

TOWN OF STOW
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & INDUSTRIAL COMMISSION

Minutes of the February 25, 2021 Economic Development & Industrial Commission Meeting

Members Present: Serena Howlett, Thomas Farnsworth, Kevin Whalen, Bob Collings, David Elkins, Jen Gero

Kevin Whalen called the meeting to order at 5:30

*Thomas Farnsworth moved to accept the minutes from the January 28, 2021 meeting as written
Serena Howlett seconded*

Roll Call: Kevin Whalen -**Yea**; Serena Howlett -**Yea**; Thomas Farnsworth -**Yea**; Bob Collings -**Yea**;
David Elkins -**Yea**; Jen Gero -**Yea**

Member updates

David Elkins inquired whether representative of Linear retail could be invited back to a future meeting to address issues around support for their tenants. that members had previously raised. Town Planner Jesse Steadman said he will reach out and invite a representative to a future meeting of the Commission.

Serena Howlett requested more information about an upcoming 40B development in Bolton, Jesse Steadman said he will reach out to officials in Bolton for more about the project.

Jen Gero conveyed frustration from local business owners and investors about the signage bylaws, specifically from the owner of the 108 Great Road site over difficulties obtaining a building permit. Jesse Steadman said he would follow up with the site owner to clarify.

Jen Gero offered to represent the Economic Development & Industrial Commission at the March 3, 2021 Town Boards volunteer recruitment night.

Mass Office of Business Development Route 117 corridor grant proposal

Kevin Whalen inquired how the cost figures in the recent grant application to the Massachusetts Office of Business Development (MOBD) were determined. Jesse Steadman explained that these cost figures are ballpark estimates based on comparable projects in the region.

Members of the Commission requested updates on the anticipated sale of the Bose campus off Great Road. Jesse Steadman explained that the town wants to get out ahead of development proposals, especially if any prospective developers want to change the zoning to meet what they believe to be the best and highest use.

Update to Stow Business Assoc. Brochure

Serena Howlett explained that past version of the Business Association directory was considered advertising, and required payment from participating businesses to be listed, which discouraged participation. Bob Collings and Thomas Farnsworth raised concern that including home-based business in

any update to the directory would make the brochure excessively large, but that excluding these businesses could demonstrate favoritism by the town. Bob Collings suggested doing a simple email outreach to businesses in the EDIC list and request their participation. Jen Gero and David Elkins offered to reach out to local business to gauge interest in an updated version of the business directory.

Lower Village Water System Feasibility

The Commission discussed its options for supporting a feasibility study for a public water system to serve the Lower Village area. Jesse Steadman suggested that the Commission begin outreach to business owners about sharing cost of a water supply feasibility study. Serena Howlett requested an estimate for what such a study would cost. Jesse Steadman responded that he believes Town residents would want to see some buy in from the local businesses that would be affected prior to expending funds that would benefit a certain number of property owners.

Members of the Commission indicated that they would reach out to the business owners in Lower Village to gauge interest in contributing to a future water system feasibility study.

Other Business

Jesse Steadman informed the Commission that he would inquire to the Town Administrator about the process to install a new streetlight on Great Road, following a request from the owners of Nan's Market.

Jesse Steadman requested that Commission members compile possible projects to bring before Town Administrator, to then carry on to the Board of Selectman for funding requests.

Respectfully submitted,

Malcolm Ragan