



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, October 6, 2011, 7:30 PM, Room 126 – Acton Town Hall

Present: Dick Calandrella/Full Member, Derrick Chin/Planning Board Rep, David Clough/Selectman, David Didriksen/Member at Large, Nancy Dinkel/Chamber Rep, Jeoff Hall/Full Member, and Harry Mink/Full Member/Clerk
Absent: Ann Chang/At Large Member, Chris Pappas/Chamber Rep and Doug Tindal/FinCom Rep **Quorum:** Yes

EDC Meeting Called to Order: 7:32 PM by Nancy D. who chaired the meeting

1. **Public Participation** –No members of the general public were present so Nancy D. moved onto the next item
2. **Approval of Minutes** –Nancy D. asked about the Minutes of 9-01-11 and after a **Vote** these were approved by the EDC members present. **Action Item:** **Harry M.** to forward the aforementioned Approved EDC Minutes to clerk@acton-ma.gov
3. **Discussion of OML** – Nancy D. reported highlights (Dick C., Derrick C. and H. Mink attended) of the 9-15-11 OML Training Meeting; Agendas must be published 48-hrs ahead of a Meeting and Minutes must be presented to the Town Clerk within 10 days post Meeting (draft and/or notes if formal, approved Minutes aren't yet available). Training was lead by Nina Pickering Cook and was backed by Stephen D. Anderson, Attorneys from Anderson & Kreiger LLP and a hard copy handout was given to attendees, and subsequently E-mailed to all others. There were changes to "Meeting", "Deliberation", "Public Body" and "Intentional Violation". Of note In "Meeting" section, a formal subcommittee where members are less than a quorum still require formal notice and minutes. In "Deliberation", it counts if oral or written communication (including E-mail, Blogs, You-Tube, Twitter, Facebook, Skype, Chat Rooms, etc.) occurs among a quorum of any business within its jurisdiction. Advice: Be careful of the use of "Reply All" in E-mail. "Public Body" means you, but not Town staff. "Intentional Violation" is any act or omission by a public body or a member knowingly violating the OML, especially repeated conduct where body or member has been previously informed and fines may be imposed (\$1,000 per violation). Agenda must be sufficiently specific to advise public of issues to be discussed (no open boilerplate allowed). Remote participation not yet allowed, but AG has proposed regulations under review. Executive Session rules reviewed. Expanded Minutes now included summary of topics discussed and a list of documents used. Lessons Learned: No enforcement action if the body takes steps to cure before the complaint reaches the AG; AG often cites "spirit of the OML" in the determination of violations and Meeting notices need to be as specific as possible.
4. **Updates on Sign Bylaw Goal** – Nancy D. moved this item forward in the Agenda to accommodate Dick C. and any who might have to leave the meeting early. Dick C. reported the following: the Planning Dept. gave 3 sign-law information meetings last week after mailing 200 invitations to West Acton business owners and/or landlords; the materials were well prepared and the presentations were well done, but only a total of 7 business owners attended representing 6 businesses; next step Planning staff will talk to business owners about non-compliance issues giving reasonable time for remediation prior to issuance of fines; EDC Sign Sub Committee members pleased to see clear, graphical compliance examples of all sign types; HDC also in attendance and their tighter restrictions were listed in the meeting handouts; Dick C. reported that the general feedback from business attendees: "We understand, but don't agree with the overly restrictive sign laws." Also, Dick C. said that Planning wasn't aware that West Acton had a Merchants Association. Dave D. suggested that since temporary signs are a major irritant, rather than dealing with the much more difficult goal of fixing all sign law violations, the Planning Dept. might consider an initial, narrower focus on temporary signs as a more achievable objective.
5. **Reporting of Kelley's Corner Meeting 9/14** – Nancy D. reported that this was a 2020 Meeting focused on Kelley's Corner not being a village area similar to West Acton (not walkable, not a town center, heavy & fast commute traffic, insufficient fast food & other desirable businesses). Dave C. recently talked to Jamie Eldridge and he said that given a plan for Kelley's Corner, there could be State EDC funding made available and much discussion centered around that there wasn't much the Town could do directly to effect change due to ownership pattern in that area. Dave C.



suggested that the Cassa Stone sign/monument be turned over to Nara Park, but not be owned by Recreation Dept. in the event the Town wanted to move them to a new location sometime in the future. **Action Item:** **Nancy D.** to contact Stop & Shop regarding their plans for the K-Mart/McDonalds plots.

6. Review of Site Permit Process – nothing noted
7. Update on Electronic Business Directory – Jeoff H. said that he hadn't made any further progress on this project, but did state that Manta has made quality improvements in their data. Dave C. suggested that Jeoff H. should check with the Town since he's learned that they have acquired a commercial business database that EDC should be able to access.
8. Update on Marketing Survey – nothing noted
9. Upcoming Scheduled Meetings – 7:30 PM in Room 204, Acton Town Hall: 10-20-11, 11-17-11, 12-1-11 and 12-15-11; however, on 11-3-11 EDC will move to Room 126, Acton Town Hall. Nancy D. recommended that the EDC 11-3-11 meeting be replaced by attendance at the mandatory Ethics Training being held that same evening.

Adjourn – The EDC Meeting was adjourned at/around 9:04 PM when sufficient number of members had to leave dropping EDC below a quorum

Next Regular EDC Meeting (October 20, 2011)

Minutes respectfully submitted by: *Harry A. Mink*, Clerk of EDC