

EDC Minutes – 6 March 2014

These are the meeting minutes from the Economic Development Committee (EDC) of the Town of Acton, Massachusetts. The meeting took place on 6 March 2014 at the Acton Town Hall.

The meeting was called to order at 7:37 pm by Nancy Dinkel.

Present: Chris Pappas, Derrick Chin, Dick Calandrella, Larry Kenah, Nancy Dinkel

Not Present: Allan Gulliver, Ann Chang, Dave Clough, Doug Tindal

There was no public participation.

Minutes from the 6 February 2014 meeting were approved.

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Agenda Items

Robbins Brook v Firewood Manufacturing (3)

There was no update on this item.

Acton 2020 (4)

Larry Kenah gave a brief update on the Board of Selectmen (BoS) meeting that took place on 10 February and reported on in the 13 February 2014 issue of *The Beacon*. The Urban Land Institute Technical Assistance Panel (ULI TAP) was invited by the BoS to examine Kelley's Corner from a different perspective and report their findings. The ULI TAP looked at earlier documents about Kelley's Corner and then spent the day of 10 February on a guided tour. They also met with some stakeholders.

Their overall assessment was optimistic. From a business perspective, Kelley's Corner is a healthy center that can be improved. They pointed out that the current approach seems to have a long time horizon and seems to ignore some incremental improvements that can be realized in a shorter time frame. One aspect of their presentation that seemed to add to the current conversations dealt with the nearby school campuses.

- The arbitrary boundaries that define Kelley's Corner do not include these campuses.
- The town owns this land and has more control over its uses than it has over the privately held land in Kelley's Corner.
- Some of this land might be used as a gathering place, an idea mentioned in the existing Kelley's Corner proposals.
- Students, mostly high school students, represent a large existing pedestrian population.

Alignable (5)

The name refers to a Web site where retailers in Acton Woods Plaza and other parts of town present themselves to the town.

Derrick Chin pointed out that several of the Woods Plaza retailers meet weekly on the Woods Plaza coffee shop. He volunteered to attend one (or more) of these meetings. Larry Kenah offered to join him when a meeting is selected.

Goals (6)

Nancy Dinkel led the first of several discussions on goals for the EDC in 2014. She listed the previous set of goals.

- Demographics of existing businesses
- Marketing (via surveys)
- Focus on existing businesses
- Outreach

Chris Pappas mentioned that from his perspective there were not a lot of start-up businesses these days. But he posed a question for the entire EDC. "What can we do to be ready for the recovery?"

Nancy pointed out that the Town of Bolton has a video on the town Web site about its advantages for existing or new businesses. We would look to create a similar video for Acton, perhaps with help from Acton TV.

A final item for the goals discussion was how the EDC can better use town resources. We had some good connections in the past but these are not being used lately.

Remaining Agenda Items

There were no updates on agenda items #7 through #10.

In Closing

The meeting adjourned at 9:15 pm.

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