

Ridgely E.D.C. Meeting
December 12, 2007

In Attendance: Joe Mangini, Kelly Hayman, Leo Stepp, Robert Thayer, Jerry Sutton, Sara Wright

6:34 pm- Meeting called to order.

Introduction of Mr. Robert Thayer of Thayer Entertainment.

Mr. Thayer discussed his business, saying that Thayer Entertainment films commercials, and is currently working on a feature film called "Furry Hamsters from Hell." His company tries to make quality films at a low cost, and is currently filming mostly on the Western Shore. Mr. Thayer is interested in finding space in Ridgely to build his sets, but said that he may need help getting started. In response to a question asked by Leo regarding how much space would be needed, Mr. Thayer said he's looking for an area large enough to fit his 30'x 20' sets. Joe recommended Mr. Thayer talk to Mr. Musselman, stating that his units were 1900 square feet. He also added that Mr. Brodie's building was filling up fast and probably would not have the space that Mr. Thayer was in need of. Joe had already spoken to Mr. Musselman about Thayer Entertainment and said he seemed interested in having Mr. Thayer as a tenant.

After showing some of his completed commercials, which are broadcast on Comcast local cable, Mr. Thayer explained that he tries to make them simple enough that they can be shot and edited within a week. Joe praised Mr. Thayer, stating that his work is impressive. Mr. Thayer said that he would probably be asking for enough financial aide, from Ridgely E.D.C., to cover approximately one year worth of rent. Joe suggested a loan of \$10,000. be requested by Mr. Thayer to get his business started.

Commissioner Chuck Hunter is currently attending a grant application class, where he is working on the Strategic Revitalization Grant for Ridgely. This grant would give Ridgely the possibility to receive up to \$50,000., which could be used to hire an E.D.C. planner. The application for the Revolving Loan Fund will be submitted next week (Dec. 16-Dec. 22).

Joe recommended gearing E.D.C. loans towards small businesses and making loans available to both new and existing businesses. Jerry asked if after the money is taken out, would the account automatically replenish itself or not. Joe explained that the money will keep turning over, and in response to a question from Kelly, he added that the only thing delaying the distribution of money is the loan plan which should be in place by February 1, 2008. He noted that it would be in Ridgely's best interest to move as quickly as possible to receive the money because if Caroline County's status changes from a One Maryland County, the funds will be cut in half.

Joe discussed some ideas he had for loan guidelines, including a possible 3% interest rate, or possibly doing guarantee loans. He would like to see the business owner involve some of their own money, rather than have the Town fully fund them. Kelly questioned whether the rules and policy for loans would be reviewed and agreed upon by E.D.C. members before being set. Joe said that while the Commissioners of Ridgely should be the ones to give final approval over the loan application, the rules and policy would be the responsibility of the E.D.C.. Jerry asked about having a rule regarding length of time a business must stay in Ridgely. Joe agreed that there should be, and that there may also be a clause regarding job creation. Members were asked to think about what rules and policy they would like to see in place, and share ideas at the next meeting.

Joe gave updates on current projects in Ridgely. There is still a problem with MDE and the County is not signing off on any subdivision plans until after it is resolved. Rails to Trails is the only Town project that is moving forward. The Hayman Farmhouse has been demolished and the Brodie Shopping Center has been approved. Mr. Brodie purchased Vicky's Restaurant for \$375,000 with hopes of turning it into either a seafood restaurant or a steakhouse. The building must sit vacant for thirty (30) days before he can do anything with it though. Joe said he would try to talk to Mr. Brodie about converting it into a family restaurant. The County will be taking on the Hanover project, although the Town of Ridgely will be helping out.

Jerry and Leo asked if Joe thought the problem with MDE would be resolved favorably. He admitted that he was unsure what the outcome may be, and said that he believes someone is causing problems because they don't want Ridgely Park coming to Ridgely. Joe went on to discuss the State's flawed inflow and infiltration study on Ridgely, which they have agreed to redo. It is possible that one of the reasons inflow and infiltration is messed up is because of damaged sewer clean outs at individual residences in town. Senator Colburn is now involved in this issue with MDE, and Joe said that Ridgely Park is staying. Joe added that the permit for Ridgely's wastewater treatment plant upgrades will be in to MDE within the 30 days.

The next E.D.C. meeting will be January 9, 2008.

7:54 pm: Meeting Adjourned