



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, February 2, 2012, 7:30 PM, Room 204 – Acton Town Hall

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

Quorum: Yes

Public/Visitors: None present

EDC Meeting Called to Order: 7:35 PM by Dick C. who chaired the meeting

1. **Public Participation** – nobody from the general public was present, therefore there was none
2. **Approval of Minutes** – Dick C. asked about the Minutes of 01-05-12 and after prior input by Derrick C. were incorporated into a V1.1, a Vote was held and the Minutes were approved with one abstention by Jeoff H. who wasn't in attendance at the January Meeting, as amended by the balance of the EDC members present. **Action Item:** Harry M. to forward the aforementioned Amended, Approved EDC Minutes to clerk@acton-ma.gov
3. **MAPC focus on Transportation** – Jeoff H. reported to EDC mail that he'd contacted Jessica Robertson/ Transportation Coordinator/Metropolitan Area Planning Council regarding inviting them to one of the upcoming March EDC Meetings; David C. suggested to Jeoff that Mike Gowing is a resource that he should touch base with; Dick C. said that Franny Osman is doing PR on the local transportation on Acton TV; Doug T. expressed concern that Acton has been running a \$2M/year deficit for the last 3 years and would face increasing shortfalls in the future unless substantial new sources of revenue were found or major tax increases enacted over and above our normal maximum of 2.5%. The situation means that some deficit spending items such as Transportation and the Nursing Service were now targets for elimination. The Siegal Company was hired to analyze the unfunded liabilities around health benefits furnished to retirees. If not properly addressed, these Other Post Employment Benefits (OPEB) will have a negative impact on Acton's current AAA Bond rating. The Finance Committee and the Town seem to have agreed that OPEB should be funded initially at \$500K, but it wasn't clear that the Schools, with 70% of the Towns employees, were prepared to go along.
4. **Kmart location** – David C. said that Nancy D. had been given a Stop & Shop contact, but Doug T. suggested that time would be better spent with Atlantic, the Commercial Real Estate Agent responsible for renting the spaces (Kmart & McDonalds); he also said that without land or money, neither Acton nor the EDC has any real clout or leverage and can only develop a relationship and keep abreast of what's happening. **Action Item:** David C. volunteered to contact Atlantic to open up lines of communication.
5. **Review of Sign By-Laws** – Doug T. urged EDC to focus on this thorn in the side of the Acton business community and get the issue resolved to the best of their ability and to show progress and gain credibility with Acton businesses; EDC should publish a "How to get a Sign in Acton" brochure. **Action Item:** Derrick C. to finish his draft spread sheet on what Departments a new business has to deal in order to get a particular thing accomplished. Doug T. also suggested that something must be done to address the proliferation of temporary signs, especially by the non-profits and out-of-town signs (e.g. some Concord based entities) who don't bother with applying for permits; also, an absolute enforcement of the Acton Center prohibition of any signage on the green there which is an important, war memorial. **Action Item:** EDC Sign Sub-Committee to recommend a sign Bylaw for temporary signs.



6. Update on Electronic Business Directory – Jeoff H. no real progress. **Action Item:** **Jeoff H.** to retripple his efforts to get John Murray to respond to his question about the Nielson data.
7. Update on Marketing Survey – It was discussed that there really wasn't much that could be done until such time as EDC recruited a marketing resource to replace Leigh Davis-Honn. **Action Item:** **Dick C.** to contact Leigh D.-H. and obtain the MS Word file format copy of the business survey and draft letter. **Action Item:** **All EDC Members** to be on the look-out for a new marketing pro to help EDC complete this work. **Action Item:** **Harry M.** to contact his Marlborough contacts and report findings at the next EDC Meeting about their EDC marketing and PR.
8. Upcoming Scheduled Meetings – 7:30 PM in Room 204, Acton Town Hall: 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.

Dick C. asked Harry M. to see that Doug T. was added as the FinCom liaison to the EDC. on the Acton Town Website. **Action Item:** **Harry M.** to request IT to update the EDC Members list by adding Doug Tindal/FinCom Rep & Acting FinCom Chairman.

Doug T. left at 8:37 PM to attend a FinCom/School Committee Meeting

Adjourn – The EDC Meeting was adjourned at/around 8:52 PM.

Next Regular EDC Meeting (7:30 PM, February 16, 2012 in Room 204 Town Hall)

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