



County of Shenandoah

OFFICE OF COUNTY ADMINISTRATION
600 N. Main Street, Ste 102
WOODSTOCK, VA 22664
www.shenandoahcountyva.us

AGENDA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Board Conference Room
Shenandoah County Government Center
600 N. Main Street, Woodstock, Virginia
April 26, 2011
5:00 p.m.

Committee Members:

David Ferguson, Chairperson

Steve Baker

Sharon Baroncelli

Dick Neese

Larry Helsley

Gary Lantz

Staff Liaison: Vincent E. Poling, Economic Development Program Manager

1. **Approval of Minutes**
March 22, 2011 meeting
2. **Monthly Reports and Staff Comments**
3. **Discussion regarding Web Site update**
4. **Discussion regarding Economic Development Strategic Plan**
5. **Old Business**
6. **New Business**
7. **Adjournment**

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

March 22, 2011

5:00 p.m.

Board Conference Room

Shenandoah County Government Center

Present: David Ferguson, Chairman

Supervisor Baker

Supervisor Neese

Larry Helsley

Supervisor Baroncelli

Supervisor Morris

Supervisor Helsley

Staff: Doug Walker, County Administrator

Vince Poling, Economic Development Program Manager

Natalie Wills, Director of Tourism & Marketing

1. Approval of minutes.

Supervisor Ferguson called the meeting to order at 5:00pm. The January minutes were approved with a Dick Neese/Steve Baker motion.

2. Monthly Reports and Staff Comments

Vince Poling reported that he had worked with a company wanting a site for a propane facility. This was not a huge investment but would impact the poultry farmers so this company was given contact information for the landowner of the piece of property located in Shenandoah County.

There have been conversations with a development company referencing 55/81 for that commercial area. They have a new partner, Danny Laycock and there seems to still be an issue about the single lane round-about verses another point of ingress/egress. It was stated that Danny Laycock has talked as if the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) is allowing 170,000 square foot limitation but the original zoning was for 300,000 square feet of retail space with a single lane roundabout. The VDOT will allow them 170,000 square feet but it is not being based on trips per day which we find questionable. They are trying to do the single lane roundabout in order to bypass putting in a signal and dealing with the Federal zoning regulations. There is to be a meeting between Brandon Davis, Vince Poling and Matt Smith in order to get an understanding of what is going on and to also let VDOT know where everyone stands on this issue. The Board of Supervisors will need to approve a Memorandum of Understanding to break away from the original conditions associated with the re-zoning.

Shortton is in progress that is the industrial access road extension. Vince Poling stated that he will be out next Monday, (March 28 (is this the correct date?)) at 8:00am, to meet with a VDOT

Engineer to look at the tie in where the cul-de-sac is located. The power pole where Bill Holtzman had stated was in the way; there is enough off-set where the facility is located. A drawing was made to show how the road currently is laid out to give an understanding of what corrections will be done to straighten the road in order to miss the poles. Vince Poling also stated that by doing this, and according to a survey completed by Randy Newland, it would eliminate the need for a pump station. Larry Helsley asked when would be a 'best guess' start date and Vince Poling stated this summer or fall. Larry Helsley also questioned what the status of the expansion of Mercury Paper. Vince Poling stated that Mercury Paper did not qualify for Economic Road Access Funds but will still expand their facility.

Natalie Wills reported that she and Vince Poling have been working collaboratively with Hank Zimmerman to update the Economic Development website. She stated that Economic Development is a key search on the tourism website, www.shenandoahtravel.org. Natalie said that it was discovered that potential prospects had a hard time finding the website since there is no direct link to the site on the front page of the County site. It is questioned if the Economic Development site should be separated from the County's site, as is the Tourism website, to make it more easily accessible to the public or to keep it where it is but add a link on the front page for easy access. Natalie and Vince will be meeting with Hank Zimmerman again tomorrow, March 23 to discuss updates and if it would be more beneficial to the Economic Development Department and the County if there was a standalone Economic Development website. Vince Poling stated that if it was decided to have a stand alone site then there would be a bold link on the County's main page to linking it to the site. Natalie Wills stated that Hank Zimmerman will create the site template and make any changes necessary to make this an effective website. Doug Walker questioned what the turnaround time to get this completed would be and was told that they would not have that answer until tomorrow's meeting. Dave Ferguson stated that he would like to have more information about cost, effectiveness, etc. before committing to having a separate site created. Vince Poling said that those involved with the website will be seek out sourcing for graphics and photography that would be best for content and display.

Dave Ferguson questioned how connected was the representatives for project "Evening in Paris" and project "Fishbowl" and Vince responded that these two project came from the State. Dave Ferguson then asked how many of the projects that the Economic Development office receives go through the Shenandoah Valley Partnership (SVP) and if they go through the SVP do they ask for County or State parameters? Vince Poling stated that most of the project representatives know that the County is in partnership with the Shenandoah Valley Partnership and when we receive prospects from either office we are given site parameters needed and then we show them the sites best suited for their needs. He added that neither Mercury Paper nor Americold came from the state; representatives from each company came to our door.

Natalie Wills reported that on she had attended a business symposium at Shenandoah University March 10, and she passed out a flyer that was given out at the symposium. Andrew Ansoorian, Director of Human Resources, Shenandoah County Public Schools, was a speaker at the Symposium and his presentation was on Leadership. Natalie stated that the symposium was very well attended with approximately 200 people in attendance and was able to pick up new

marketing material that may be beneficial to the County. Natalie also attended an orientation at the Virginia Economic Development Partnership office in Richmond last week where they discussed four “good fit” targets, developed by the state, for the Valley which are as follows:

- Advanced Manufacturing
- Life Science
- Alternate Energy
- Information Technology

She also attended the Shenandoah Valley Partnership meeting last Friday, March 18 and gave a presentation on the County. Dave Ferguson reviewed the flyer and pointed out that it was more geared towards small industry with no mention that it was also prime for high technology businesses. He asked if the flyer could be corrected to include that the County can be rural and high tech depending on your needs. We have updated the County profile sheet that gives updated information about the County that would grab the attention of would be prospects.

Natalie advised the members that she has been meeting with the Chambers of Commerce and with People, Inc. to discuss the possibility of scheduling another Entrepreneur Express. Sharon Baroncelli stated that in the past Shenandoah County in conjunction with the Virginia Department of Business Assistance hosted a free workshop to give advice to people on how to start their own business or how to build up their existing businesses. This event was held at the County Administration building and was well attended.

Natalie Wills advised the group that there had been multiple inquiries if the Economic Development Committee would again host a Business Appreciation Reception. It was cancelled last year due to the budget. The Business Appreciation Reception is normally held during Business Appreciation Week in May. It was suggested that instead of having a full reception type event in May to possibly having a breakfast type meeting sometime in the fall. If the event was partnered with the Towns and Chambers so that the County would not have to pay the full bill that would be fine to schedule for next year.

3. Old Business

Vince Poling reported that the office has not had any updates from some of the office’s older projects such as “Wilbert” and “Slaughterhouse 5”.

4. New Business

Vince Poling reported that the Economic Development office had anticipated a visit from a company code name “Evening in Paris”. Due to inclement weather the day of the visit, the marketing manager, Mr. Enghauser contacted us and cancelled the site visit. Mr. Enghauser and I spoke a few days later and was told that the company had decided that the Valley was not metropolitan enough and wanted to be near Richmond. The only information that we have on the current active project, code name “Fishbowl” is that it is a food manufacturer. We did a site response and approximately three weeks later the County was included in second round talks. We then received a request for information (RFI) on Friday morning (March 11) that would be due by noon on Monday, March 14. This particular company brings \$119 million investment

and will employ 90 people, and they use rail and gas. They want a cultural setting, pleasing vistas and natural beauty. They do not want to be near a sub-division but they would like to be close to a town and to be pad ready, and they would like to break ground in August. We suggested a site. Supervisor Ferguson questioned the process of how our sites are selected adding that the company asks all types of questions about the County but we have no idea of who or what type of company they are. Vince Poling stated that a consulting company will review all possible sites. After the initial contact, the consulting company will ask for an RFI from the leading site candidates; upon review of the RFI the company then decides to come for a site visit then that is the time we learn more about this company. For example, "Project Fishbowl" will start off using 4-5 train cars per week with the second phase kicks in by 2015/16 the number of train cars coming in per week and will increase. Supervisor Ferguson asked if this company has asked about any concessions and Mr. Poling stated that yes, indirectly they have asked about things "by right" and we responded that at this stage it is too early to offer anything.

5. Other Business. - None.

6. Adjournment

With no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 5:40pm.

David Ferguson, Chairperson