

TOWN OF STOW
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
AND INDUSTRIAL COMMISSION

Minutes of the April 19, 2018 Economic Development and Industrial Commission Meeting

Members Present: Kevin Whalen, Tom Farnsworth, Bob Collings, Serena Howlett, Jen Gero

Absent: Andrew Bluestein, Jean-Claude Sureau

Kevin Whalen called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm.

Meeting Minutes of March 22, 2018

Tom Farnsworth moved to approve the minutes as written.

Bob Collings Seconded.

VOTED: (5-0) Unanimously in favor (Kevin Whalen, Tom Farnsworth, Bob Collings, Serena Howlett, Jen Gero- Yea).

Public Input

Peter Cavallaro, of Great Road Firearms, introduced himself to the Commission as a new business owner in town. Peter Cavallaro said that his store opened on March 10th, after completing all necessary permits and safety checks through the Federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives and local public safety officials. Peter Cavallaro answered the Commission members' questions regarding the purchasing of firearms in the region, the types of items he sells, as well as the choice to locate in Stow. Peter Cavallaro said that numerous gun ranges and clubs are within a close radius and residents of Stow own over 1,000 gun permits.

Member Updates

None.

Planner's Updates

Jesse Steadman said that the Lower Village Traffic Safety Improvement Project is underway and E.T.&L. Corp has begun to install tree protection and stack materials on the Lower Common. Jesse Steadman said that construction is expected to last through August.

Job Fair

Valerie Oorthuys said that the function room at the Pompositticut Community Center is available on the evenings of June 27 and June 28 or midday on July 14. Jen Gero said that she would take those dates to volunteers to see when would work best for them.

Tom Farnsworth said that Massachusetts Manufacturing Extension Partnership should be contacted to see if they are interested in attending the fair.

The EDIC discussed whether to charge employers to attend the job fair, as a means of securing their RSVP.

Jen Gero said that she could advertise for the job fair and the work of the EDIC at SpringFest.

Public Water Supply Policy

Jesse Steadman provided the Commission with a presentation regarding Public Water Supplies. The presentation describes types of wells, public water supply systems, and the history of water access issues in Lower Village. Jesse Steadman described how Lower Village's growth is limited by public water supply infrastructure.

Jesse Steadman said that an updated feasibility study could show what is possible for growth in Lower Village. Jesse Steadman said that the upcoming Business District and Market Analysis for Lower Village should provide an economic foundation for future zoning and growth expectations. Due to this, Jesse Steadman said it appears to be an appropriate time to revisit public water supply concerns in town.

The EDIC agreed that it may be helpful to add to the presentation a map of towns in Massachusetts without Public Water Supplies, as well as a description of how dependent Stow is on the commercial tax base. Jesse Steadman said that it would be helpful to learn from other towns what change in local taxes were seen in regional towns as their downtowns developed, to better understand what Stow could expect from supporting the businesses on the south side of Great Road.

Preparation for Interviews with Local Business Owners

Serena Howlett said that she feels it is important to share the Massachusetts Downtown Initiative grant narrative with local owners to help frame a conversation around improvements to the Business District.

The EDIC agreed to send out a list of questions along with the grant narrative to owners prior to meeting with them.

*Bob Collings moved to approve the list of questions to ask business and property owners.
Tom Farnsworth seconded.*

VOTED: (5-0) Unanimously in favor (Kevin Whalen, Tom Farnsworth, Bob Collings, Serena Howlett, Jen Gero- Yea).

The EDIC agreed to invite a representative from Linear Realty to their meeting of May 10th.

Sign Bylaw Next Steps

Valerie Oorthuys noted that a model sign bylaw and the sign bylaw from the Town of Norwood, revised after recent Supreme Court rulings to be content neutral, were sent out to members.

The EDIC agreed to take this item up on a future agenda, tentatively the evening of May 24th, when more time could be spent on the subject.

Meeting Adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,
Valerie Oorthuys