

TOWN OF STOW
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
AND INDUSTRIAL COMMISSION

Minutes of the January 12, 2017 Economic Development and Industrial Commission Meeting

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

Absent:

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

Meeting Minutes of December 8, 2016

Bob Collings moved to approve the minutes as written.

Kevin Whalen Seconded.

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

Members' Updates

None.

Discussion of Work Plan/ Next Steps on Priority Projects

Andrew Bluestein suggested methods of retaining and marketing businesses at Springfest, saying that creating a logo and slogan for the Town would be valuable. The logo and slogan could be put on a T-shirt sold through local businesses and at Springfest, with proceeds going to local causes. Andrew Bluestein suggested that a slogan should highlight what makes Stow unique, such as community activism or apple orchards. The EDIC agreed that a slogan would help advertise economic development in Stow, and may help create a 'year round' brand.

The EDIC discussed additional methods of advertising local businesses, such as a map of Stow that showcases businesses.

Serena Howlett reviewed her correspondence with the project manager at 124 Great Road. The EDIC agreed that they would like the project manager to discuss any updates on the project with them at an upcoming meeting.

Stow Job Fair

Andrew Bluestein noted that many local businesses, particularly in Lower Village, are hiring and struggling to find enough employees. The EDIC discussed opportunities to sponsor, promote, or organize a job fair in Lower Village or at Springfest.

Follow up on Signage Bylaw Discussion

Bob Collings presented his research into legal implications of municipal sign bylaws, noting concern for businesses to be able to easily interpret the bylaw. The EDIC discussed their concerns with the current bylaw, and considered steps to review or rewrite it. Members of the EDIC expressed interest in employing a consultant for a legal review, to be presented to the Planning Board, which could then decide whether to revisit the current bylaw. The EDIC discussed the feasibility of hiring a consultant, what the consultant's background should be, and which Town Board or Committee should manage the project.

Members of the EDIC noted that it would be helpful to review the EDIC's budget at an upcoming meeting.

Serena Howlett moved to write a letter to the Planning Board that states that the EDIC has identified the Sign Bylaw as an issue, and would like to bring concerns of the sign bylaw to the attention of the Planning Board course of action is.

Bob Collings Seconded.

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

Meeting Adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

Valerie Oorthuys