



## **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**

Thursday, February 16, 2012, 7:30 PM, Room 204 – Acton Town Hall

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

**Quorum:** Yes

**Public/Visitors:** Mr. C. Pappas

**EDC Meeting Called to Order:** 7:44 PM by Nancy D. who chaired the meeting

1. **Public Participation** – Mr. C. Pappas, a Real Estate executive from Acton, shared with the EDC Acton commercial real estate data generated by a research service with which his firm has a subscription and the reports included the following: Aggregate Absorption Report, Aggregate Historical Vacancy Report, Availability and Vacancy Analysis, and Acton Rental Rates for: Office, Industrial, and Retail (see attached **Acton-Commercial-RE-Data**).
2. **Approval of Minutes** –the Minutes were approved as amended. **Action Item:** Harry M. to forward the aforementioned Amended, Approved EDC Minutes to [clerk@acton-ma.gov](mailto:clerk@acton-ma.gov)
3. **MAPC focus on Transportation** – Jeoff H. was absent so this topic was skipped.
4. **Review EDC/Sweet Bites/Planning Dept** –Nancy D. asked for an update on Sweet Bites; Harry M. said that he had his wife drop off a package directly to the owner of the Planning Dept. materials from their W. Acton informational meetings last year; Dick C. reported that he'd visited with the owner and gave her advice on how to proceed; Derrick C. pulled files to track the history and Harry M. reported that the owner acknowledged contact by the Planning Dept. and now has a better idea of the sign rules and regulations that impact her business. Harry M. then reported on another W. Acton retail business brought to EDC's attention by David C. had some observations about the sign approval process being overly complex as well as somewhat confusing. (see attached for all materials pertaining to this topic that was discussed **EDC-2-Acton-Shops-Planning-Dept**)
5. **Marlborough Business Model** – Nancy D. asked Harry M. for a report and he passed out a memo entitled "Marlborough EDC Notes" (see attached **Marlborough-EDC-Report**); the executive summary of which is: 1) The Marlborough Regional Chamber is the only group that looks after Main Street businesses and 2) the MEDC is focused on brining in medium to large businesses, has been floundering for 5 years, but now is well funded (\$750K in 2011 from a 2% Meals Tax) and well staffed missing only a professional EDC Director (about to be hired) and poised to be very effective.
6. **Review Sign Bylaws** – meeting with Roland – Nancy D. said that she, Dick C. and Ann C. met with Roland at the end of January regarding the changes EDC would like to see implemented in the Sign Bylaws; Roland expressed concern that he doesn't have the staff to enforce the Bylaws; Roland agreed to about half of the 16 some issues EDC raised and will bring to the Planning Board to discuss issues raised.
7. **Update on Electronic Business Directory** – Jeoff H. unable to be at the meeting, therefore no real progress reported. **Action Item:** Jeoff H. to refourple his efforts to get John Murray to respond to his question about the Nielson data.



8. Update on Marketing Survey – Dick C. passed out copies of the Marketing Survey that he'd obtained from Leigh Davis-Honn. Dick said that Leigh offered to help EDC with the survey in a limited capacity. David D. and David C. asked that the purpose be restated and it was agreed that it was limited to just identifying the current businesses in Acton and have owner contact information for future communications. The EDC members then walked through the 9 pages eliminating non-essential questions and to the ones that David D. said were unreasonably intrusive and would cause people to not complete and turn in their survey. Dick C. observed that sufficient changes were made to the survey that we should not go back to Leigh for any more help at this point, but to go forward without her. **Action Item:** **All EDC Members** to finalize their editing in the March 1<sup>st</sup> EDC meeting. (marked-up Survey with additional notes attached **Acton-EDC-Revised-Survey**)
9. Upcoming Scheduled Meetings (2012)– 7:30 PM in Room 204, Acton Town Hall: 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 10:03 PM.

**Next Regular EDC Meeting** (7:30 PM, March 1, 2012 in Library Conference Room)

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