

**Town of Medway
Economic Development Committee
Wednesday April 13, 2016
76 Oakland Street
Medway, MA 02053**

PRESENT:

Paul Yorkis, Hugh McKinnon, Ken Bancewicz, Scott Habeeb, Andy Rodenhiser
Tina Chemini, Eric Arbeene, Alissa Rodenhiser, and Keith Peden.

NOT PRESENT:

The Chairman asked if there were comments from the general public. There were no comments.

Discussion on Committee Work Plan:

The Economic Development Committee was in receipt of the tasks of the Economic Development Committee as noted in Section 2.20. This document references that “the committee will work proactively to promote, encourage, and facilitate the development responsible and properly planned business and industrial growth within the community in order to expand and strengthen the local economy and diversify the community tax base.

The Committee discussed coming up with a long term economic development plan based on the goals noted in the master plan. Although the EDC is advisory, this committee can provide recommendations to the Board of Selectmen and the Planning and Economic Development Board. The Committee would like to put together action items and strategies which can be monitored.

The Economic Development Committee next discussed the following ideas to stimulate Economic Development:

- The town could hold a food truck festival at one of the shopping areas. This is currently done in the Town of Natick.
- Reach out to the Cultural Council. This type of event gives the town exposure.
- Use such groups as the lions club to encourage economic development.
- Sponsor a Military Band event which could be open to outside the community.
- Continue taking advantage of the membership and events sponsored by the Metrowest Tourism Bureau.
- Hold events similar to Taste of Holliston, Holiday Stroll, and October Fest which are done in the Town of Holliston.
- Have an old fashion car show in plaza parking lot.
- Hold an event similar to Metro Fest which would be held in September or June. Check what is needed for liability insurance.
- Create a business improvement district for purpose of helping with the planning and marketing of these events and the central business district area.
- Adopt a highway program.

The concern about the ideas listed above are that these are one-time events and while may help some businesses during the event, it does not provide for long-term impacts for economic development.

Economic Development Legislation:

The members are in receipt of a document dated January 28, 2016 regarding a bill filed in relation to “Providing Opportunities for All”. This legislation is the first step in implementing a plan to promote economic prosperity for businesses at the state level. This bill will also streamline and simplify the Economic Development Incentive Program.

Continued discussion on Planning for Economic Development:

The discussion then moved to how the Town would deal with the MS4 permit as it relates to stormwater management in the central business district. This permit will be in effect July 2017. The town will need to discuss how to come up with options on how to handle the stormwater in this area.

The Committee also discussed utilizing the new communications director to see how to shape and market a business district. In a monthly business newsletter, there is now a business spotlight column focusing on a different business each month. This will also be added to the website. It was recommended to invite the communications director to the next meeting.

The EDC further discussed that there needs to be dialogue about how to create a larger tax base and set a goal for 2020. The committee needs to think more horizontally instead of vertically by setting the goals and coming up with action items to accomplish the goals. The EDC would like to create a strategic plan for the next ten years. There also needs to be further communication with the business owners about how it is to do business in Medway.

Some of the question asked were:

- How do we want to market of brand the Town of Medway?
- What do we want to be identified as? (green community, bedroom committee etc.)
- What is the brand for the Town of Medway and how do we market this?

The town has done some of this research through the Medway Redevelopment Authority. The Authority is tasked with looking at the bottlecap lots and an Urban Renewal Plan will be developed with the hope to stimulate and foster economic development.

The EDC next discussed having Stephanie look at parcels which may be of interest to a business owner. Six parcels were identified, but there is really only potential for three of those.

The EDC would like to see this committee as business ambassadors. There are a lot of buildings which are for sale in town and some are vacant and becoming dilapidated. It would be great to work with a business owner who may need one of these spaces to come up with a plan to clean these up and use them for mixed use.

There was discussion that the many older residents with four bedrooms homes want to sell and move into a smaller home, but there is not a lot of this type of housing stock in Medway. There are also not a lot of affordable first time homes in Medway. It was suggested that the Committee can play a role in impacting the rules and policies to get housing rentals in this area.

It was suggested that a small group but not a quorum of the EDC get together with Stephanie to brainstorm and create an outline from these discussions on how to move forward.

The EDC was made aware that there is currently a shuttle bus which picks up Medway residents and brings them to the Norfolk Train Station. This service is also provided in the evening. The Committee would like to see this schedule posted on the town website along with on the Friends of Medway site.

Sign Bylaw Task Force:

The EDC was given an update on the sign bylaw task force. This committee will review the existing sign bylaws and will be tasked with providing recommendations. It was suggested that there be some type of signs created to indicate the proximity of a business district.

Route 109 Project:

The contract for the Route 109 project is expected to be awarded soon. There will be an upcoming meeting with the MASS DOT anticipated in May. There will also be a preconstruction meeting which will take place afterwards. There needs to be a plan for communication for businesses and the residents.

Route 109/Trotter Drive CTPS Report:

The EDC was made aware that the work order was put in for the damaged sign at the industrial park. Tom Holder informed Stephanie that things are moving. It was suggested to get the contact information about possibly filing a claim to get it fixed. There is a concern about the fact it is taking too long to get these items addressed. The report which noted short term and long term goals was done almost a year ago. To date, none of those goals have been accomplished. This is extremely frustrating. Stephanie will follow-up Allison about the discussion which took place regarding an appropriation for possible state funds to make this happen.

Update on Cybex:

Member Bancewicz informed the EDC that Cybex is merging with a company from Illinois. There has been no decision about what will happen with Cybex products. There will not be a plan for the facility until the end of the year. There is a lot of uncertainty. The company is to remain but it will be two different brands. The town did reach out to the owner of the new company to keep the facility up and running here in Medway.

Committee Report:

Warrant Articles:

The Economic Development Committee recommended to the Planning and Economic Development Board at the last meeting to pull the article relating to rezoning some parcels from ARII to Industrial II.

Task to Complete:

- The EDC needs a vision.
- Create clear and attainable goals.
- Research desirable parcels for businesses or developers.
- Influence businesses on what we do not want. For example, another tire business.
- Define potential opportunities in commercial, industrial and overlay districts. Prioritize this list.
- Visit individual businesses and ask them about what issues they might have and how to make sure we keep them in town.
- Increase commercial base by 5% in 5-10 years.
- Provide the PEDB with recommendations on what would be a good plan for the West Street area for long term planning.

Minutes:

March 9, 2016:

On a motion made by Hugh McKinnon, and seconded by Andy Rodenhiser, the minutes from March 9, 2016 were accepted with revisions.

Other Business:

The site plan for 2 Marc Rd. for a medical marijuana dispensary was filed. There will be a public hearing on this to be held Tuesday April 26, 2016 at the Middle School at 8:45 pm.

Next Meeting:

The next meeting date is Wednesday, May 11, 2016.

Adjourn:

On a motion made by Andy Rodenhiser, and seconded by Keith Peden, the Economic Development Committee voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 8:41 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Amy Sutherland
Transcribed from audio tape
Approved May 11, 2016

