

TOWN OF STOW
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
AND INDUSTRIAL COMMISSION

Minutes of the August 25, 2016 Economic Development and Industrial Commission Meeting

Members Present: Rich Eckel, Tom Farnsworth, Bob Collings, Serena Howlett, Kevin Whalen, Andrew Bluestein

Rich Eckel called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm.

Meeting Minutes of July 14, 2016

Andrew Bluestein moved to approve the minutes as written.

Bob Collings seconded.

VOTED: (6-0) Unanimously in favor (Rich Eckel, Tom Farnsworth, Bob Collings, Serena Howlett, Kevin Whalen, Andrew Bluestein-Yea).

Members' Updates

With Ken Duval's resignation, the EDIC requested that staff hear where his work left off and what a path forward could look like.

Follow up on Medical Offices in Lower Village

Steve Steinberg has been working with strategic planning and marketing personnel from Emerson Hospital to open a medical facility in Lower Village. Jesse Steadman and Steve Steinberg met with representatives from Emerson Hospital to inform them of plans for Lower Village improvements. They discussed how Emerson Hospital selects sites, how trade areas work, and where they currently have locations.

The EDIC discussed the difficulty of leasing to businesses with limitations on the water supply. They discussed visions for mixed use development in Lower Village, and requested new information regarding clean up at the former Mobil gas station.

Rich Eckel and the EDIC agreed to sign a letter of support for bringing Emerson Hospital to Lower Village.

Andrew Bluestein moved to support Steve Steinberg in writing a letter of support for Emerson Hospital.

Kevin Whalen seconded.

VOTED: (6-0)Unanimously in favor (Rich Eckel, Tom Farnsworth, Bob Collings, Serena Howlett, Kevin Whalen, Andrew Bluestein-Yea).

Letter of Support for 2016 MassWorks Infrastructure Program Grant

Jesse Steadman reported that the MassWorks grant round has officially opened and that the Planning Board would greatly appreciate the EDIC's support again this year. Jesse Steadman noted that the Highway Department has increased their contribution to Lower Village improvements this year.

Rich Eckel and the EDIC said they would support the MassWorks grant, and would like to incorporate statistics based on the 2015 survey into the letter of support.

Jesse Steadman asked if the EDIC had interest in reaching out to Lower Village businesses that the Town will be requesting easements from. Rich Eckel said he would support this type of outreach, and suggested a letter also be printed in the Stow Independent. Bob Collings said that this letter should articulate the costs and benefits of the plans.

Rich Eckel moved to pledge support behind the MassWorks Infrastructure Program Grant. Tom Farnsworth seconded.

VOTED: (6-0)Unanimously in favor (Rich Eckel, Tom Farnsworth, Bob Collings, Serena Howlett, Kevin Whalen, Andrew Bluestein-Yea).

Follow up on Business Directory

Serena Howlett discussed the Welcome to Bolton sign, which lists several local businesses. The EDIC discussed their appreciation for the sign and interest in learning more about it.

Andrew Bluestein shared the Town of Hudson's involvement with Action Unlimited, and discussed multi-town business advertising. To follow up, Kevin Whalen will call Barbara Locke.

Planner's Report

Community Announcements

- Minuteman Ribbon Cutting on Friday from 5-8pm September 16th for flight school Grand Opening.
- ***Grand Opening Assistance***
Kimberley Ramos | Professional Aesthetics of Central Massachusetts, LLC.
Wondering if there is a business association that could help her organize a grand

opening. Members of the EDIC agreed that she should be directed to the Assabet Chamber of Commerce.

Lower Village Traffic Update

Jesse Steadman reported that Planning staff have begun reaching out to property owners to kickstart discussions of providing pedestrian improvement and temporary construction easements ahead of the formal MassWorks Infrastructure Program application filing with the state. Jesse Steadman said that based on feedback from the consultant, they have identified a few solutions that can help ease concern around the new designs from a property owner perspective.

Lower Village Water Update

Jesse Steadman reported that he and Valerie Oorthuys attended a meeting with Rich Presti, Steve Steinberg and Roy Angel of MassDevelopment to discuss the potential for some of their lending programs to be reconfigured to assist on a small project, such as funding a private entity to create a public water supply. Jesse Steadman said that Roy Angel asked for a narrative from the Town detailing the plan in place for Lower Village in order to provide MassDevelopment with context for the request. Jesse Steadman said the narrative serves as a helpful primer on the issues and progress in the planning effort for Lower Village.

The EDIC discussed concerns over water access and sidewalk easements in Lower Village, specifically noting the layout of curb cuts around 92 Great Road. Jesse Steadman said that the Town is working steadily toward implementing the finalized plans from the transportation consultants at Howard Stein Hudson and that land owners in the Lower Village are being contacted to discuss the progress.

Jesse Steadman and the EDIC discussed how water access limits growth and constrains business. Jesse Steadman pointed to Massachusetts DEP standards for restaurant and office uses, and described Zone 1 well requirements. Stow relies on businesses to create Zone 1 wells to support their businesses, and a small business owner likely wouldn't have the amount of open land needed to steward the well. The process is further complicated by restrictions placed on open land, such as Conservation Restrictions and Article 97 land.

Gleasondale Improvement Efforts

Jesse Steadman noted that a Planning Department staff working group in Gleasondale Village has been actively pursuing improving a small park, creating a walking trail and adding historically appropriate signage to identify Gleasondale Village. Jesse Steadman said the efforts are a step toward completing several of the short term action steps identified in the Gleasondale Revitalization Plan, which largely centers around making the mill a more viable redevelopment opportunity. The efforts may be something that the EDIC could consider supporting as they move toward the phase of identifying funding opportunities for the work.

Meeting Adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

Valerie Oorthuys