



**TOWN OF BOXBOROUGH
NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING
Meeting Minutes**

BOARD/COMMITTEE: Economic Development Committee

MEETING DATE: January 21, 2021

TIME: 7:30 PM

PLACE: Virtual Zoom Meeting

Members Present: Mark White, Kristin Hilberg, Dawn Willis, Rich Guzzardi, John Neyland (7:40 PM)

Members Absent: Nate McKinley, Joe Ferguson

Other Attendees: John Markiewicz, Becky Neville, Janet Connolly

Summary of discussion of each topic

1. **Meeting Minutes from 22 October 2020.** Mark White motioned to approve; Kristin Hilberg seconded. Voted in favor: Willis, White, Hilberg, Guzzardi. Not in favor: None
2. **Meeting Minutes from 7 January 2021.** White motioned to approve; Hilberg seconded. Voted in favor: Willis, White, Hilberg, Guzzardi. Not in favor: None
3. **Meeting Minutes from 3 December 2020 will be taken up at meeting on February 18th.**
4. **Correspondence and new business.** Rich Guzzardi shared discussion held with Erik Neyland (Town of Bolton EDC Chair). Discussed how Bolton was able to generate a fund raising campaign and shared town investment in the construction of a gazebo on town land along Main Street in the center of town. This has spawned some business interest in the center of town, with a family purchasing a building on Main Street to open a general store. The focus of their EDC is in serving as a pseudo business chamber in support of small businesses. They have started a social media site "Destination Bolton" where they post videos of small businesses and generate interest in their marketplace. They also sponsor Backyard Bolton for three days in the Fall (farms, artisans, crafts, etc.). Committee members mentioned that they believed our Agricultural Fair was on a larger scale than the Backyard Bolton event.

Erik did indicate that they are looking at two parcels (one East and the other West of 495), with one of them potentially developed as a comprehensive permit apartment style development to address their exposure to Chapter 40B. Erik referenced discussions with Boxborough as a potential model (looking at Paddock Estates) for how they can address their issue. He indicated that the view in Bolton is

that office parks are dead. In fact, they are looking at an old office building East of 495 being reused as a marijuana processing facility.

They are similarly constrained by private well and septic, requiring tight tanks in their down town section and limited seating capacity. They are making small steps (parking restriction relaxation, diversity of housing, village setbacks).

Discussion centered on the plusses and minuses of the Bolton approach. Dawn Willis mentioned she likes the chamber idea. It was recognized that Boxborough's reliance on the office buildings is greater, due to the larger scale and size of the office parks in our community and in our overall tax receipts. Discussion then jumped to how Bolton's Main Street works relative to Boxborough's desired Town Center. Kristin Hilberg asked what the owners of Town Center were intending with the yellow building as she saw a dumpster outside in the parking lot. Kristin took the action to follow up with Debra Jeanson.

5. **UMASS Study – Presentations and plans were reviewed for presentation of the UMASS Study Results to the Select Board on January 25th. Comments were provided. There was discussion about the \$25K study that the Planning Board is pursuing to tackle the next phase of the zoning audit/zoning cleanup. Rich Guzzardi indicated that while changes were being made, if there was something that should change to realize the Boxborough Village, it should be considered. Mark White indicated that the EDC should be a voice in the study. Discussion on EDC meeting with Planning Board at some point following our meeting with the Select Board. There was also agreement that the EDC should be the lead committee working cross town/board/committee to bring Boxborough Village vision to reality.**
6. **EDC Goals and Priorities – Next Steps. Discussion centered on EDC business engagement to be held in March via Zoom. It was agreed that we would hold the session on Tuesday, March 9th from 9-10:30. John Neyland motion to authorize up to \$5,000 to generate a mailing to the Business Community that would do three things: 1. Advertise the rollout of the Microenterprise Grant; 2. Advertise the Virtual Business Engagement; 3. Request business participation in the Climate Survey. White seconded. Voted in favor: Willis, Hilberg, White, Neyland, Guzzardi. Voted against: None.**
7. **Standing Items – There were no updates to the standing items (other than the Microenterprise Grant discussed above).**

Exhibits

- **Minutes of October 22, 2020**
- **Minutes of January 7, 2021**
- **Draft copy of Select Board Presentation**