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EDC Minutes – 20 June 2013

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These are the meeting minutes from the Economic Development Committee (EDC) of the Town of Acton, Massachusetts. The meeting took place on 20 June 2013 at the Acton Town Hall.

The meeting was called to order at 7:33 pm by Nancy Dinkel.

Present: Allan Gulliver, Chris Pappas, Dave Clough, Derrick Chin, Dick Calandrella, Larry Kenah, Nancy Dinkel

Missing: Ann Chang, Dave Didriksen, Doug Tindal

Marion Maxwell attended the meeting but not bring any issues to the committee.

Minutes from earlier meetings were approved.

- Minutes from 16 May 2013 were approved after adding “pm” to time designations.
- Minutes from 30 May 2013 were approved after fixing details with start time and end time.

Agenda Items

Special Town Meeting

There was some discussion about the articles from Special Town Meeting related to EDC. In particular, articles #9 and #10 were discussed at earlier EDC meetings.

- Article 9 required a 2/3 vote but passed in a voice vote.
- There was a surprising amount of discussion at town meeting on Article 10. A voice vote was not conclusive. The article passed after a standup count by the moderator.

In the context of this agenda item, we talked briefly about a proposed development behind the Staples shopping center.

Electronic Business Directory (EBD, aka Database)

Larry Kenah provided an update to the committee about the current state of the electronic business directory (EBD, aka database). His notes are attached to these minutes. Here is a summary of the notes.

- More data is needed for each business before it is “good enough” to be published.
- A data quality pass is needed to eliminate duplicate entries.

Here are some points that were raised during the discussion.

- UMass Lowell performed a survey about Acton businesses as part of a student special project.
- Acton 2020 assembled some numbers on Acton businesses as part of its efforts.
- I should see the clerk about DBA details.

- Many (but not all) businesses must apply to the clerk for a DBA as part of starting a business in Acton.
- We should err on the side of inclusion when selecting what businesses appear in the directory.
- There should be no concern about publishing the directory because it is being built only from data that is already public.
- Should the EDC create a blog to promote this effort or to help with other EDC goals?
 - There are serious concerns about whether such a forum would violate the Open Meeting Law.

Kristen Update on Workshop

Kristen Domurad-Guichard, Assistant Town Planner, attended a workshop called “Investing in Infrastructure to Promote Development”. This workshop was hosted by Mass Development.

Kristen sent an email to boards and committees who might be interested in the presentations from this workshop but especially in the tools that are available to help towns in their planning.

Committee members agreed to take a look at these tools.

Goals, etc

The committee revisited its goals as part of an ongoing process. A couple of specific questions were raised.

- Where is the EDC charter?
 - In particular, what constitutes a quorum?
- What does “associate member’ mean?

Remaining Agenda Items

There were no updates on agenda items 5, 7, 8, 10, and 11.

In Closing

The meeting adjourned at 9:30 pm.

These minutes were recorded by Lawrence J Kenah, EDC Clerk.