

TOWN OF STOW
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
AND INDUSTRIAL COMMISSION

Minutes of the August 13, 2015 Economic Development and Industrial Commission Meeting

Members Present: Tom Farnsworth, Serena Howlett, Bob Collings, Andrew Bernstein and Kevin Whalen

Tom Farnsworth called the meeting to order at 7:10 pm

Members' Updates

Ace Hardware was sold to Aubuchon Hardware. A grand opening will be held soon.

Welcome Letter

Karen Kelleher suggested that the Commission send a welcome letter to new businesses such as Aubuchon Hardware, and the two new businesses at Minute Man Airfield (Ice cream establishment and distillery). Karen will draft a letter for the Commission to review at the next meeting.

Survey Update

Bob Collings reported that he called about ten businesses. Most responded that they are small businesses that have no issues or interest. Andrew Bernstein said has been reaching out word of mouth.

Marketing Stow

Members discussed ways to get businesses together and finding ways to market Stow. Serena Howlett will forward information on "Branding a Community" that might be helpful to the Commission. It was agreed that the Commission needs to find a way to market Stow through planning events, and creating a logo to designed around things that represent Stow's character such as conservation land, recreation, golf, apples, and farms.

Sign Bylaw

Members discussed the sign bylaw. Some noted that the bylaw is not business friendly. Directional signs are too small and in conflict with agricultural signs. The bylaw should accommodate grand opening and temporary sale signs, noting that Hobby Land ran into a problem with their grand opening sign in the form of a rocket. Some questioned why signs on private property should or can be regulated.

It was agreed that the Commission should look at area town bylaws (Acton, Sudbury, Hudson, Maynard and Bolton).

Noise Bylaw

Members briefly discussed the proposal to update the noise bylaw. Bob Collings suggested that the Town should look at OSHA information regarding noise decibels and duration.

MassWorks Infrastructure Grant Application

Karen Kelleher reported that the Planning Department will be submitting a MassWorks Infrastructure Grant Application for the Lower Village section of Route 117 and requested that the Commission provide a letter of support.

Karen and Tom explained that the final design and construction plans are a result of many years of planning, beginning with the former Lower Village Sub-Committee. The Final Plan will provide for improved pedestrian and vehicular traffic flow and easier access to businesses.

Tom Farnsworth moved to send a letter of support of the MassWorks Infrastructure Grant Application. The motion was seconded by Serena Howlett and carried by a unanimous vote of five members present (Tom Farnsworth, Serena Howlett, Bob Collings, Andrew Bernstein and Kevin Whalen).

Property Owners

It was agreed to invite property owners to meet with the Commission in October.

Committee Name

Members discussed the Commission's name and wondered if the fact that it includes "Industrial" is a detriment. Karen Kelleher explained that the Commission's name is by statute, adopted by the Town. It was also noted that "Industrial" is and should be part of Stow's Economic Development Plan noting that Bose, Radant and Minute Man Airfield are big parts of Stow's economic base.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Kelleher
Town Planner