

EDC MINUTES 6/15/21

Present: Marc Romeo, Ken Fettig, Meg Kundert, Daniel O'Driscoll, Donnell Murphy, Brian Connor, Beth Pelick, John Shalbey (5:50 p.m.), Harry Brousaides, Kevin Spendley (5:15 p.m.), Patrick Deschenes (Director of Community & Economic Development)

Mr. Romeo opened the meeting at 5:00 p.m. and addressed the following topics below;

BUSINESS:

1. Setting Committee Goals for 2021:

Mr. Deschenes stated that he'd like to set a better list of items and goals to accomplish with the Commission within the next year in terms of economic development for the Town. Mr. Murphy recommended that the Commission review the goals that were given to them by the Select Board, and suggested that those goals be placed on the agenda for every meeting. Mr. Murphy also expressed that he'd like to look into the vacant land within town that has potential to be developed, and create a way to work with the property owner to create the right development for the area that would benefit the town. Mrs. Kundert suggested that the area downtown also be looked at for any land that is underdeveloped. Mr. Romeo expressed the need for creativity relating to vacant property on Rte. 1. Mr. Deschenes stated that a digital information/marketplace center for business owners is a one of the top goals to be explored for businesses in Walpole, along with another goal of creating an easier redevelopment process within the downtown area relating to potential zoning changes. Mr. Brousaides suggested that as a board, the EDC forms a grandiose plan spanning 3-5 years out for the downtown area.

2. Main Street Live Update:

- 2nd Sub-Committee Meeting: Mr. Romeo voiced that with restrictions dropped, the event should be planned as it has been in the past. Mr. Romeo suggested that the interim Police Chief be invited to the next meeting to include the Police Dept. on the plans for the event. Mr. Murphy voiced that volunteers are needed for this event on 9/17/21, and 20-30 volunteers would be ideal from the hours of 4PM- midnight/1AM.

3. Local Rapid Recovery Planning Grant/ Department Updates:

Mr. Brousaides stated he will send out a reminder to all the Commissioners for the year -end chamber event.

Mr. Deschenes stated he submitted a grant application within the one-stop portal relating to the old town hall project that has been discussed at the previous EDC meeting, and also submitted a separate grant application for infrastructure improvements for additional sidewalk on Union Street due to the increase in over 700 units of housing within the town over the last 5 years. Mr. Deschenes further explained that since Walpole met the requirements of the grant, the town has 2 years to apply for a housing choice capital grant that is geared towards infrastructure improvements. Mr. Romeo expressed this enthusiasm for improvements on Union St. and suggested that Mr. Deschenes reach out to the MBTA relating to the location where the bus currently stops and waits (the Cookie Factory), and the possibility of relocating to the Walpole Mall.

Mr. Deschenes provided the Commission with a brief overview of the Comprehensive Permits that have been before the Zoning Board of Appeals recently, and their current status.

OPEN FORUM:

1. MINUTES:

2/9/21: Mr. Fettig motioned to accept the minutes of 2/9/21, seconded by Mr. Murphy, the motion carried 5-0-4 (Fettig, Romeo, Connor in favor; O'Driscoll, Murphy, Kundert, Pelick abstained)

5/11/21: Mr. Murphy motioned to accept the minutes of 5/11/21, seconded by Mr. Fettig, the motion carried 7-0-1 (Fettig, O'Driscoll, Kundert, Murphy, Connor, Pelick in favor; Romeo abstained).

Murphy motioned to adjourn, seconded by Shalbey, the vote carried 8-0-0 (Pelick, Fettig, Shalbey, Kundert, Murphy, O'Driscoll, Connor, Spendley in favor)

The meeting adjourned at 6:25 PM