

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

ACTON, MASSACHUSETTS 01720

MEETING MINUTES (JANUARY 6, 2011)

Minutes Approved 7-21-11

Prepared by Associate Member Dick Calandrella

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

MEMBERS ATTENDING --- Joe Ianelli / David Didriksen / Chris Pappas / Nancy Dinkel / Ann Chang / Dick Calandrella

MEETING BEGAN --- 7:15 p.m.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION --- None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES --- Not Done – pending are minutes from David Didriksen and Leigh Davis-Honn

CURRENT ISSUES (SIGN REVIEW PANEL UPDATE) --- Committee notes that it must immediately submit its Sign Review Panel Report, but notes that 2 reports currently exist. One, prepared by the Sign Review Panel and the other a summary prepared by Chairman Doug Tindal. The “Sense of the Committee” is that a single EDC Sign Review Panel Report be immediately prepared, reviewed by entire committee, approved, and then submitted to appropriate Town officials as soon as possible.

Also discussed were next steps in the sign review process. With the holiday period ended, a new target area for sign enforcement be approved. NOTE: West Acton Village had been previously identified as the target area but since it is also a “Historic District” other guidelines would apply in addition to the sign bylaw, so the South Acton area (Powdermill Road) was identified as the new target area. Discussion about next steps should be held with Sign Enforcement Officer Scott Mutch and Town Planner Roland Bartl.

CURRENT ISSUES (BYLAW ENFORCEMENT PROCESS-NEXT STEPS) --- See previous section and also extensive comments noted in the EDC Meeting Minutes of October 21, 2010

NEW BUSINESS --- Not discussed

DEMOGRAPHICS TEAM UPDATE --- Dick reported that he continues to integrate business data received from Jim Synder-Grant (Acton 2020 member) into the EDC Business Database and hopes to complete it in January.

MARKETING TEAM UPDATE --- Leigh Davis-Honn not present at meeting, but Committee believes that the Business Survey she is working on has been completed, and now awaits distribution. Questions were raised about the status of the list of businesses to be contacted --- whether we have both E-Mail and postal mail addresses for those businesses --- what sources will be used to gather those addresses --- whether the survey will be distributed electronically via Survey Monkey and postal mail -- and who will tabulate the survey results?

Also discussed was the status of the EDC Directory of Retail Businesses in Acton and what sources were needed to find the list of those businesses. One source noted would be the EDC Business Database. Suggestions were also made to contact Christine Joyce in the Town Manager's office, and also contact the Office of the Secretary of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts (William Francis Galvin).

Also briefly discussed was the "Buy Local" campaign held in Acton during the holiday period. David reported everyone thought it was a great idea, but ultimately only 3 businesses participated.

Ann also briefly mentioned the "West Acton Village Stroll" held on Friday night, December 10th as a local business holiday promotional effort with 11 businesses opening their doors to more than 300 area residents to share cider and snacks and be entertained by several local chorus groups and some members of the Acton-Boxborough Regional High School Band. It was deemed a success, and plans to expand the celebration next year are already under discussion by West Acton businesses.

NEW & EXISTING BUSINESS SUPPORT TEAM UPDATE --- Brief discussion of past efforts, such as a "How to Do Business in Acton Pamphlet." Ann noted that she thought such a document had been prepared by Acton in the past, and that she would check and report back.

PATH FORWARD --- Not discussed.

It was noted that the next EDC meeting was scheduled for Thursday, January 20, 2011 in Room 204 at Acton Town Hall.

ADJOURN --- 8:20 p.m.

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