

Minutes

Town of Acton Economic Development Committee (EDC) Acton Town Hall, Room 204 8-06-2009

Attending: Richard Calandrella, Nancy Dinkel, Terra Friedrichs, Doug Tindal, Ann Chang, Joe Ianelli, Leigh Davis-Honn, and Nick Francis. Gisela Weber attended as a guest.

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM

I. Green Communities Initiative.

The Committee discussed the Green Communities initiative at length and found that virtually all members present approved the initiative in concept. Concerns were raised as to short notice, insufficient information on which to make a judgment, potential long term consequences for business investment, potential negative competitive position for Acton compared to other towns with which Acton competes. Finally, the members felt that the Chamber had not been brought up to speed and consequently the views of the Acton business community were not available. It was unanimously decided that the chairman would draft a memo to the Board of Selectmen expressing the Committee's concerns and recommendation.

II. Coordinated Marketing Initiative with MWCOC.

Nancy Dinkel and Leigh Davis-Honn described discussions held with the Chamber of Commerce relative to the EDC initiative for marketing the Town and coordinating all activities with those of the Chamber. It was agreed to continue to pursue that dialogue, particularly as the Marketing Team begins to develop specific activities which would require manpower of the sort which the Chamber is uniquely qualified to provide. Discussion was held of comments received from the Chamber about the difficulty of obtaining signage. It was agreed that such concerns were directly within the Agenda of the Team supporting Existing Businesses.

III. Discussion of Acton Farmer's Market

Committee members discussed the new Farmer's Market, now over a month in business. Impacts on nearby merchants, availability of parking, reports of high prices, and general logistics were discussed. It was agreed to continue to monitor the FM itself, but also to pay closer attention to problems or opportunities arising out of the WAV merchants' situation during Market days.

IV. Approval of Minutes

Minutes were approved for the meetings of March 19, July 9, and July 16.

V. Review of progress in the Demographics/Research Team

Team members Ianelli, Francis, and Calandrella reported on the collection of websites containing useful information relative to Acton. Discussion was held as to how to boil this information down

into its most relevant elements. Team members are assembling an essential list of sites, but noted that the task of separating out the most useful material was proving to be time intensive. Discussion was held of how to provide additional manpower, how to concentrate on the most sought after subcategories, and of how to stage in the results over time. Discussion was held of how to house the information while it is being assembled, and then later when it is posted and made available to the public. Discussion of the potential for the Town website was held, it was agreed that the final position for the results of the Demographics Team were premature considering that the Team had only been operating for a few weeks. Team members reported that some of the agencies which had been approached were enthusiastic that the Town was undertaking the effort.

VI. A motion to adjourn was made, seconded and passed unanimously at 9:45.

The next meeting of the EDC is scheduled for August 20th.