

Committee Members

Zachary Knowlton, Chair
Khalid Abdi, Vice Chair
Richard Di Iulio, Member
Mark Schultz, Member
Cassandra McKenzie, Member
Jennifer Kendall, Member
Liam McDermott, Member



TOWN OF MEDWAY COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

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ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Minutes

Thursday, September 23, 2021 at 7:00 p.m.

Senior Center

76 Oakland Street, Medway

Members Present: Zach Knowlton, Chair, Khalid Abdi, Vice Chair, Rich Di Iulio, Cassandra McKenzie, Liam McDermott

Members Absent: Jennifer Kendall, Mark Schultz

Also Present:

Barbara J. Saint Andre, Director, Community and Economic Development

Chair Knowlton opened the meeting at 7:01 p.m.

New Business

Update on Cultural Council Initiatives

Ms. Kendall was not present, so there was no update

Assistance to business owners affected by COVID-19 emergency/ Update on assistance to businesses seeking to hire

Ms. Saint Andre reported that the student job fair at the High School went well, there was a good turn out of students. There were 15 businesses and town departments that participated. She worked with Sandy Johnston, the Town's Communications Director, to promote it. They found that social media was not effective, so they personally visited numerous businesses in town to let them know about the job fair. Mr. Abdi also helped out by visiting some local businesses. Dave Passeggio, the Assistant Principal, did a great job of setting it up and promoting it with the students. Ms. Johnston and Ms. Saint Andre attended the job fair and had a table with handouts for local businesses that could not have a person there. At the end of the job fair, Ms. Saint Andre spoke with each of the business representatives who were there, they all felt it had been worthwhile. She plans to send out a follow-up email in a few weeks to the businesses to see if any actual hires resulted. They are considering having another job fair at the High School in the spring.

Reports

Master Plan Committee

Ms. McKenzie reported that the first draft of the Phase 2 vision and goals was sent today to the Master Plan Committee members. The engagement phase is over, the survey and other feedback options are now

closed. She informed the members that the next big event is the Community Forum on October 3rd at the High School. It will be an open house format, with interactive and kid friendly activities. There will be more community forums in Phase 3. She also stated that regrettably she will be stepping down as vice-chair of the MP Committee. She said that the consultant, Jenn Goldson and her team, are doing a great job of keeping this on track.

Use of Economic Data

Mr. Knowlton asked for any comments on the 2020 Census data. Ms. Saint Andre noted that the data shows that Medway's population and housing growth have slowed in the last 20 years; also, the data does not include the many multi-family housing developments currently under construction. Ms. McKenzie asked if the affordable housing being developed in town is for persons earning 80% of median income or if it has deeper affordability. Ms. Saint Andre noted that the Glen Brook development is at the more affordable 60% level, and may even have units at a lower affordability. She noted that the Housing Authority rental units are also available at deeper affordability levels. However, 39 Main Street is at 80% affordability and only 25% of the units are affordable. Mr. Di Iulio stated that the Planning and Economic Development Board is not prioritizing more chapter 40B or other affordable housing at this time, due to the number of units under construction. The Zoning Bylaw requires multi-family developments to have a percentage of affordable units. Ms. McKenzie noted that Medfield is looking at deeper affordability. Ms. Saint Andre noted a 47% increase in rental housing in the town since the last Housing Production Plan in 2015. Mr. McDermott noted that there are constraints due to water and sewer capacity.

Planning and Economic Development Board (PEDB)

Mr. Di Iulio reported that the PEDB is still reviewing applications from Medway Place, Rocky's Hardware, and Phytopia. Evergreen and William Wallace Village developments are under construction. At the last regular PEDB meeting, they heard a presentation on potential future flooding concerns due to climate change from the Conservation Agent and DPW Compliance Coordinator. There was discussion among the Committee members regarding the Charles River and potential removal of some of the dams on the River that no longer serve a purpose. Removal of dams could have other consequences, however, such as the spread of mercury deposits that have accumulated behind the dams, and upstream and down stream impacts.

Approval of Meeting Minutes from August 19, 2021

On a motion made by Mr. Khalid seconded by Ms. McKenzie the Economic Development Committee voted unanimously, 5-0 to approve the meeting minutes from August 19, 2021.

Next Meeting: October 21, 2021

Other Business

Ms. Saint Andre noted that, at the last meeting, the Committee members asked about a "Welcome to Medway" package for new businesses. She noted that the Town Clerk provides each business applying for a d/b/a certificate with a copy of the Zoning provisions for home businesses; a four-page document explaining town regulations for home businesses, and a notice about the Assessors' personal property tax requirements. In addition, there is a pamphlet available in the Town Hall vestibule on Recycling and Solid Waste in Medway; and a Business Resource Guide pamphlet prepared by Community and Economic Development Department, with business resources, town and state officials' contact information, and business groups.

Ms. McKenzie noted the number of breweries that have started up in Massachusetts and suggested having a beer garden event to attract people to a local business area. She stated Brockton recently

did this successfully, and there are state grant monies available. Mr. Di Iulio noted that Medway Place has indicated an interest in hosting pop-up events. Mr. McDermott suggested perhaps the Choate Park/Medway Mill area. Mr. Knowlton stated that every large city has this type of event, it can bring together local entrepreneurs. He suggested contacting three local breweries to come to the Town for an event. Ms. McKenzie noted that Brockton did this as a summer long event, and it was packed every week. Mr. Abdi suggested also having local food trucks there. It was agreed to put this on the agenda for next meeting to explore locations and potential breweries to contact.

On a motion made by Mr. Abdi, seconded by Mr. Di Iulio, the Economic Development Committee voted unanimously, 5-0 to adjourn at 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Barbara J. Saint Andre, Director
Community and Economic Development