

**Rockland Economic Development Advisory Committee
Meeting August 27, 2015**

Draft Minutes of Meeting 8-27-15

In attendance:

J Billington, Chair

T Peaco, Pen Bay Chamber

T Plummer, Member

V Geiger, Member

S Roberts, Member

L Ondra, Member

J Jeffers, Member

G Page, Rockland Main Street Inc

Audra Caler-Bell, Community & Economic Development Director, Rockland

1. Motion by J Jeffers to accept meeting minutes seconded by T Plummer – unanimously accepted.
2. On behalf of Council J Billington asked if there was a member of REDAC interested in participating in the Harbor Park Redesign Committee. Anyone interested was invited to email Sandy Billington.
3. To follow up on the question as to whether or not REDAC could go into Executive Session the City Attorney has advised that REDAC can go into Executive Session if the discussion falls within State Statute and REDAC formally votes to go into Executive Session.
4. Susan Deutsch, President of the Farnsworth Art Museum, gave an overview of the New Markets Tax Credits program and how this can be leveraged for development projects such as the Farnsworth, CMCA and potentially major redevelopments such as Tillson Avenue.
5. G Page gave an update on Downtown. J Billington asked how RMSI goes about recruiting businesses to Main Street. Inventory of what we have? Surveys to determine what there is a need for? G Page explained it's typically a very informal process and there is no record of what businesses are approached. REDAC discussed the need and strong potential for interest in certain specialty retail shops, such as a kitchenware store (Williams-Sonoma) or others who may be interested in moving out a mall type retail environment into a downtown. There is opportunity to canvas/survey downtown merchants to find out what types of specialty retail may compliment what is currently on offer and survey residents to find out what they would be interested in seeing in the downtown.
6. Chamber of Commerce spoke about the Cruise Ships and the goal of trying to attract more cruise ship visitors to downtown Rockland. This will relate to improvement of signage leading visitors to the downtown and overall redesign of Harbor Park.
7. Comps is currently working on infill development and how to encourage ancillary buildings.

The meeting adjourned at 5:00pm, Next REDAC meeting is September 24th at 4pm