



**Town of Walpole**  
**Commonwealth of Massachusetts**  
**Office of Community & Economic Development**

**JAMES A. JOHNSON**  
*Town Administrator*

**Patrick Deschenes**  
*Community & Economic  
Development Director*

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**MINUTES**  
**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION**  
**1/18/22**

Present: Beth Pelick (Vice Chair), Brian Connor, Ken Fettig, Margaret Kundert, Donnell Murphy, Daniel O'Driscoll, John Shalbey, Kevin Spendley  
Absent: Marc Romeo (Chair)

Also present: Patrick Deschenes (Director of Community & Economic Development) and Harry Brousaides (Walpole Chamber Liaison)

Mr. Deschenes opened the meeting at 5:04 P.M.

**BUSINESS:**

**1. One Stop for Community Growth – Application Platform:**

Mr. Deschenes informed the Economic Development Commission about the One Stop for Community Growth program, which the Town can use to more easily apply for grant funding for projects. He stated that he would like to add a page to the Town's website that can serve as a marketing tool to attract developers to Walpole.

Mr. Murphy stated that CoStar is a great resource that the Town can utilize to provide real estate information and analytics to potential development partners. Mr. Deschenes said that he would reach out to the Assessors' office to look into that.

**2. Housing Choice – MBTA Community Guidelines**

Mr. Deschenes presented the newly-released MBTA Community Guidelines, which requires towns like Walpole to have zoning bylaws that allow for 15 multi-family dwelling units per acre, or about 2,008 units for Walpole. The number is unrealistic, but Walpole just needs to show that its zoning allows for that many multi-family units to comply with the state mandate.

Mr. Murphy voiced concerns about constructing more multi-family units because the current zoning bylaw requires one parking space per bedroom, and parking lot space is already so scarce.

Ms. Kundert asked why the MBTA Community guidelines classify Walpole as a "bus" community and not a "commuter rail" community. Mr. Deschenes stated that it is likely because Walpole has both a train stop and a bus stop, and "bus" is a level above "commuter rail" with stricter regulations.

Mr. Deschenes stated the guidelines are not final, and it is possible that Walpole already complies so there may be no need to make any zoning bylaw changes. If we do not already meet the criteria, we have until May 2nd to comply or we will no longer be eligible for funding from certain state programs.

**3. Master Plan 2022 Update:**

Mr. Deschenes stated that the Master Plan Steering Committee is currently holding “Kitchen Table” meetings with members of the Walpole community to gather feedback on the Master Plan from people who may not have previously participated in the public forums or online surveys. He invited members of the Economic Development Commission to participate.

Ms. Kundert stated that as a member of the Master Plan Steering Committee, she is excited to see how the more casual meetings will go and what kinds of responses they will get from the community on how to best improve the Town.

#### 4. MassWorks Grant:

Mr. Deschenes gave an update on the MassWorks grant that the Town was awarded to pay for the Union Street Sidewalk Extension. The path along the road is utilized by many pedestrians traveling to the bus stop or other commercial businesses and constructing a sidewalk will increase safety along the busy road. The design work at permitting process will begin soon and the project should finish up by early 2023.

Mr. Brousaides asked why the bus doesn’t make a stop at Walpole Mall. Mr. Deschenes said he spoke to the transit department and they stated that the bus is on a fixed route and it cannot deviate from that route without an official schedule change. If there is enough interest in changing the bus route, they can look into amending it.

#### 5. Department Updates:

Mr. Deschenes gave updates on Walpole’s various 40B building projects. The 55 Summer Street projects, Cedar Crossing and Cedar Edge, were issued conditional decisions which are currently undergoing the appeals process. Moose Hill Condominiums has received approval for eight townhouse-style dwelling units. The Dupee Street 40B, which was originally twelve units and was revised to eight units, was denied by the Zoning Board and is now under litigation. The 48 Burns Ave project was approved two years ago and is now under appeal to modify the plan from 32 units with one point of egress to 40 units with two points of egress. The Zoning Board has opened a public hearing on the Burns Ave modification and will soon deliver a ruling on the revised plans.

Mr. Fettig asked how the Town attracted Aldi’s to the mall and how we can get more businesses like that to come to Walpole. Mr. Deschenes stated that Aldi’s actually approached them first, but they are actively trying to appeal to similar businesses. West End is one ongoing project to construct live/work townhouses which will add both residential and commercial spaces to the Town.

Mr. O’Driscoll asked if there if Mr. Deschenes has heard of any interest generated in the live/work townhouse development from businesses. He replied that whenever a business reaches out to his office he tries to direct them there first, but he hasn’t heard of any takers so far.

Mr. Deschenes shared that 153 Production Road has recently finished construction and two of the three commercial spaces have been leased out to businesses.

Mr. Deschenes announced that Building Commissioner Michael Yanovitch left Town Hall to open a private business and his role has been filled by former Deputy Building Inspector Jim Crowley. Mr. Brousaides commended Michael Yanovitch’s great work for the department.

#### **OPEN FORUM:**

##### **1. MINUTES (11/16/21):**

**MOTION** by Mr. Fettig and seconded by Mr. O'Driscoll to approve the minutes from 11/16/21  
The motion passed 5-0-3 (Ms. Kundert, Mr. Murphy, and Mr. Shalbey abstained).

**ADJOURMMMENT:**

**MOTION** by Mr. Fettig and seconded by Mr. Murphy to adjourn.  
The motion carried all in favor 8-0-0.

The meeting adjourned at 6:12 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted: Kevin Sanderson