

Committee Members

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



TOWN OF MEDWAY COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

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ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Minutes

Thursday, April 21, 2022 at 7:00 p.m.
Sanford Hall

Members Present: Khalid Abdi, Chair, Mark Schultz, Jennifer Kendall, Cassandra McKenzie, Rich Di Iulio

Members Absent: Liam McDermott

Also Present:

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

Chair Abdi opened the meeting at 7:05 p.m.

Initiatives: Restaurant Week April 29th – May 6th

Ms. Saint Andre mentioned 11 restaurants are currently signed up. Sandy Johnston has been working incredibly hard on this. Each restaurant has its own special. Ms. Saint Andre suggested members sharing the information to get the word out. Ms. Johnston is creating a video on YouTube of all of the businesses and their specials. We will be putting the signs in the window or on the doors of the participating restaurants to try to get the word out. Ms. Saint Andre is hoping it will go well and people will support it. Restaurant Week is being marketed on MyMedway FM, Medway Business Council, social media, flyers, post cards, etc. Chair Abdi asked if there was feedback from last year's event. Ms. Saint Andre stated the pandemic was still happening last year, so it was hard to judge. This year we are advertising more.

Recap of High School job fair held on April 13th

Ms. Saint Andre stated the job fair was successful. Eighteen employers attended; some were repeats from the last job fair. She stated there was a lot of activity. All businesses had at least spoken to students and had applications. Shaws recruited 9 students from the job fair held last fall and returned this year. Ms. Saint Andre mentioned the Army Reserve had students doing pushups or sit-ups to receive an Army Reserve water bottle. We are planning to have a job fair at the High School on a regular basis. Thank you to Sandy Johnston and Assistant Principal Dave Paseggio who did a great job on this.

Brew Pub Pop Up

Ms. Saint Andre stated she had spoken to the representative from Jacks Abbey. They are already planning for Fall events now. This event is possible for next year. She mentioned a beer garden event for the Juneteenth celebration. Ms. Saint Andre stated there is \$5,000 in the FY 2023 budget requested to be available for different events in town. The Select Board is working on guidelines for how to award the money. A lot of these events do not have a budget. This might be something that can be tapped into.

The pop-up event does not have to be at Medway Commons. Mr. Schultz asked if there could be a cover or entry charge to get in. Members agreed to plan a potential beer garden for Restaurant Week of next year. Ms. Saint Andre stated tying a pop-up pub to another event makes sense and would be helpful.

Master Plan Phase 3 presentation and discussion – Cassandra McKenzie

Ms. McKenzie states that the Master Plan is currently in Phase 3. There is an interactive website that includes tools to get feedback from the community. There are many strategy approaches being considered for the Master Plan. The project began in March 2021 – Phase 1. Phase 2 was Medway Tomorrow – draft vision and ideas from the community, what they would like to see. We are now in Phase 3 – Achieving Medway Tomorrow – this includes strategies for achieving the vision; we are now considering which strategies we want to include in the Master Plan. Phase 4 will be Plan Finalization & Adoption.

Ms. McKenzie mentioned there were several points of contact with various members of the community. They held various focus groups, community forums, summer engagement at events, etc. The last community forum was April 5th, which reviewed overall draft vision & goals. There are 4 core themes, with 5-6 goals within each core themes. We are now focusing on strategies – how to achieve the vision and goals.

Ms. McKenzie encouraged members to visit the Master Plan website and give feedback on the strategies. Specifically, those under numbers 2 & 3 to give Economic Development perspective. The website provides a summary of the focus groups, and asks residents to rate the idea (love this idea or I really don't like this idea), comment box, etc.

The proposed strategies we are asking for input on are the ones that are not unanimously supported. The Master Plan Committee is looking for additional input on these.

The EDC reviewed some proposed strategies. Placemaking – build upon the Route 109 streetscape that was recently completed. Ideas include applying for placemaking dollars, art and other ideas. The Planning and Economic Development Board has made a conscience effort to change zoning so that it can be open to ideas to do things to allow streetscapes. Mr. Di Iulio would rate this a 5. Chair Abdi agrees, it would help make Route 109 more walkable. Ms. Saint Andre mentioned they are looking into extending sidewalks toward Cumberland Farms. This was largely supported in the focus groups. HIGH PRIORITY.

Tax Incentives for Redevelopment was not widely supported. Mr. Di Iulio would rate this a 1. He believes the town has given opportunities to the businesses in this area. Tax incentives for businesses could hurt the average taxpayer in town. Mr. Schultz – Median household income in Medway is \$130,000. Will affect how affordable Medway will become. LOW PRIORITY.

The members rated other proposed strategies: Special Designation – LOW PRIORITY.

Tax Incentives for Industrial Growth – LOW PRIORITY.

Allow smaller village-style commercial areas – HIGH PRIORITY.

Expand Industrial Development – MEDIUM PRIORITY.

Reports

Update on Cultural Council initiatives and potential EDC involvement – Jennifer Kendall

Ms. Kendall reported that the Cultural Council funded some Mass Audubon programs at the library. Ms. Kendall also mentioned a few hikes at Choate Park, a family concert, and a spring photo contest. There is a Poetry Contest – submit a poem, get a free ticket for a Friends of the Library book.

Planning and Economic Development Board – Rich Di Iulio

Mr. Di Iulio stated the PEDB is still working on Battery Energy Storage System draft zoning by-law. The Phytopia marijuana facility is still going through permitting. He did not attend the last PEDB meeting. Two Marc Road is looking to add a second floor to expand, that public hearing started 2 weeks ago. The Master Plan is still on-going.

Approval of Meeting Minutes from March 17, 2022 and March 24, 2022

On a motion made by Ms. McKenzie; seconded by Mr. Schultz, the Economic Development Committee voted to approve the meeting minutes from March 17, 2022 & March 24, 2022.

Next Meeting: May 19, 2022

On a motion made by Mr. Di Iulio; seconded by Ms. McKenzie, the Economic Development Committee voted unanimously to adjourn at 8:27 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Katherine Mitchell, Recording Secretary

Edited by

Barbara J. Saint Andre, Director

Community and Economic Development