



## Economic Development Committee

### Meeting Minutes

7/18/19

7:30 pm

Room 9, Acton Town Hall, Acton, MA

**Present:** Members—Larry Kenah (Chair), Shirley Ming, Mike Majors, Ann Chang, Derrick Chin, David Didriksen, Josh Fischel (Clerk), Matthew Selby (Staff)—EDD

**Absent:** Peter Daniel, Jon Benson, David Foley

Chair Larry Kenah opened the meeting at 7:35 pm.

### I. Regular Business

1. Public Participation—No public in attendance at the time, and thus no comments.
2. Approval of Meeting Minutes – **The meeting minutes from the EDC's 5/2/19 meeting were reviewed and approved unanimously by a vote of 7-0, with minor, mostly typographical, amendments.**

### II. New/Special Business

3. Next week is Judi Barrett's presentation—This will be available on Acton TV, in case you have scheduling conflicts. This is the wrap-up of the whole project; at some point, there will be a report, though it may not be available at that meeting. Larry Kenah has posted the EDC agenda, in the event that four or more of us show up.
4. Restaurant Week (Peter D and Selby)—There is a logo! It's up on the bulletin board in Town Hall. We've reserved domain names! The Chamber of Commerce will design the page. It's \$50/restaurant (for the Chamber) to pay for advertising. There will be a street banner! Terra Friedrichs suggests a button for people to wear to help owners see who's coming in specifically for Restaurant Week. Peter Daniel has been doing most of the outreach. The target is to have 20 restaurants participate; as of these minutes, there are seven.
5. KMart Parcel—Stop & Shop is officially putting the KMart parcel up for sale. Larry wants to know if the EDC should take a position on what we'd like to see put there. Mike Majors says yes—with the redevelopment of Kelley's Corner, it makes what goes in there that much more important and visible. He advocates for commercial-only space, and says the town must be proactive. Selby says that the Town Manager had a conversation with Stop & Shop, and weeks later, they put it on the market. He suggests that we wait until there's a buyer, and then we sit down with them and talk about what's to be done on the site. David says that if the town meddles at *this* point, it would spook most potential developers. We are not yet at the safe harbor threshold for 40B housing; we thought we would be there in April.



6. EDC Web Page (Selby)—One of the findings you'll hear about at the Judi Barrett presentation is that our town does a dismal job online promoting economic development. Selby has begun to look at what other towns do; he's hoping to create a resource for potential business owners, and to send a message that there's someone here to help you. There'd be information about tax incentives and other links. Selby also mentioned that the rules for Special Tax Assessments (STA's) have changed, and we no longer have to allow businesses to go down to 0% taxation; we can start at whatever reduced tax rate we wish to offer, which makes an STA a much better incentive than it had been before. The committee is enthusiastic about Selby's content; now to add some creative flair. Selby asks us to check out the Town of Holliston EDC.
7. Business Guide—Selby seeks volunteers to help encourage him to make progress on this; there are few takers. Instead, we agree to do this collectively.

### **III. More Regular Business**

8. Mike Majors reports that the Minuteman High School open house and tour was very successful. Shirley Ming attended as well. Mike said it was informative, and he encouraged everyone to go see it. Shirley said it was very impressive and modern; she had questions about the funding model, which Mike said has changed so that tuition fees for member towns are less than for non-member towns. There's already a waiting list for the incoming ninth-grade class this fall. Ann Chang says there will be a Minuteman Bake Sale a few times a year hosted by the library. Mike says there's a state-of-the-art kitchen there (at the high school, not the library). Larry said there is an item he read that Julie's Place is closing on August 11th; Nancy's Airport Café is also looking to sell—neither can find a buyer. David waxes rhapsodically that every business should have an end game. Selby is attempting to make a match with potential buyers. Ann Chang says that sewers will likely be on the Special Town Meeting agenda—it will be on December 10th. Funding for a new school and a fire station will also be up for a vote.
9. Updates from EDD—Manufacturing Day is October 4th. Selby is hoping to get three schools to do tours at Haartz, AES, and Insulet. We're hoping to have another hiring summit in September.

### **IV. Consent Items**

10. None

The meeting is adjourned at 8:52 pm.

The EDC will not meet in August; the next meeting will be Thursday, September 5th.