

**MONTGOMERY TOWNSHIP BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP**  
**MEETING MINUTES**  
**February 16, 2021**

The monthly meeting of the Montgomery Township Business Development Partnership (BDP) was held at 8:30 A.M. using the virtual meeting platform, TEAMS. The members of the BDP in attendance included Lisa Martin - Chair, JP Northrop, Allen Nappen, Mary Griffith-Alfarano, April Donahue, Jim Brusilovsky, Troy Tradewell, and Gwyn Karpf. Also present was Candyce Fleuhr Chimera, Board of Supervisors' liaison to the Committee, Carolyn McCreary, Township Manager, Bruce Shoupe, Director of Planning & Zoning, and Marianne McConnell, Deputy Zoning Officer.

**Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 8:30 a.m.

**Minutes:** The minutes for the January 19 meeting had been previously circulated for review and approval.

**New Business:** Each Committee member provided an update on their business operations and any issues they are continuing to deal with because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Mr. Nappen (Nappen & Associates) stated he has an RFP for his building in Hatfield Township and spaces in his other buildings are filling up as they become available. He cited the continuing need for more industrial and warehouse space in the area.

Ms. Donahue (QNB Bank) stated they are busy with PPP loans, reminding everyone that a lot of local businesses in the area are hurting.

Mr. Brusilovsky (Mark's Jewelers) stated sales were very good over the Valentine's Day weekend which he attributed in part to a promotional piece sent out as a gift-giving guide. He noted sales were for 9 days compared to 14 days in 2020 due to reduced days open and the recent snowstorm.

Mr. Tradewell (5 Points Automotive) stated he continues to have difficulty in hiring even though he is utilizing Indeed as a source to advertise his employment opportunities.

Mr. Northrop (Edward Jones) stated he has recently been helping professionals who are using the current environment to change jobs or retire.

Ms. Karpf (Simon Properties) stated the past weekend was busy, particularly Saturday the 13<sup>th</sup>. She stated they continue to offer short-term and long-term leases as well as spaces for "pop up" shops for vendors who may have been using the Etsy or Instagram platforms.

Mr. Shoupe stated his department continues to be busy and includes residents who are making inquiries about swimming pool installations.

Ms. Fluehr Chimera stated the real estate market is particularly frustrating right now because buyers are purchasing homes, paying up to \$50,000 over asking price and doing so without looking at them, while inventory remains low.

Ms. Griffith-Alfarano (Fulton Bank) stated she expects interest rates to not rise this year. She noted her customers have also indicated they are having difficulty finding employees for good paying jobs in certain sectors. She stated hospitality and food services are hurting.

She spoke to the committee about issues that can delay the PPP process, even those that are clerical in nature, and explained how it works with bank and underwriting reviews, and the SBA review. She indicated the loans remain on the bank's portfolio until it is forgiven. She also advised there is an employee retention grant that will be made available through the state.

Ms. McCreary stated even in a pandemic the typical work of the Township continues along with some recent snow removal because of two successive storms. She indicated bids had been solicited for the 2021 paving and curb/sidewalk projects. She noted the Township building continues to be open with appointments being recommended. She informed the committee that due to the delays in the vaccination process, all committee meetings will continue to be virtual for the foreseeable future.

**Old Business:** Ms. Martin asked Ms. McCreary to forward the list of businesses with contact information to her and Mr. Northrop.

**Adjournment:**

- Ms. Martin thanked everyone for their updates and participation in the meeting. There being no further business to come before the BDP, the meeting adjourned. The next meeting will be via TEAMS on March 16, 2021.