner Smodilla asked how the meeting went with the Cook County Assessor.

Mr. Skrycki stated that unfortunately there was only one Bartlett business that attended. He added that staff emailed and called the businesses to inform them of the event. He added that he asked questions and got their contact information if any businesses have questions. He stated that they are moving many of their procedures digitally to improve their process, and added that it will really help streamline the process.

There being no further business to discuss, Commissioner Smodilla moved to adjourn the EDC meeting and that motion was seconded by Commissioner Perri.

ROLL CALL VOTE TO ADJOURN

AYES: Commissioners Erickson, Gorski, Gudenkauf, Hughes, LaPorte, Lewensky, Perri, Smodilla

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Commissioner Kubaszko

MOTION CARRIED

The meeting was adjourned at 7:53 p.m.


Joseph Dienberg
Management Analyst