

TOWN OF STOW
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
AND INDUSTRIAL COMMISSION

Minutes of the June 14, 2018 Economic Development and Industrial Commission Meeting

Members Present: Kevin Whalen, Tom Farnsworth, Jen Gero, Jean-Claude Sureau, Serena Howlett

Absent: Bob Collings

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

Meeting Minutes of May 24, 2018

Tom Farnsworth moved to approve the minutes as written.

Serena Howlett Seconded.

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

Public Input

None

Sign Bylaw Discussion

Present: Leonard Golder of Stow Planning Board

Leonard Golder, of the Stow Planning Board, presented to the Commission on the core aspects of updating the sign bylaw from the Planning Board perspective. Leonard Golder noted the following:

- Lower Village sign regulations are important aspect to sign regulations in Stow;
- Design and continuity of design within a district are important aspects to consider;
- The idea that there could be incentives to provide better design is strong;
- Corporate signs will also need to conform and have been demonstrated to do so in other communities.

Leonard Golder discussed the case of Reid vs. Gilbert that ended with a Supreme Court Decision regarding free speech and municipal sign bylaws. Leonard Golder asked a series of rhetorical questions that could help understand the limitations of sign bylaws, including whether a bylaw could be passed that limited signage to make it so small that it is discriminatory; and whether specific verbiage descriptions would be found unconstitutional.

Leonard Golder said that in the context of Reid v. Gilbert, regulating the time, place and manner of signs though zoning is a more defensible approach.

Leonard Golder acknowledged that new updates to the zoning bylaw could be difficult. He noted the importance to Stow of agriculture, and whether a bylaw update could still allow different standards for seasonal agriculture. He also asked whether existing signs would be grandfathered. Leonard Golder said that no matter what types of regulations are proposed, the reality of whether they can be enforced is critical to their effectiveness.

Job Fair

Jennifer Gero and members of the EDIC discussed final planning matters before the June 28th Job Fair.

Meeting Adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,
Jesse Steadman