



## Economic Development Committee

Meeting Minutes

3/7/19

7:30 pm

Room 9, Acton Town Hall, Acton, MA

**Present:** Larry Kenah (Chair), Dave Didriksen, Mike Majors, Ann Chang, Derrick Chin, Shirley Ming, Josh Fischel (Clerk)

**Absent:** Peter Daniel, Jon Benson, David Foley (members); Matthew Selby (staff)

### 1. Opening

Chair Larry Kenah opened the meeting at 7:31 pm.

### 2. Regular Business

A. Approval of Meeting Minutes – **The meeting minutes from the EDC’s 2/21/19 meeting were reviewed and approved unanimously by a vote of 7-0, with minor, mostly typographical amendments.**

B. Public Participation—There was none.

C. Updates from members—Mike brings up Minuteman High School. The substantial completion date for the high school is July 25th. September 25th, they’ll be entirely complete. That’s a year ahead of schedule. Shirley asks how many students from Acton go there; Mike says it’s around 30.

Next meeting, the committee will attend the Kelley’s Corner Open House on March 21st.

The committee will not meet on April 4th, immediately after Town Meeting, or on April 18th, because of Larry’s absence. Our next meeting will be on Thursday, May 2nd.

D. Updates from Selby—Selby is absent.

### 3. New/Special Business

A. Respond to latest OML complaint—The most recent complaint says we missed the date to respond to the previous date by one day. We did actually respond within the 14-day limit because we held a meeting within that time frame in open session, which the complainant could have attended. Larry avails us of his draft response; we discuss it. **Josh Fischel moves that Larry Kenah be charged with crafting the response to the OML complaint received on March 4th, 2019. It is passed unanimously, by a vote of 7-0.**



B. Discuss town meeting articles relevant to EDC—We revisited the Kelley’s Corner article (currently Article #5) on the upcoming Town Meeting warrant and whether we should voice our collective support. David went to the forum, changed his mind (positively) about the plan, but remains unsure that the EDC should weigh in on it. Josh asks if we think the vote will be close enough—or if there will be enough division amongst other groups offering support or opposition—to make it necessary for the EDC to weigh in; Larry says he would not take that into consideration to decide whether we should vote. Ann thinks that, long-term, this is likely to be advantageous to businesses there. **Ann moves that the EDC supports Article 5, regarding Kelley’s Corner Infrastructure project. It passes unanimously, by a vote of 7-0.**

Regarding sewers, Ann Chang is meeting with businesses in West Acton next Tuesday.

Larry wants to talk about three more articles:

Re: plastic bags—Larry visited several local businesses that use plastic bags. His findings: most but not all retailers were aware of the proposed ban. It seemed to him that there are direct and indirect costs on retailers. Plastic bags are cheaper than paper bags. Plastic bags take up less storage space than paper bags. Some stores were already paper-only. One retailer was adamantly opposed to the ban. Several retailers wondered how they would find out about next steps if the ban passes. One retailer assumed the state would impose this ban soon anyway, so our efforts would be moot. Shirley advocates for a price attached to getting a plastic bag. David says this is a feel-good effort, but it’s a drop in the bucket in terms of the overall plastic we use and consume. The bags also act as a security device.

Re: turning lanes for Route 27 and Route 111—Larry brings up a book he’s read about traffic by Tom Vanderbilt; the discussion turns to storage lanes and roundabouts and traffic density. Shirley re-directs us to move from pedantry to economic impact; we decide there is not enough there for us to contribute our collective voice at Town Meeting.

Re: register intent to purchase the K-Mart parcels—a member of the public spoke with parents who were interested in a way to dictate that a community rec center be on that property. Mike says he was told that registering the intent does not block 40B housing there. Ann is skeptical that eminent domain would work here, and that we’re building schools and perhaps a fire station for hundreds of millions of dollars—there’s little stomach to buy another parcel for which we have no immediate use. David is “unalterably, vehemently opposed” to this article because “eminent domain is tyranny.” **Derrick moves that the EDC opposes Article 38, to oppose registering intent to purchase the K-Mart parcel. This passes unanimously, by a vote of 7-0.**

#### **4. Adjournment**

At 8:44 p.m., it was moved and seconded to adjourn the meeting.

**The motion was approved unanimously, 7-0.**



**List of Documents:**

OML Complaint received 3/4/2019

Draft Minutes from 2/21/19