



**Economic Development Commission  
Tuesday, March 06, 2018 at 5:00PM  
Room 112, Walpole Town Hall**

**Attending:**

Members: Donnell Murphy (Chairman), Beth Pelick (Vice Chairman), Michael McGrath, Ken Fettig, Paul Millette, Mark Romeo, John Hasenjaeger, Richard Shields and Harry Brousaides (Chamber of Commerce Representative) & Tim Higgins (Community Development Director)

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Chairman Murphy called the meeting to order at 5:05 PM.

He introduced and welcomed the new Community Development Director, Tim Higgins.

**Minutes**

The minutes of December 12, 2017 were reviewed by the members. A motion was made by Mr. McGrath and seconded by Mr. Fettig to approve the minutes from January 16, 2018. The vote was 8-0 in favor.

**New Business:**

- Mr. Brousaides asked if there were specific rules and regulations guiding the operations of the EDC
- Members requested a copy of the EDC transition memo put together by Mr. Shield. T. Higgins stated he would provide a copy.
- A detailed discussion on the process of placing items on the Committee's agenda and interested parties participation in the discussion of such items ensued.
- The Warrant Article concerning the Town Planner position was discussed. Mr. Murphy noted that he would attend the Fin Com discussion scheduled March \_\_, 2018. This was followed by a discussion of the Economic Development Director's responsibilities vis-a-vis those of the Town Planner. It was generally agreed that one person could not perform both functions at a high level.
- A short discussion on the implementation schedule of zoning Articles occurred. T. Higgins noted that once the proposed language appears in the newspaper, it is in effect – presuming Town Meeting adopts the language and the Attorney General's office approves it.

**Open Meeting Violation:** A draft piece of correspondence from Town Counsel to the state Attorney General's office responding to the formal complaint was reviewed and discussed. In general, Counsel believed the purported violation was unsubstantiated. Several recommendations to improve transparency and to clarify the meeting agenda were discussed and accepted. On a motion by Mr. McGrath, seconded by Mr. Fettig, the Committee voted 7:0 to have Town Counsel send the reply to the AG's office.

**Old Business:**

- It was agreed to add a “Zoning Discussion” item to future agendas and to be as specific as possible with the issue. The status of new commercial projects should be included under this heading.
- Mr. Higgins stated that he would try to get out a draft agenda for comments/edits prior to posting which is usually the Thursday prior to the following Tuesday meeting.

**New Business:**

- There was a short discussion on the ability of the Commission to influence commercial activity in the community. The Committee’s influence in policy issues through possible regular meetings with the Board of Selectmen was considered. It was believed that the Committee has a list of Goals and Objectives. T. Higgins did not see such a list in the electronic files but will search for such.
- Mr. Higgins noted that the Pulte application to redevelop the Walpole Woodworker’s site was filed with the Planning Board. A public hearing date had not been set.
- The 1350 North Street proposed day care facility was discussed briefly. An historic home will need to be removed or razed and local opposition is strong. A group is trying to raise money to buy the structure.
- Mr. Romeo updated the Commission on his suggestion to require parking stickers for downtown businesses. He showed a copy of a proposed sticker and estimated the cost for the program would be under \$500.00 – not including management & enforcement. There was a question as to the number of available spaces. Mr. Higgins noted that the Town of Mansfield offer free parking to residents and has 1,200 spaces with an aggressive enforcement program.
- Mr. Brousaides mentioned the availability of a \$20,000 grant for a downtown study. Additional information on this is required and it will be placed on the agenda for April’s meeting.
- The status of the Route One reconstruction project will be placed on next month’s agenda.
- The Business Form breakfast will be placed on the next agenda.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6:50 PM.