



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, May 17, 2012, 7:30 PM, Room 204 – 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, Harry Mink/Full Member/Clerk, **Absent:** Ann Chang/At Large Member, Jeoff Hall/Full Member Chris Pappas/Chamber Rep and Doug Tindal/FinCom Rep & Acting FinCom Chairman **Guest:** William A. Depietri/ President of Capital Group Properties

Quorum: Yes

EDC Meeting Called to Order: 7:35 PM by Nancy D. who chaired the meeting

1. **Public Participation** – None
2. **Approval of Minutes of 5/3** –the Minutes were approved as amended (David C. filled in last names of Developers in Summary). **Action Item:** **Harry M.** to forward the aforementioned Amended, Approved EDC Minutes to clerk@acton-ma.gov

Nancy D. mentioned that she'd contacted two potential developers of Kelley's Corner as requested and that they declined to attend an EDC Meeting at this time as they deemed the timing premature.
3. **Retail at 100 Discovery Way** – Bill Depietri of Capital Group Properties was introduced by Nancy D. and presented a change of use concept from commercial to retail and passed out a May 15, 2012 drawing of the 100 Discovery Way Retail Layout; the rough plan would entail an anchor grocery store (he has 3 that expressed interest) and the balance of retail; tax potential \$250K from current \$60K; history was built for Honeywell 25 years ago and as of July 2012, the small portion of the 40,000 sq ft existing space they currently occupy will be vacant as the operation is being moved to Japan; the retail plan would require rezoning from commercial to retail and the Planning Department suggested Bill meet with the EDC and get feedback. David D. suggested that the retail project concept for that location would have a very difficult time for the following reasons: 1) Residential abutters and existing small retail businesses would raise adverse impact objections 2) zoning change to retail in that location would be next to impossible to get passed (failed big box story history of town dump and auto action spaces) and 3) retail traffic would be a major issue in that location; Bill then asked the EDC for their summary views and only Derrick C. encouraged him to proceed. Bill left at 8:15 PM and additional discussion was held, but the next view of the majority members present was that his proposal for retail use in that location was dead in the water due to Acton being adverse to allowing big box retail into the town which would change the character of Acton and kill current small businesses.
4. **Transportation Issues** – Nancy D. asked if there was anything more that the EDC could use to help Franny Osman with her transportation project and after some discussion which included ideas that had been discussed in our last meeting (solve "last mile" issues for Acton businesses, airport shuttle, etc.) Dick C. suggested that a serious, professional survey be taken as the most significant next step Franny should take; David C. suggested that the airport shuttle wasn't an EDC issue; a vote was taken by the EDC to recommend Franny find funding for a professional survey. **Action Item:** **Nancy D.** to relay EDC's survey advice to Franny



5. Review Ease-of-Doing Business – Nancy D. asked where Derrick C. stood with respect to discussions on this topic in our last meeting: a) Kelley’s Corner Business District Circulation Plan dated Feb. 28, 1997 and b) Route 27 (Main Street) Corridor Study dated Aug. 1, 2001. Derrick made copies of Table E-1 Main Street (Route 27) Recommended Improvement Plan which he circulated at the May 3rd meeting. **Action Item:** **Derrick C.** to continue to develop a process for obtaining a sign by a business.

6. Donation Boxes – Nancy D. introduced this topic and after some discussion on this issue that included the points that: 1) advise Planning Dept. to notify all box owners that they were currently in violation of the Acton sign laws and start the compliance process including \$300/day fines 2) there was some sensitivity to true charity organizations such as the Red Cross 2) that EDC recommend to the BOS that landowner’s be held directly responsible for obtaining a permit and that they be charged a \$150 annual fee. There was no vote taken nor any Action Item given so this item should be taken up at the June 7th EDC Meeting. **Action Item:** **David C.** to carry EDC recommendations forward to the BOS.

There was also some discussion of the rolling sign truck and David D. remarked that he had experienced the “problem” in the parking lot of his retail business. It was noted that Roland had handled it already with his E-mail exchanges with Allen Nitscheim/Acton Forum Publisher who was one of the advertisers on the truck.

7. Updates on Electronic Business Directory - Nancy D. skipped due to Geoff H. being absent **Action Item:** **Nancy D.** to reschedule for June 7th EDC Meeting only if Geoff H. will be in attendance and ready to report.

8. Updates on Marketing Survey/Process - Nancy D. offered to reschedule this topic at the next meeting due to the late hour **Action Item:** **Nancy D.** to reschedule for June 7th EDC Meeting

9. Upcoming Scheduled Meetings (2012) –June 7, June 21, July 5, July 19, Aug 2, Aug 16, Sept 6, Sept 20, Oct 4, Oct 18, Nov 1, Nov 15, Dec 6 and Dec 20.

Additional Action Item to Support Another Discussion - **Action Item:** **Derrick D.** to talk to Scott to take action regarding the continuing additional (flags) sign law violations by Tailgaters that was brought up by David C. prior to the close of the meeting. It was thought that the ownership should be officially notified that they are in serious violation of many Acton sign laws and that they should not continue to add additional violations to their place of business.

Adjourn – The EDC Meeting was adjourned at/around 9:30 PM.

Post Meeting Discussion – David C. gave an update on the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail saying that it would start in N. Acton and continue to the Acton/Concord line on Rt-2; due to proximity to wet land concerns by the Town of Concord, the design of the proposed foot bridge over Rt-2 increased in cost from an initial \$4M to \$7M; David C. also said that feedback on this was needed within a week by Roland and that he’d E-mail a link to everybody. **Action Item:** **David C.** to E-mail a link to the EDC Board for providing feedback on the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail to Roland.

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

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