



MONTHLY REPORT to the BOARD OF SELECTMEN
January 2021

We find ourselves still in the throws of a Covid-19 Pandemic putting pressure on business and limiting opportunities for residents to engage in community events, institutions and with each other. This also gives us time to pause, however, and reflect on how important our community is to each of us. We all look forward to eating out, watching a movie, attending a Kettle Dinner at the Community Center, and freely interacting with our local services. The focus of this office has been on how we can support residents and business so that when we all come out from under this burden, we can jumpstart our community and hasten in a bit of normalcy.

We have been fortunate these past months to partner with the Bridgton Community Center on the CDBG-CV grant by helping administer rental and utility assistance, food assistance and temporary shelter assistance programs for our residents in need. During this time, we have also been posting opportunities for businesses on ongoing and new state and federal assistance program to help keep afloat. To that end we are making progress on new guidelines for the Micro-loan program so it can be used to provide monies to jumpstart stalled business as the vaccination campaign allows communities to reopen its doors not on this limited basis but to fully open once again to the public. In addition, we have been navigating CARE'S ACT and other relief funding opportunities to include much needed childcare assistance and programs. We continue to look to these options as we anticipate a less-restrictive circumstance in the months to come.

On the development front we have been working with a proposed memory care clinic request for a new Tax Increment Finance district that would bring new infrastructure development monies to the town and lower the town's education fees, and county and state tax obligations. We are also in the process of proposing a second set of amendments to some of our zoning ordinances to remove unintended impediments and eliminate conflicts between ordinances that have come to light as we work through our new Land Use Ordinance. We also have a new Arts and Culture Subcommittee to the Community Development Committee that began its meetings in this month and are at work developing a slate of activities to increase opportunities to enjoy arts-related projects and events. Much progress was also made on determining how we can secure access to internet for everyone in our town now when it is so needed to support activities on every level from remote working to telehealth to education and more. Our work with surrounding towns has led to a regional approach that will create economies of scale and a mutually beneficial environment across our larger neighborhood.

The future is promising not in small part because of these efforts from this office but more importantly because of the resilience of our business community and residents to help each other through this strange time and keep our eye on how we will all come out of this together.

Respectfully Submitted,
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Community Development Manager

Office of the Community Development Director