



**Economic Development Commission  
Tuesday, May 13, 2014 at 5:00p.m  
Room 112, Walpole Town Hall**

**Minutes**

Attending: Chris Walker (Chairman), Mike McGrath (Vice Chairman), Ken Fettig, John Hasenjaeger, Donnell Murphy, John Keefe and Stephanie Mercandetti, Community & Economic Development Director.

1) The meeting was convened at 5:05pm by Chairman Walker.

2) Public Open Forum:

There were no non-members present to speak.

3) Approval of Minutes:

The draft minutes for the meetings of February 11, 2014 and March 11, 2014 were presented to the Commission for review.

A motion was made by Mr. Murphy and seconded by Mr. McGrath to approve the minutes of February 11, 2014 as written. VOTED UNANIMOUSLY

A motion was made by Mr. Murphy and seconded by Mr. McGrath to approve the minutes of March 11, 2014 as written. VOTED 4-0-2

In favor (4): John Hasenjaeger, John Keefe, Chris Walker and Ken Fettig

Abstentions (2): Donnell Murphy and Mike McGrath

4) Ongoing Business:

Due to a presentation and lengthy discussion on proposed improvements for the Central Business District, the following items were held until the next meeting:

(a) Downtown Updates:

(i) Follow-up discussion on Downtown Sidewalk and Rehabilitation Plan:

At the March meeting, the DPW Director and Town Engineer presented a plan to simply rehabilitate what is existing in the Central Business District. The proposed project included replacing sidewalks and repaving the roadway along Main Street from the intersection of East Street (Route 27) to Common Street, and along West Street from Main Street to the Commuter Rail Station to make a better pedestrian connection from the train to the downtown. A portion of Elm Street from Main to East Streets will also be paved. The proposed project schedule is two years with a total estimated budget of \$850,000 (\$250,000 in the first year and \$600,000 in the second year). In addition, some trees will be removed while others replaced and there will be some landscaping added in a couple of locations if possible.

Members discussed the proposed project and agreed that this has been a top priority for some time. While they understand the direction and plan, they feel the proposal does not resolve issues in the downtown. It is not going to drive business downtown. These improvements should include added pedestrian amenities. The EDC has not been included in the discussion leading up to the development of the proposal and would like to be kept in the loop moving forward.

A motion was made by Mr. McGrath and seconded by Mr. Murphy to send a letter to the Board of Selectmen with their sentiments on the CBD rehabilitation plan. VOTED UNANIMOUSLY

Mr. Murphy said that he was going to outreach again to the downtown property owners, particularly along East Street, to have another informal meeting. There have been some scheduling conflicts which prevented this gathering from happening sooner.

(b) Business Outreach/Ambassador Program:

Ms. Mercandetti reported Fancypants Bakery has relocated from East Walpole (Hogie Building) to 160 Elm Street. This is exciting news for the Company and for the Town. The Company is more than doubling space for their operations and plans to double the number of employees. She had worked with them on permitting, site opportunities and coordinated with MassDevelopment. They also received equipment financing from MassDevelopment. Once they have settled in and at their convenience; we will work with them on a grand celebratory event. She also mentioned that 16 Handles is now open at the Walpole Mall next to Massage Envy. She is working with a few developers and property owners on permitting and zoning issues.

(c) EDIC/Superfund Site Update:

Mr. McGrath noted that Article 27 relating to the Superfund Site was approved at Town Meeting. It authorizes the Board of Selectmen to acquire the eleven parcels that make up the property, a key step in the redevelopment process.

(d) Rt. 1A Industrial Park/Main St Economic Development Study:

No updates at this time.

(e) Goals and Objectives:

Mr. Walker stated that members should review the last draft document and be prepared to nail down the goals at the next meeting.

5) Any Other Business:

(a) Liquor Licenses:

Mr. McGrath said Town Meeting recently approved an article to have a home rule petition filed with the State Legislature for additional licenses for Walpole Place. Mr. Walker stated that he felt the issue should be looked at in general and suggested some data gathering as initial next steps. Ms. Mercandetti noted that there are some existing and prospective businesses interested in licenses.

(b) Summer "Festival":

Mr. Walker said he wanted to discuss with the EDC the idea of a summer festival but since the Commission had not met since March, it is too late at this point to organize an event. He would like to see such an item on a future agenda for discussion to allow for proper planning.

(c) Walpole Commuter Rail Station:

Mr. Hasenjaeger commented about the train station and the push to have the property listed on the National Register of Historic Places. He was hoping the Commission would take a stance in opposition because he felt it would impede economic growth in the downtown. Mr. Walker inquired how it will specifically impair downtown economic development. Following a brief conversation about advantages and disadvantages, no stance was taken by the Commission.

6) Next Meeting: Tuesday, June 10, 2014 in Room 112 in Town Hall.

7) Adjournment: A motion was made by Mr. McGrath and seconded by Mr. Fettig to adjourn the meeting at 6:30pm. VOTED UNANIMOUSLY