

These are the minutes of the EDC meeting of 1/26/2017, held in Room 9 of Acton Town Hall. Present: Chingsung Chang, Derrick Chin, Dave Didriksen, Selby, Larry Kenah, Josh Fischel  
Absent: Ann Chang, David Foley

Called to Order: 7:32

• **Public Participation:** Terra Friedrichs came to hang out with us on her way to volleyball, and pitch the business of a friend who just moved to Acton and does pop-up galleries in derelict buildings and elsewhere. She also wanted to push that the K-Mart re-development be smaller-scale instead of anchored by a big box store, etc. This led to a discussion of how the retail model has shifted in the past twenty years, and what inhibits small business from getting established. Dave Didriksen agreed to field Terra's friend's call.

• **Approval of the Minutes:** They were passed unanimously without change.

• **Revised Charge:** Larry Kenah introduced the revised and brief version, written by him and Selby. It will move to Select Board's agenda next, likely at some point in February.

*I move to approve the charge of the Economic Development Committee as submitted.*  
This was passed unanimously.

• **Progress Report on the Great Business Database Collection:** Larry and his wife will re-start their survey next week, once retailers are fully recovered from the holiday shopping and return season.

• **Updates from Members:** Derrick reported on the Import/Domestic Auto Center, which wants to change their zoning to be part of the West Acton Village commercial district. They want to be able to sell cars. The business made a nice presentation to the Planning Board, and the Planning Board decided to seek the advice of the EDC on whether to grant this change. Tara suggested that she'd rather award them a special use permit so that they can't do things like tear down and build something higher density, or sell to someone else who could take advantage of the village commercial zoning permissions. Derrick assured us that he would keep us apprised of the situation.

From the FinCom meeting came the need for us to have a philosophy for how we would approach future business development requests for tax incentives and the like.

There's pushback in the act of purchasing land to preserve it as open space because people are worried about losing the town's rural character. This causes swings in one direction and then the other, and the current mood in the town leans away from supporting businesses.

Derrick also mentioned that the Brookside Shops changed ownership, and they're submitting a re-zoning request, because it's zoned residential. This may come back to Town Meeting. It was suggested that we invite them to come meet with us to see how we might support their needs, as our pithy charge now says.

• **Update from Selby:** FinCom meeting with Insulet seemed to go well; we think FinComm will offer a favorable recommendation. Next stop is the Nagog Condo Board, followed by the Planning Board, to shore up support among key blocks in advance of

Town Meeting. There will also be a March 13th public workshop in Town Hall, as well as a mailing to residents in the broad vicinity of Nagog Park to let them all know of these hearings and opportunities to learn about Insulet.

Selby is aiming to create a business guide for how to do business in town. He recommends taking a look at the Holliston EDC website and seeing if we want to establish and maintain an online presence.

Adjourned at 9:12

Respectfully Submitted,  
Josh Fischel