



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, December 1, 2011, 7:30 PM, Room 126 – Acton Town Hall

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

Quorum: Yes

Public/Visitors: None,

EDC Meeting Called to Order: 7:30 PM by Nancy D. who chaired the meeting

Nancy D. offered to step aside as the EDC Chairman at this time if the EDC felt that it might be better served and led by another Member. She felt that she had a lot on her plate and that she wasn't able to give EDC the quality time and attention it deserved. There was positive feedback by many EDC Members who all encouraged Nancy to continue leading the Committee and this appeared to be the sentiment of all Members in attendance.

1. **Public Participation** – nobody from the general public was present, therefore there was none
2. **Approval of Minutes** –Nancy D. asked about the Minutes of 11-03-11 and after Dick C. proposed a spelling change (Hall to Hald), and a Vote was held and unanimously approved, as amended by the EDC members present. **Action Item:** **Harry M.** to forward the aforementioned Amended, Approved EDC Minutes to clerk@acton-ma.gov
3. **Discuss EDC Report for Town's Annual Report** – A general discussion occurred prior to formally taking up the EDC Report that centered on EDC priorities and focus for 2012+. Dick C. suggested the following tasks and priorities: 1) Sign By-Law Changes 2) Greet New Businesses to Acton 3) Develop and Publish an Acton Guide Book for New Business. David C. reminded everyone that a focus of the 2020 plan is to convert Kelley's Corner into a pedestrian, retail center. Dick C. mentioned that the 2020 people didn't know that there was a Kelley's Corner Merchants Association. David C. said that Chris Star, a developer, who owns the corner lot with the old Meineke building, will soon have a Mexican restaurant on a short lease as a place holder. Mr. Star wants to implement a more extensive plan for Kelley's Corner, much like he's currently doing in Belmont, a \$40MM development of mixed-use. Dave C. also reiterated that Senator Jamie Eldridge suggested the State could help fund an Acton EDC upgrade for that location provided there is a plan in place. Nancy D. reported that she was given Stop & Shop contacts from Doug T. and she followed up with them and learned that K-Mart has recently renewed a 5-year lease as they are making money in this down economy while the McDonald parcel is still on the market looking for a 5-year tenant. Doug T. mentioned that large company tenants would require a much longer lease before investing in expensive lease-hold improvements, so he's pessimistic about that space being leased to a quality tenant anytime soon despite the great retail location. Doug T. then suggested EDC would benefit Acton by getting Stop & Shop and Verizon together regarding higher & better use for the land they control. The shift to wireless telecommunications from land lines has made Verizon's switching station at that location much less vital to them, but is a keystone parcel for that corner. **Action Item:** **Derrick C.** said that he had obtained a business contact document from Roland Bartl and he volunteered to E-mail it to EDC members.

After all of the above discussion, Nancy D. asked for a **Vote** on the Draft EDC Annual Report and it was Unanimously approved



4. Planning Board input re Zoning Bylaws/EDC's suggestions to change – Nancy D. said that the EDC Sign Sub-Committee had come up with the following suggestions to be brought up in the April 2012 Town Meeting: 1) Change the fine language regarding Sign Law violations to ... "up to \$300/day." 2) Allow LED's (new lighting technology that's trending to replace incandescents) 3) Remove the \$10 fee charged for any date changes for temporary signs that occur during the year after a business pays its \$45 up-front fee and schedules its 45-days for the entire year (viewed as a nickel/dime annoyance to the businesses imposed by the town). **Action Item:** Nancy D. asked that **All EDC Members** read through Section 7 and mark-up and send directly to her; **David C.** E-mailed to everyone during the meeting. David C. said that the Section 7 rules & regs are posted on the Town Website. Dick C. suggested that the EDC Sign Sub-Committee and other interested EDC members should attend the upcoming HDC meetings on Signs (9:00 PM to 10:00 PM, Dec. 13th) **Action Item:** **EDC Sign Sub-Committee** to attend the upcoming December 2011 13thHDC meetings and if other EDC Members want to attend, so notify Nancy D., Dick C. and Ann C. so that if an EDC Quorum is met and/or exceeded an EDC Agenda can be generated in order to comply with the OML. **Action Item:** **Dick C.** said that he'd obtain the deadline for inputs submitted for the Town Warrant. Doug T. recommended that EDC focus on the ONE BIG THING: SIGN LAW that's in EDC's way, get past that issue and then forge ahead on other important EDC objectives.
5. Update on Sign By-Law Goal – see Item # 4 above as it appeared to the EDC Clerk that these two Agenda Items were discussed together
6. Update on Electronic Business Directory – Jeff H. said that thinks the Manta data has some merit despite the duplications; also, he's not made much progress and is working with the baseline data that Dick C. had resent to him that contained the variety of business listing data that he'd collected. **Action Item:** **Chris P.** to check to see if the current Commercial Databases that he has access to might be able to generate a report that might be useful to EDC and Jeff H. **Action Item:** **Jeff H.** to contact Kim Gorman to learn exactly what business data base the Town has recently acquired
7. Update on Marketing Survey – Doug T. again suggested that EDC recruit and identify another marketing resource other than Leigh Davis-Honn as she is being tied up with work on other projects; Doug T. also suggested we request that Leigh Davis-Honn give that person and/or the EDC a data dump on where things currently stand and what she would recommend going forward. **Action Item:** **Doug T.** to contact Leigh Davis-Honn for suggested alternative marketing people resources for the Marketing Survey project that's currently stalled. **Action Item:** **Jeff H.** to contact John Murray regarding Nielson data.
8. Upcoming Scheduled Meetings – 7:30 PM in Room 204, Acton Town Hall: 12-15-11, 1-5-12, 1-19-12, 2-2-12, 2-16-12, 3-1-12, 3-15-12, 4-4,12, 4-19-12, 5-3-12, 5-17-12 and 6-21-12 at the Acton Town Hall.

Adjourn – The EDC Meeting was adjourned at/around 9:15 PM.

Next Regular EDC Meeting (7:30 PM, December 15, 2011 in Room 204 Town Hall)

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

