

Economic Development Committee
MEETING MINUTES
JANUARY 7, 2021

EDC Meeting Called to Order 1/7/2021 @ 7:31PM

In attendance: Rich Guzzardi, Kristin Hilberg, Nate McKinley, Dawn Willis, Joe Ferguson and Mark White, Becky Neville (Fin Com) and John Markiewicz (Select Board)

1. Meeting Minutes from October 22nd & Dec 3rd, will be presented and approved at next meeting.

2. Correspondence and New Business - Development Meeting

-Rich Explained about a town meeting with Vialogics Pharma that covered their plans for the 1414 Mass Ave property they recently leased. This prompted discussion about creating a cross "land use" board advisory board with a town employee to manage/liaison. The goal is to make Boxborough an easier town to work with for businesses.

3. 495 Metrowest partnership email about some Key Legislation that was passed this week that might be interesting for us to look at and see if they can help Boxborough.

- An Economic Development Bill
- A Transportation Bond Bill
- Major Climate Legislation

4. UMASS Study

- Review of EDC Summary of Final Study Report.

- Everyone agreed that the Summary that Rich created was well executed.
- Rich is suggesting that we make some hard copies of the study for Reference. For places like the library, town hall etc. Also make sure that the report and results are clear and easy to access online as well.
- MOTION by Mark White to spend up to \$1,000 of funds approved for the study at December 2019 Special Town Meeting for printing up to 10 copies of the UMASS final report. SECONDED BY Kristin Hilberg. Roll call vote: Ferguson – Aye; Willis – Aye; McKinley – Aye; White – Aye; Hilberg – Aye; Guzzardi - Aye

- Discuss plans for EDC presentation to Select Board. We all agreed that keeping it simple was the best approach. Rich will pull together a couple of slides and ask to get on the Agenda for the 25th of January.

5. EDC Goals & Priorities for 2021

Revised 1/7/21

EDC 2021 Goals presented:

- Lead cross board/committee effort to realize Boxborough Village (Action 3.1.3.1)
- Work with property owners to identify and then initiate changes/incentives to re-vitalize office park districts
- Implement administrative changes to drive process simplicity & transparency for land owners and businesses

- Implement zoning changes necessary to enable a village center and office park re-development (2030 Action 3.1.3.2)
- Pursue opportunities for rural / civic village in current/expanded Town Center District (2030 Strategy 1.1.2)
- Successfully distribute 20 micro-enterprise grants under DHCD grant

Agreement that goals made sense as reflective of all the work we are doing. All agreed tying items to specific actions in the 2030 Master Plan also made sense, as that is what guides our purpose.

Rich suggested adding development of a Long Range Plan, as that is a near term goal in the 2030 Master Plan.

6. Business Engagement

- Rich shared proposal to develop a post card mailing to go out to all Boxborough businesses to 1) advertise the Microenterprise Grant (discussed below); and 2) advertise a virtual business engagement session that would inform the business community of the work the EDC has done over the last year, and potentially include outside speakers. Ms. Willis suggested that we be careful about who we have as an outside speaker, as often times it can become more self-serving than informative for all attendees. It was discussed that even a short session that was focused on sharing what we have done and are doing: UMASS Study, Microenterprise Grant, EDC Goals, Business Advisory Team, etc. it would be productive.

Mr. Guzzardi shared that the cost of the mailing would be approximately \$400, and we can vote on it at our next meeting.

Mr. White suggested that we could create an email list of businesses. The post card mailing can include a link to register to be on the EDC mailing list. There was consensus that this is a good idea. More to follow at next meeting.

7. Mass Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) – Microenterprise Grant update B. Cisco Beaver Brook Campus Update.

- Getting up to \$9600 for 20 Boxboro microenterprises. Also includes a grant of \$40,000 per town to a local food pantry.

8. Standing Items, no other info on property happenings.

9. Doing Business in Boxborough Guide (Simon/Nate) Nate is going to reach out to Simon to see if they can implement a Glossy Guide for new potential businesses in Boxboro.

10. Business Engagements (John Neyland, not in meeting, stay till next meeting)

11. Development Departments Meetings, discussed in #2.

Upcoming Meetings

- Jan 21, Jan 25th (BSB Meeting), Feb 18th, Mar 18th

- Mark White MOTIONED to adjourn at 8:52 PM Kristin Hilberg SECONDED. Roll call vote: Ferguson – Aye; Willis – Aye; McKinley – Aye; White – Aye; Hilberg – Aye; Guzzardi – Aye