

Committee Members  
Khalid Abdi, Chair  
Liam McDermott, Vice Chair  
Jessica Chabot, Member  
Cassandra McKenzie, Member  
Larry Presswood, Member  
Mark Schultz, Member



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## TOWN OF MEDWAY COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

**Thursday, January 19, 2023 at 7:00 p.m.**  
**Medway Town Hall – Sanford Hall**  
**155 Village Street, Medway, MA**  
**Meeting Minutes**

**Members Present:** Khalid Abdi, Liam McDermott, Cassandra McKenzie, Mark Schultz, Larry Presswood

**Members Absent:** Jessica Chabot

**Also Present:** Barbara J. Saint Andre, Director, Community and Economic Development

The Chair opened the meeting at 7:04 p.m.

#### **New Business**

##### **Initiatives to assist local businesses**

Members mentioned that a restaurant in town is closing. Mr. Abdi stated that Master's Touch will not be locating in Medway, the owner expressed some frustration with the town's regulations and length of time for permitting. It was discussed that the site that Master's Touch had wanted to purchase and construct a new building in the back was a somewhat difficult site due to the back of the lot being very narrow where the new building was proposed. Mr. McDermott mentioned that sometimes neighbors raise issues at the public hearing. Mr. Presswood asked if the Town could streamline the permitting process. It was agreed that regulations should be streamlined and made more apparent up front. Ms. Saint Andre stated that prospective business owners are encouraged to meet with staff prior to filing for permits so that staff can provide direction and inform them of applicable regulations.

##### **Discuss potential zoning bylaw amendments for May annual town meeting**

Ms. Saint Andre mentioned that February 15<sup>th</sup> is the deadline to submit warrant articles for the Annual Town Meeting. She stated that there the Planning and Economic Development Board is considering a few minor amendments to the Zoning Bylaw, but no major changes. She also mentioned that a resident, Charlie Myers, has requested some adjustments to the home-based business zoning. The Committee members had no specific zoning changes to suggest at this time.

##### **Discuss Town tax rate and growth**

Ms. Saint Andre stated that each year the Assessors make a presentation to the Select Board regarding setting the annual tax rate. She took selected slides from the Assessors' powerpoint to present to the Committee for its information. She then presented the powerpoint to the Committee. (see attached). It included a comparison with tax rates of abutting towns. A member questioned why some towns have a lower tax rate, Mr. Presswood remarked that it is because those towns have a larger commercial tax base. It was noted that the tax rate has gone down, but many residents' tax bills went up due to higher valuation.

Mr. Schultz asked where the money is spent, it was noted that Town Meeting approves the budgets and capital expenditures. Mr. McDermott noted that there are some vacant storefronts in the Plaza, it was thought that perhaps the lease rates had increased. The Town collects less tax money when commercial space is vacant.

Ms. McKenzie asked about the property that the Town bought on Main Street, and the possibility of a new town hall and/or fire station being built there. There was discussion about whether the members thought that a new town hall should be built on Main Street. Mr. McDermott noted that space at the current town hall is limited; also, the fire department needs for training and storage of equipment, etc. have grown enormously since the fire station was built. Other members thought that a new facility is not necessary given other capital needs of the town.

### **Recruiting New Committee Members**

It was noted that there is currently one opening on the Committee. The members will continue reaching out to local residents in the business community. It was stated that if the Committee had a budget for events perhaps it would attract more interest in the Committee. Ms. McKenzie asked if the Committee could be involved in an event such as Medway Pride Day.

### **Reports**

#### **Planning and Economic Development Board – Jessica Chabot**

Ms. Chabot was not present, so there was no report.

### **Approval of Meeting Minutes – December 15, 2022**

**On a motion made by Ms. McKenzie, seconded by Mr. Schultz, the Committee voted to approve the December 15, 2022 meeting minutes 4-0-1 (Mr. McDermott abstained)**

Next meeting – Scheduled for February 16, 2023

### **Any other business to come before the Committee**

Mr. Schultz asked about the MBTA communities zoning requirements (G.L. c. 40A, §3A), and the grant programs that the state will withhold from any community that is not in compliance. Ms. Saint Andre mentioned that the state has already begun withholding a portion of the state share of housing authority budgets in municipalities that are not in compliance with this new law.

**On a motion made by Mr. McDermott; seconded by Ms. McKenzie, the Committee voted unanimously to adjourn at 8:13 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara J. Saint Andre, Director  
Community and Economic Development

### List of Documents Reviewed at Meeting

1. Classification hearing FY2023 slides