

The regular meeting of the Economic Development Task Force (EDTF) was held tonight. Members present were: David Cohen, Maureen Haff, Virginia Helm, David Kratzer, Fred Milbert, Sheila Perkins, Brad Pransky, David Rosenberg. Staff present was: Bryan T. Havir, Assistant Township Manager.

1. **Call to Order.** Vice-Chair David Cohen called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.
2. **Approval of Minutes.** Vice-Chair David Cohen made a motion to approve the February 15, 2011 meeting minutes as submitted; seconded by Mr. Pransky. The motion was unanimously accepted.

3. **Main Street Committee Reports by Chairpersons:**

**A. Design** – Mr. Kratzer reported that two design grant applications were received and reviewed this month.

- **#10-23, SGS Paper, 540 W. Mt. Carmel Avenue, Glenside Commercial District, for signage.** The Design Committee recommended to the EDTF that two (2) new channeled letter façade signs with LED lights be approved as shown on the rendering prepared by Rodon Signs dated February 23, 2011. Upon motion by Mr. David Cohen, and seconded by Mr. Rosenberg, the recommendation was unanimously accepted by the EDTF. The EDTF concurred with the recommendation to allocate up to \$4,000.00 in Design Challenge Grant funds subject to completion of all work and submission of paperwork on or before June 1, 2011.
- **#10-24, Trevi, 21 E. Glenside Avenue, Glenside Commercial District, for signage, awning, painting.** Mr. Kratzer presented the applicant's plan to install one proposed acrylic letter sign on the front of the building for approval as well an aluminum framed fabric awning sign, which will be lowered by six inches as recommended by the Design Committee. Mr. David Cohen made a motion to approve the awning and the façade sign with the condition that the background wall color that the sign will be affixed to be made a lighter color white than what is shown in the rendering, and that anchoring of the awning sign meets Township zoning requirements. The EDTF further recommended that the owner of the building consider re-painting the door on the right side of the building as well as the matching colored strip across the front of the building for a more balanced appearance. The suggested color of the door and strip is white. The EDTF agreed that this applicant would be eligible for half of the project cost in Design Challenge Grant funds with a cap of \$1,900.00 providing paper work is presented and the work is completed by June 1, 2011. The recommendation was unanimously accepted by the EDTF.

**B. Organization and Development** - There was no report.

**C. Economic Restructuring**

1) **Recruitment** - Upon a question raised by Mr. Pransky about the role and functions of the EDTF prior to the Main Street Program, Mr. Havir explained that prior to the Main Street Program, the focus was on broader economic development issues, and in particular the shopping centers along Cheltenham Avenue. With the Main Street Program inception in 1998, the five commercial districts rose out of the 1995 Strategic Plan Study. Because the Township still has an active Main Street grant with the Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED), it is technically still considered a main street community. That will change in June 2011 when the grant is closed out. After that time, the EDTF may decide to administer its business differently. Mr. Pransky asked if the Board of Commissioners expressed anything about the EDTF's advisory role. Mr. Havir stated that the Board of Commissioners would look to the volunteers to continue assisting with well established Township special events and functions in the various districts in the absence of a Main Street Manager.

Mission, goals, functions and tasks may be modified or continued. Ms. Perkins offered to perform a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) analysis which she believes would be healthy and not be too difficult. The members thought that was a good idea. Mr. David Cohen advised Ms. Perkins to contact Chairman Alan Cohen about her idea. Mr. Rosenberg asked if the Main Street Program was still viable or if all or none of it will be scrapped. Mr. David Cohen explained that it is an economics issue to no longer fund a Main Street Manager position. It will be hard to get funding (federal, state and local) for the next three to five years. The DCED budget was slashed by a third according to Governor Corbett's proposed budget. It was suggested going forward we must work within confines or raise money through donations.

Mr. Pransky discussed strategies of land assemblage of large parcels that the EDTF should consider endorsing and encouraging the Township to consider for possible relocation and consolidation of public facilities and mixed uses. He noted the numerous large parcels in Elkins Park are the William Elkins Estate, Stella-Tyler Elkins Estate and the P.A.B. Weidner Estate. These properties are still available for acquisition and he suggested the Township can't afford to lose this opportunity to improve the community. It was noted that this is what the focus of the La Mott Master Plan Visioning was supposed to accomplish years ago.

2) **Retention** – Ms. Williams was not present to make a report.

**D. Marketing and Promotions Committee** – There was no report.

- District Liaison for Elkins Park East – Mr. David Cohen stated that The Market at Elkins Park East, located in the former Pharmacy space opened on Sunday, March 13, 2011. Mr. Baruch Schwartz moved his photography business from Montgomery Avenue to Glenside Avenue in Wyncote. Yo Dogs! located in the former Little Dipper space will hold their grand opening on April 13, 2011. Mr. Milbert noted that only two store front spaces are vacant right now. He also announced that the U. S. Department of Agriculture notified CreekSide Co-op today that they had won their appeal and are now eligible for funding. He also mentioned that the owner of Frame House is expanding to provide art classes and is planning “First Thursdays” for the surrounding businesses. Mr. David Cohen noted that The Friends of High School Park (FHSP) netted approximately \$8,500 from their recent “Winter Warm-Up” fundraising event at Curtis Hall on February 26, 2011 which goes to support its staff and maintenance of High School Park sponsored by the Friends of High School Park (FHSP). Mr. Milbert noted that the High School Park Farmers Market will open on Sundays in April. They are considering adding an additional

day; more information to follow. Mr. Havir noted that the Glenside Farmers Market will re-open at the Glenside Station on April 29, 2011.

- District Liaison for Glenside – Ms. Haff met with several new resident volunteers from the Downtown Glenside Community Partnership (DGCP) to develop committees similar to those of the EDTF such as (Marketing, Promotions, Beautification, Glenside Street Fair, etc.) and appoint captains. The residents would like to be able to approach property owners and businesses about fixing up store fronts if needed which would be part of business development. It was agreed that Marketing and Promotions is an effort that needs to be retained in terms of offering special events. Discussion ensued about the Glenside Street Fair (GSF) using local artists in the Township as a theme rather than trying to attract outside artists. Mr. David Cohen offered to share some information on local artists that have participated in Arts in the Park. Participation from the Cheltenham Art Center was also mentioned. Also, advertising would still appear on Channel 42 as well as the Township website. Ms. Haff inquired about dates for the GSF and Mr. Havir stated that the new calendar is being developed now so Ms. Haff should e-mail him a couple of dates that she might be considering as soon as possible. Mr. Havir stated that this should be brought back to EDTF next month for a formal recommendation. He will then check with the Police Department for availability of auxiliary police once a date has been selected.

Ms. Haff also inquired about how to find out if a business is relocating into the commercial district. Mr. Havir stated that either through Building and Zoning Department or through registration for a business privilege license.

Mr. David Cohen inquired about the request for proposals for the updating the Township website and hoped that it would include the ability to request a lot more information be e-mailed

in e-blasts. Mr. Havir noted that the new website design should be completed by mid-April and launched the end of April or beginning of May.

- District Liaison for East Cheltenham Avenue – Ms. Helm had no report to offer.
- District Liaison for Cheltenham Village – Mr. Lewis was not present to offer a report.
- District Liaison for Elkins Park West – Mr. Mirsky was not present to offer a report.

**4. Chairman's Report** – On behalf of Chairman Cohen, David Cohen reported that very few of the members had contacted Chairman Alan Cohen as requested at the last meeting to discuss future committee assignments and what help they may need with their current assignments. He had asked everyone to review the five year plan for their respective committee structures under the main street program submitted to the State several years ago. Chairman Cohen would like to meet with all committee chairs before any decisions are made on future modifications to Cheltenham's Main Street Program. Mr. David Cohen encouraged the EDTF members to contact Chairman Alan Cohen and made his telephone number and e-mail address available.

#### **5. Old Business**

A. Continued Discussion of Proposed Glenside Business Improvement District (BID) Main Street Program – Ms. Haff reported that she developed a draft of a letter explaining why she feels the BID should move forward and sent it to both Mr. Havir and Mr. Alan Cohen. The letter was reviewed by Mr. Cohen and Mr. Havir and was made available at the meeting. Ms. Haff had spoken recently to four business property owners and based on her conversations with them felt that there was little interest in moving forward. Mr. Havir noted that there were 109 property owners within the proposed BID boundary. He stated that volunteers could be provided with talking points for their use in making face-to-face contact with the property owners. The purpose of the outreach is to contact the owners, distribute the letter and determine overall support for the BID creation.

B. Beautification Committee (America In Bloom) - Ms. Williams was not present to offer a report.

However, Mr. David Cohen asked for an update from Mr. Havar regarding America in Bloom (AIB).

Mr. Havar noted that the AIB national organization approved Cheltenham Township's application for eligibility. A media package was forwarded to the Township with information that is necessary prior to the judges' visit. This information was provided to Ms. Williams and she has begun to assemble the required information which she will forward to Mr. Havar. The information required includes a community profile as well as ten photographs that best represent the community. The Township has photographs of Kleinheinz Pond and the Fountain in Robinson Park and perhaps we include photographs of our national landmarks. The due date for this information is April 1, 2011.

Two dates have been offered for the judges' visit to Cheltenham Township – Thursday and Friday July 28 and 29 or August 4 and 5, 2011. It was generally agreed that August 4 and 5, 2011 would be preferable. The judges will need transportation from the airport and lodging perhaps at the Elkins Park House for one night. The EDTF requested financial assistance from the Cheltenham Township Community Development Corporation (CTCDC). Mr. Havar offered to provide the transportation to and from the airport as well as touring the Township. Mr. Havar asked Mr. David Cohen (FHSP) about the possibility of providing a potluck dinner/movie night event for the judges on Thursday, August 4, 2011. Mr. David Cohen will be contacting Ms. Diana Weiner regarding the above plans. Discussion on this matter will be continued to the next EDTF meeting.

C. Update on Easton Road Streetscape & Traffic Calming Project, Phase III - Mr. Havar noted that Marino Corporation had been selected by PennDOT for construction of the Easton Road Streetscape and Traffic Calming Project, Phase III. A pre-construction meeting has been scheduled for April 4, 2011. Mr. Havar offered to attend the April meeting of the DGCP to discuss the project and construction schedule. He will invite the contractor as well. The majority of the construction work should be done by

July and completion of the punch list items by August. Ms. Haff will confirm date and time of the next DGCP meeting.

D. Update on Elkins Park West Streetscape and Traffic Calming Project - The first kick-off meeting took place on February 17, 2011. The meeting included the introduction of streetscape improvements recommended in the Township Commercial District Enhancement Plan and the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission's Route 611 corridor study. Pedestrian connections, sidewalks and traffic safety improvements at the intersections of Route 611 and Church Road, Church and Old York Roads and Church and Starr Roads were discussed. PennDOT who has a representative on the steering committee will have to approve the plan.

E. Mr. Milbert inquired about the status of streetscape plans for the Elkins Park East Commercial District. Mr. Havir reported that a state funding application was filed with the State Senator LeAnna Washington's office last fall; however, no feedback has been provided to date.

#### **6. *New Business* -**

A. Update on Census 2010 – Mr. Havir stated that the initial census data for the 2010 U. S. Census indicates that the population decreased by 82 persons in Cheltenham (36,793). Block group data will be released around July. As soon as the information is available, it will be reviewed by Montgomery County Planner, Ms. Mazzaccaro and the Township Staff to make sure we were not under counted. The Economic Data will not be released until the end of the year.

B. Anchor Building Analysis - Mr. Havir stated that the Township and its consultant is under obligation to include this analysis in its final study. Delta Development Group was asked to include the analysis of the State's anchor building program for the Glenside and Elkins Park Commercial Districts in its Business Retention/Business Recruitment Plan. This will be a stand alone chapter of the overall plan. Upon a request, a copy of the analysis will be e-mailed to EDTF members.

Mr. Havar announced that Mr. Carmen Italia, Executive Director of the Montgomery County Economic Development Corporation (MCEDC), a non-profit membership organization will make a fifteen minute power point presentation to the EDTF at the April meeting. Cheltenham Township has joined MCEDC to work with the Township with Business Retention and Business Recruitment especially to help in finding new uses and/or new owners for the white elephant buildings that exist in the various commercial districts. MCEDC may be able to package public funding opportunities to help stimulate interest in white elephant properties and place them back on the tax rolls.

**7. Assistant Township Manager Report** – Mr. Havar made the following announcements:

- The Township will be accepting advertisements for its upcoming calendar and annual report.
- Mr. Havar made reference to a recent article featuring Cheltenham Township and the Ogontz Bus Loop project in the Greater Valley Forge Transportation Authority (GVFTA) Spring newsletter.
- Mr. Havar informed the EDTF that the Township Staff and the Township Solicitor reviewed the existing ordinance regarding recycling in commercial districts and found that no amendment was necessary. Letters were mailed to businesses reminding them of the mandatory requirements in the Township's recycling ordinance for those who sell products that can be recycled to provide recycling containers.

**8. Adjournment:** The meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

  
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David G. Kravnik,  
Township Manager

Submitted by:  
Kathryn McDevitt



Meeting Attendance Sheet

Economic Development Task Force



Tuesday, March 15, 2011, 7:00 P.M.

Township Administration Building  
8230 Old York Road, Elkins Park, PA 19027

(Please Print Clearly)

No.	Name	E-mail or Other Contact Info, if desired	Member (Y/N)
1	DAVID L. COHEN		Y
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3	VIRGINIA L. HELM		Y
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5	Sheila K PERKINS	Seabring 2000 @Yahoo.com	Y
6	Dave Rosenberg	rosenberg1@comcast.net	Y
7	DAVID KHATZEN		✓
8	BRAD PRAWSEY		✓
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