

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE  
ACTON, MASSACHUSETTS 01720  
MEETING MINUTES (OCTOBER 21, 2010)

(APPROVED) at November 4, 2010 EDC Meeting)

Prepared by Associate Member Dick Calandrella

**LOCATION** --- Acton, Massachusetts Town Hall (Room 204)

**MEMBERS ATTENDING** --- Doug Tindal / David Didriksen / Chris Pappas / Nancy Dinkel / Dick Calandrella

**GUESTS ATTENDING** --- None

**MEETING BEGAN** --- 7:24 p.m.

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION** --- None

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES** --- Not Done – pending are minutes from September 16, 2010 meeting

**CURRENT ISSUES (SIGN REVIEW PANEL UPDATE)** --- This discussion occupied most of the meeting. Some members feel the Sign Bylaw is “unenforceable” and that all existing signs should be “grandfathered” and start fresh.

Next steps were discussed. Hard look at the Bylaw language is recommended to help make it more understandable and enforceable. Suggestion that a “sunset law” be enacted – signs can only be displayed for a set period of time and then be reviewed.

Comment that the “process” is not working, and that the entire process of signage Bylaw and enforcement should be reviewed. Examples given on how some of the Sign Review Panel meetings with businesses were not a productive use of time or cost, and that many of the issues could have been resolved more effectively through more timely and personal forms of communication.

Comment that some discretion be allowed in enforcement, but this was countered by saying the law allows “no” discretion.

It was agreed that the Synopsis being prepared by the 4 EDC members who sat on the Sign Review Panel be completed as quickly as possible (before next meeting in

November) --- that recommendations on how to deal with the sign issues be attached to the Synopsis --- and that this be reviewed by the entire EDC Committee.

Discussion then moved to next target area for Sign enforcement --- when and where?

It was basically agreed to wait until the holiday period has ended.

West Acton Village had earlier been discussed as the next target area, but since West Acton Village also falls within an “historic district” with even more stringent limitations, then it was suggested that perhaps Powder Mill Road be a better choice and this should be checked out.

Comment that the final phase of the sign review process should be “education” --- how to effectively do business with the town.

It was suggested that all members read the Sign Bylaw with a goal of perhaps amending the language.

Also, it was suggested that there should be meetings with selected town officials to discuss the EDC findings, and seek their comment/input.

**CURRENT ISSUES (BYLAW ENFORCEMENT PROCESS)** --- This was essentially discussed in the above section.

**NEW BUSINESS** --- Not discussed

**DEMOGRAPHICS TEAM UPDATE** --- Brief report that Leigh Davis Honn and Dick Calandrella (EDC members) and Jim Synder-Grant (Acton 2020 member) have been meeting and will continue to meet regularly to expand and refine the data gathering process.

**MARKETING TEAM UPDATE** --- None

**NEW & EXISTING BUSINESS SUPPORT TEAM UPDATE** --- Not discussed

**PATH FORWARD** --- Not really discussed, but indicated that all activities continue toward resolution.

**ADJOURN** --- 9:11 p.m.

-END-