

Committee Members

Keith Peden, Chair
Zachary Knowlton, Vice Chair
Richard Di Iulio, Member
Mark Schultz, Member
Cassandra McKenzie, Member
Khalid Abdi, Member



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TOWN OF MEDWAY COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Minutes

Thursday, February 20, 2020 at 7:00 p.m.
Medway Town Hall
Sanford Hall
155 Village Street Medway, MA

Members Present: Keith Peden, Chair, Zach Knowlton, Vice Chair, Rich Di Iulio, Mark Schultz, Cassandra McKenzie, Khalid Abdi

Also Present:

Barbara J. Saint Andre, Director, Community and Economic Development
Katherine Mitchell, Recording Secretary

Chair Peden opened the meeting at 7:00 p.m.

New Business

Review and Approve Short Term Goals for 2020 – Keith Peden

Approval of Short-Term Goals for 2020: On a motion made by Ms. McKenzie; seconded by Mr. Schultz, the Economic Development Committee approved the Short-Term Goals for 2020. Chair Peden stated these goals will be posted to the website.

Chair Peden reviewed areas where committee members can participate in Short Term goals (see attached document to correlate whom is associated)

1. All members- Represent Economic Development Committee at other committee meetings. The point of attending meetings of town committees is for participation and to provide guidance. Ms. Saint Andre noted that the Town will soon be preparing an updated Master Plan. This is a vision for the Community for the next 5-10 years. Town Meeting has appropriated \$150,000 to hire a consultant. The Planning & Economic Development Board is responsible for preparing the Master Plan. Usually, a committee is formed with representatives of town committees & citizens, including a representative from the EDC. Being a member of the Master Plan committee is a significant time commitment, including night meetings. The Town will be looking for volunteers from this committee. You can read the 2009 Master Plan online. Chair Peden agreed this committee is vital and discussed the meeting requirements. Chair Peden suggested members email him if they are interested in joining.
2. Mr. Knowlton
3. Mr. Knowlton – assisted by Mr. Abdi
4. Mr. Peden – assistance after meetings are held with owners
5. Mr. Peden– assistance after meetings are held with owners
6. Planning an event for the fall – all member. Last fall, the EDC coordinated a celebration for the completion of the Route 109 Project. CED Administrative Assistant Ms. Ohannesian can help support another event.

7. Mr. Schultz
8. All members
9. Collaborate to review land available for commercial development – Ms. McKenzie. Periodic review of undeveloped land to review zoning and identify areas we should target. Boxborough's website outlines 4 scenarios of specific areas and issues. Steps to overcome (case studies). Mr. Di Iulio stated the Planning and Economic Board (PEDB) discussed available zones and what they would like to see in that area. Medway Business Council & developers in Town should be involved in the discussion. Chair Peden suggested working with the PEDB collaboratively. Ms. Saint Andre suggested expanding industrial zones, particularly in West Medway. There is adjacent undeveloped land in Bellingham, so a joint venture between the towns is a possibility. Chair Peden asked if Ms. McKenzie would be interested in assisting with this.

Outreach to owners of land available for commercial lease – Zach Knowlton

The goal is to expand the tax base by targeting vacancies in commercial real estate. Mr. Knowlton and the committee would like to be able to assist new businesses with achieving their goals. Mr. Knowlton stated the committee should ensure they take care of existing businesses as well as assist with new ones.

A letter has been drafted and signed to send to companies that own properties with vacancies. Mr. Knowlton stated the Plaza on Route 109 as a prime example, as there are 4-5 vacancies in this one plaza.

Mr. Di Iulio stated our focus should be on areas to target development. Mr. Knowlton stated Framingham State University partnered with Economic Research Center to see broad trends of happenings within the community. There were some questions on the data sources and how they could be leveraged.

Tax and other data comparison with abutting towns – Barbara Saint Andre

Mr. Knowlton and the committee members discussed their initial thoughts on the data provided by Ms. Saint Andre.

Page 3 – Commercial tax rates, lowest amongst group of towns (aside from Franklin)

Medway – High percentage, but not charging as much as other towns.

Mr. Knowlton passed out a visual aid from the town of Boxborough. The committee discussed a document provided from Mr. Knowlton with strategies and enablers. Mr. Di Iulio mentioned the West Industrial Park where the Town extended sewer lines (lack of sewer a roadblock for businesses to come in). Revenue by sources- State Aid, \$12 million. Is this consistent? Do we rely on it? Ms. Saint Andre believes it is from the State budget. Chair Peden questioned if this was a reoccurring revenue? Ms. Saint Andre stated; yes, this does not usually go down. Tax Levy % - Ms. Saint Andre believes we have a good mix.

Proposed goal on creating a skills data base - Mark Schultz

Mr. Schultz passed around documentation he gathered to committee members. He envisions drawing upon resources within the community to leverage them to assist others within the community. Mark discovered Falmouth has a similar approach, which is not provided by a government agency- volunteer based. Residents can sign up for a one-time assignment or continuous basis. A modest fee is charged. There is a large pool of retired people in Falmouth.

Ms. Saint Andre stated that the EDC had also discussed at a prior meeting a means to provide support to small businesses in town who may need assistance or advice. Mr. Peden agrees that this is a good idea but may potentially be better handled by Council on Aging. Ms. Saint Andre would like to speak to the Town Administrator before reaching out to other committees.

Chair Peden stated the Business Guide was an example. Keith offered to speak to the Town Administrator to move this idea forward.

Ms. Saint Andre spoke to the Town Clerk about the census information stored in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts database, it is controlled by the state and is not searchable by the Town to find certain professions or occupations. The Town Clerk stated we do have a hard copy of a list of residents that is available. Chair Peden suggested reaching out to Friends of Medway to self-identify.

Reports

Planning and Economic Development Board- Rich Di Iulio

One subdivision in the process to permit. Two multifamily projects. Committee is working with Medway Plaza to restripe parking lot and storm water. Unsure of where this project stands. They removed angle parking. Redevelop plaza- on hold until storm water and restriping are finalized.

Zoning by law changes, looking to update environmental by laws- Noise, odor, smoke, vibration. (Spring town meeting) ensure it is up to date and meets requirements.

Cultural Council- Barbara Saint Andre

Ms. Saint Andre provided an update on behalf of the Cultural Council on the upcoming Art Week. An artist letter, seeking participation, was sent out by the Council. The Council is working on partnering with Franklin on some joint activities. They are also reaching out to local restaurants to participate and tie in. The Council is planning Art Weeks events further in advance this year, posting on state website and town website. Venues throughout town offered assistance. Chair Peden stated the Council got a state grant and do not need feel at this time they need further funding.

Minutes Approval January 16, 2020

On a motion made by Rich Di Iulio; seconded by Mr. Knowlton, the Economic Development Committee voted unanimously to approve the minutes of January 16, 2020.

Next meeting: March 19, 2020

On a motion made by Rich Di Iulio; seconded by Cassandra McKenzie, the Economic Development Committee voted unanimously to adjourn at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Katherine Mitchell, Recording Secretary

List of Documents Reviewed at the Meeting

1. Mr. Shultz' "Neighborhood Medway" handout
2. Five Pages of Data comparing area towns
3. Economic Development – Strategies and Enablers