

The regular meeting of the Economic Development Task Force (EDTF) was held tonight. Members present were: David Cohen, Jonathan Essoka, Maureen Haff, David Kratzer, Dwight Pedro Lewis, Kenneth Mirsky, Sheila Perkins, Brad Pransky, David Rosenberg, Mark Tucker and Diane Williams. Guests present were: Chris Goebel and Tom Norpel. Staff present was: Bryan T. Havir, Assistant Township Manager. (see attached attendance sheet).

1. ***Call to Order.*** Vice Chair David Cohen called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. Members took a few minutes to introduce themselves.

2. ***Approval of Minutes.*** Vice Chair David Cohen made a motion to approve the May 10, 2011 meeting minutes as submitted; seconded by Mr. Rosenberg. Motion was approved.

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

A. **Design** – Mr. Kratzer reported that the Design Committee did receive approval from the EDTF last month, subject to zoning approval from the Township, to grant the remaining balance in the Design Challenge Grant fund for new signage for the Friends of High School Park office area in Elkins Park East Commercial District at 7910 Montgomery Avenue. An application was filed with the Building and Zoning Office for zoning approval.

Mr. Havir informed the EDTF that all information pertaining to the Township's Design Challenge Grant Program has been removed from the website recently because all the grant funds have been spent. Mr. Havir felt that moving forward, the EDTF should consider looking for funding sources, either through some neighborhood banks or perhaps the Cheltenham Community Development Corporation could offer some similar incentives to Cheltenham businesses. This is a good time to approach the branch managers for consideration in their next funding cycles. Mr. Tucker added that

sometimes having a group of businesses in a specific location in need of incentives helps with having institutions provide assistance.

**B. Organization and Development** – No report.

**C. Economic Restructuring** – No report

1) **Recruitment** – No report was given.

2) **Retention** – No report was given.

**D. Marketing and Promotions Committee** – Reports were provided from the following liaisons:

- District Liaison for Elkins Park East – Mr. David Cohen reported that Friends of High School Park held its Annual Arts in the Parks which was very successful and one of the best events in years for fundraising. Mr. David Cohen wished to acknowledge the sponsors who supported the event. Mr. David Cohen also reported that the CreekSide Co-op has a loan commitment from USDA when funding is available. The Co-Op continues to work with The Reinvestment Fund (TRF) and plans a fundraising membership drive. The Co-op has a right to match any offers made within seven days to purchase the former Ashbourne Market building.
- District Liaison for Glenside – Ms. Haff reported under Marketing and Promotion, the Glenside Street Fair will be held on September 17, 2011 from 11:00 to 4:00 p.m. with a rain date of September 18, 2011; and the Abington Township Keswick Village area will also have a Street Fair on the same day and the Downtown Glenside Community Partnership (DGCP) would like to partner with that group. Discussion ensued about providing a way to connect both areas, e.g., hayride or trolley, publicizing and routes. Ms. Haff feels the energy is there. Ms. Haff reported that the Glenside Business Retention Subcommittee continues to work on business retention and reports that three businesses are

leaving the area: Dimmers, the Jewelry Store on Bickley Road and Glenside Avenue and Not Just Antiques. Discussion ensued about contact with businesses. Ms. Haff indicated that the Glenside business retention committee is actively involved in maintaining contact within the Glenside area. They can poll businesses when they canvas the neighborhood regarding lease terms, etc. Mr. Tucker suggested the concept of a survey and questions such as what five things businesses would like to see. This could be done online via an e-mail contact list as part of relationship building. It was also noted that each district liaison requires a time commitment to introduce themselves as part of the Economic Development Task Force when they meet with business owners.

Ms. Haff reported that she attended a meeting regarding the Glenside Business Improvement District (BID) and noted that approximately ten property owners attended. She felt that the general sense was positive and the BID deserves to move forward. Mr. Havir gave a brief description for the new members on the status of the BID formation, boundary draft, business plan, property owner meetings. The formation of the BID requires approval of approximately 60% of the property owners in order for the Board of Commissioners to create an Ordinance for the BID. The process fell silent about eight months ago. The Board of Commissioners recently approved ten hours of professional consultant hours to gauge the interest of the property owners. Post cards were mailed, telephone contact made and meetings scheduled.

- District Liaison for East Cheltenham Avenue – Vice Chairman David Cohen noted that there is currently no liaison designated for this area and asked if anyone would be interested in serving as a liaison.

- District Liaison for Cheltenham Village – Mr. Lewis reported that he had contacted Commissioner McKeown to have him accompany him in the district to introduce him to the business owners. This has not been scheduled yet and Mr. Lewis hopes to schedule a date in the near future.
- District Liaison for Elkins Park West – Mr. Mirsky had no report.

**E. Cheltenham Charm** – Ms. Williams reported on the planting projects at the Township park entrance signs, four of which were planted last year with ten added this year. Ms. Williams reported that the community has been very supportive of the project with some residents offering to help care for the plant material. The Township Park Maintenance personnel have been watering the native perennial plantings. Ms. Williams noted that she has learned some new gardening techniques, such as planting over cardboard in the raised beds which aids in retaining soil moisture.

**4. Vice-Chairman's Report** – Vice Chairman David Cohen suggested having a presentation at next month's meeting where Mr. Havir and Chairman Cohen outline key issues in a formal and free flowing process.

The purpose is to have an orientation for new members and reorientation for standing members giving the history of the formation of the EDTF, how the committee relates to Township staff and the Board of Commissioners, the purpose for liaisons and the required tasks; the original mission of the committee and the transition and change in mission since the main street program, in existence for ten years with a dedicated full time Main Street Manager, has been discontinued; the broader opportunities available and how to reposition the task force. The idea of a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) analysis should be considered. Ms. Perkins noted that she had suggested this process to the Chairman back in March. The analysis would examine core competencies and address who the EDTF is. This process requires a commitment of time and the need to have at least 75% of the EDTF

membership involved. Vice Chairman David Cohen suggested that Ms. Perkins create a brief one page description of SWOT analysis. Ms. Essoka volunteered to assist in the review of the mission and/or vision statements and how they relate to the charter for the EDTF. Mr. Tucker was interested in learning about the Goals, Strategic Plan and Mission as well as an understanding of where the EDTF is today. Mr. Tucker recently attended a ULI meeting presented by Edward Grier and described the need to have an urban hub. Mr. Tucker suggested Cheltenham.

Mr. Havir and Vice Chairman Cohen will work on the approach for next month's meeting.

Mr. Havir referred to several plans and studies beginning in 1995 with the Strategic Plan for Economic Development in the Township which led way to the Township's involvement in the State Main Street Program. Mr. Havir also noted that the plans referenced as the Commercial District Enhancement Plan (CDEP), Community Revitalization Plan, the Business Retention and Business Recruitment Plan, the Greater Cheltenham Avenue Business Improvement District (GCA BID) and the Glenside (BID) were all on the website and were tied into various capital improvements.

Vice-Chairman Cohen reminded EDTF members about submitting one paragraph biography about themselves to Chairman Alan Cohen.

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

A. Beautification Committee (America In Bloom) – Ms. Williams and Mr. Havir reviewed the draft of the Cheltenham Township Community Profile with the EDTF members as well as the revised itinerary that was distributed for the AIB national judges visit on August 4-5, 2011. Based on the webinar that Ms. Weiner, Ms Williams and Mr. Havir participated in last month, the itinerary was developed to showcase 80% of the Township within the eight program categories in the community. Speakers will be present at the Township Building, Synagogue and Wall House Museum. Melrose Country Club will include a drive through addressing environmental issues and grounds maintenance.

Arrangements have been made with the Cheltenham School District to tour Myers Elementary School.

Holy Sepulcher Cemetery has agreed to provide a brief tour. This itinerary and community profile will be submitted to America In Bloom tomorrow. Ms. Williams, Mr. Havir and other EDTF volunteers will provide general information to the judges as they tour the Township. Mr. Havir asked the EDTF what role do they wish to be active in throughout the visit. Ms. Haff volunteered to be present for the Downtown Glenside walk through visit. Mr. Lewis and Mr. David Cohen had offered to assist with the driving (drop-offs and pick-ups at the other end). Discussion ensued regarding fundraiser and/or business sponsorships for judge's baskets, meals, snacks, etc. Ms. Haff had offered to put baskets together. Elcy's Café will provide breakfast for the judges and the Cheltenham Township Community Development Corporation (CDC) will provide assistance with housing for the judges. Ms. Williams stated that as the itinerary is refined by way of dry runs establishing drive times, etc., she would like to gather input and confirm duties and responsibilities in writing. Discussion ensued about informing business owners in the various districts about the judges' visit and sprucing up their areas for the visit. Mr. Tucker added that stops that include children's activities are always positive.

B. Continued Discussion of Proposed Glenside Business Improvement District (BID) Main Street Program – This item was addressed in Ms. Haff's Liaison Report.

C. Update on Easton Road Streetscape & Traffic Calming Project, Phase III - Mr. Havir noted that Marino Corporation, project contractor, has proceeded with construction work on Easton Road with little disruption. Mr. Havir noted that there has been a delay in ordering the street lights and traffic light poles and bases as there had been a change in PennDOT specifications after the bid for the project was let. A waiver has since been granted and the project will proceed with a delay of at least ninety days for these items.

D. Update on Elkins Park West Steering Committee - Mr. Havir shared some design concepts for focal art for the intersection of Old York and Church Roads presented by the project consultant as a result of last month's steering committee meeting. Please send comments to Mr. Havir by next week.

**6. New Business** – Ms. Haff requested approval from the EDTF for a partial payment of \$1,000 from the Celebration Account (Capital Account #92-420) for flowers for the hanging baskets on Easton Road purchased from Primex on behalf of the Downtown Glenside Community Partnership (DGCP). Mr. Essoka made a motion to approve \$1,000.00 for flowers for the hanging baskets on Easton Road; seconded by Ms. Perkins and unanimously approved.

Discussion continued about the celebration account which has been used in the past for funding main street events in the commercial districts. Mr. Havir noted these funds have always been fundraised and were never earmarked by the Township. Continued fundraising efforts should be considered as part of the discussion by the EDTF as it redefines its role.

**7. Assistant Township Manager's Report:**

A. Mr. Havir led discussion on the Business Retention/Business Recruitment Plan and asked the EDTF for a recommendation on priority implementation strategies in each of the commercial districts as outlined in the Plan. Mr. Havir reviewed and highlighted some recommendations found in the Plan which was completed in 2010 and previously e-mailed to EDTF members for comments March 16, 2011:

Glenside Commercial District - Look at the larger vacant buildings that have remained without tenants or uses for a long period of time and work with the owners to fill them with restaurants.

Elkins Park East - Promote zoning ordinance to be re-written to provide exterior and/or outdoor cafes; work with the CreekSide Co-op to ensure that it opens and becomes a viable reality; work to advance, promote and pursue funding to implement the streetscape improvements.

Elkins Park West - Promote zoning ordinance to be re-written to provide for sporting good stores; and continue to advance the preliminary engineering and design of streetscape improvements and then utilize the plans to aggressively pursue public and private funding.

East Cheltenham Avenue - Promote the zoning ordinance to be re-written to provide for redevelopment of the Melrose Shopping Center into an ethnic dining area that is a regional destination. The redevelopment concept could include several 3,000 s. f. restaurants to a 17,000 to 20,000 large anchor restaurant that promotes Mexican, Thai, Ethiopian/West African and/or Thai-French cuisine.

Cheltenham Village - Promote the zoning ordinance to be re-written to provide for small retail galleries, boutiques and clothing stores that focus on niche ethnic services or markets.

Discussion ensued and some of the newer EDTF members felt they needed more time to study the plan along with gaining a better understanding of the Township's overall economic development initiatives, and make more specific recommendations at the September 20, 2011 meeting. However, the majority of the EDTF agreed in concept with the above recommendations noted and Mr. Pransky made a motion to recommend the above referenced suggestions be communicated with the Township Manager to present at a future meeting of the Public Affairs Committee; seconded by Mr. Mirsky and unanimously approved. Mr. Havir will forward a copy of the Business Retention/Business Recruitment Plan to Mr. Tucker.

B. Municipal Separate Stormwater Sewer System **(MS-4)** - Mr. Havir explained that municipalities are required to develop and implement a stormwater management system to reduce contamination of stormwater runoff. As part of that requirement, the Township is required to provide public education and outreach to residents and businesses about stewardship of property and good housekeeping policies to address stormwater runoff. Ways of providing public education and outreach to businesses was discussed. Mr. Havir presented an opportunity to use educational materials developed by the Partnership for the Delaware Estuary several years ago. The Philadelphia Water Department working with Dottie Baumgarten agreed to pick up the tab for this training and present the information to the EDTF District Liaisons. The program provides a form of measurement for outreach. Mr. Essoka felt that volunteers would be the best way to move it forward. Mr. Havir will inquire about meeting schedule for late afternoons.

**8. Citizens' Forum** – Vice Chair David Cohen acknowledged guests Tom Norpel of Wyncote and Chris Goebel of Cheltenham Village. Mr. Tom Norpel stated that he had not been aware of the five commercial districts discussed at the meeting and Mr. Goebel asked about the boundary of the Cheltenham Village district. Chairman David Cohen thanked the guest for attending and welcomed any formal or informal participation.

**9. Adjournment:** Vice Chairman David Cohen adjourned the meeting at 9:45 p.m.



David G. Kraynik,  
Township Manager

Submitted by:  
Kathryn McDevitt



# Meeting Attendance Sheet

## Economic Development Task Force



Tuesday, June 21, 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)
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5	Maureen Hoff	Swiretmag@tenet.com	✓
6	Jonathan Essoka	jessoka@verizon.net	X
7	Kenneth Mirsky		Y
8	DAVID KNATZ		Y
9	DAVID WILLIAMS	dcbmwilliams@msn.com	Y
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