

Committee Members

Liam McDermott, Chair
Mark Schultz, Vice-Chair
Khalid Abdi, Member
Larry Presswood, Member
Jessica Chabot, Member
Patrick Herlihy, Member
Kristen Salerna, Member



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TOWN OF MEDWAY

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Minutes

Thursday, September 21, 2023 at 7:00 p.m.

Virtual Meeting via Zoom

Pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2023, under which public bodies retain the option of holding open meetings and hearings remotely until March 31, 2025, and in accordance with the Medway Select Board's remote participation policy as amended at its July 2, 2021, meeting, all persons participated remotely in this meeting. Information for participating via Zoom was posted at the end of the meeting agenda.

Members Present: Mark Schultz, Vice-Chair, Larry Presswood, Jessica Chabot, Kristen Salerna

Members Absent: Liam McDermott, Khalid Abdi, Patrick Herlihy

Also Present:

Barbara J. Saint Andre, Director, Community and Economic Development
Jeremy Thompson, Planning and Economic Development Coordinator

Vice-Chair Schultz opened the meeting at 7:05 p.m. The members of the Committee who were present were identified for the record.

1. New Business

Initiatives to Assist Local Businesses

Mr. Schultz mentioned that the committee had previously discussed streamlining the application process so that people are able to better traverse all the hurdles to start a business. Ms. Saint Andre responded that the Committee did discuss streamlining, and the Town amended the zoning bylaws so that if an applicant needs both site plan review and a special permit, they can now go to just the Planning and Economic Development Board (PEDB) instead of both the Zoning Board and the PEDB. Regulations have also been changed to include time limits on site plan reviews to keep things on track.

Ms. Chabot suggested identifying seminars for small business owners that the Committee could sponsor. For example, having Charles River Bank do a small seminar on financial 101 of owning or starting a small business. Ms. Salerna mentioned that Paul Saia at Charles River Bank is keen on hosting workshops. Also, the Medway Business Council has hosted a few seminars with them.

Perhaps we could collaborate with them so that more people show up. Ms. Salera volunteered to contact them to ask about seminars. Ms. Chabot recommended that we also ask them if there is anything EDC could help with, such as advertising on social media to get more people to attend, etc. Mr. Schultz expressed concern that Charles River Bank was not a small business and may not be helpful to small businesses with less than 10 employees. Ms. Chabot explained that she suggested Charles River Bank because they already do a lot of outreach in the community, and they have the resources to help small businesses. Mr. Presswood agreed that a lot of banks have small business advisory groups and they separate their portfolios between small and corporate businesses. Small businesses may be a lot bigger than most people might expect, but the bank run seminars are very helpful to help small businesses grow. Once we have reached out to Charles River Bank and they have shown interest, we need to determine how to get Medway's small business owners to attend those programs. Ms. Salera suggested that working with the Medway Business Council to make sure our efforts are not duplicated, while still offering support may be the most ideal way to proceed.

Ms. Chabot also suggested doing a seminar or webinar, perhaps sponsored by the PEDB, about how to run a small business from your home – what you are or are not allowed to do, mainly because zoning can be really difficult for people to understand. Ms. Saint Andre suggested that the members of EDC join the Medway Business Council's email list so that they receive information on upcoming programs. Ms. Salera echoed the sentiment that collaborating with the Medway Business Council would really help increase attendance at programs and seminars.

Discussion on relevant Master Plan Initiatives

Ms. Saint Andre opened the discussion by reiterating a few initiatives from the Master Plan that the Committee could work on. For example, the Medway Village areas by Town Hall and the Police Station needs to be revitalized. This Committee could help investigate how to get small businesses into those areas. Ms. Chabot said that she was looking at the Master Plan and the economic development incentive program and tax increment financing and asked if we wanted to pursue those programs. Ms. Chabot also suggested pursuing goal 5 – actively leverage financial, technical and promotional support of new and local businesses throughout Medway. Ms. Chabot suggested that this Committee would have success tackling this goal. Ms. Saint Andre agreed that Goal 5 was assigned to this Committee and would be a good idea to tackle first since its better to focus on one goal at a time. Ms. Chabot pointed out that goal 5(f) about mentoring is an interesting idea as well and would be possible within the purview of this group. Ms. Chabot suggested a “speed-networking” type program connecting small business owners with college or high school students.

2. Reports

Planning and Economic Development Board

Ms. Chabot explained that the biggest concern currently is what is going to happen with the US Postal Service building that closed on Main Street and noted that no formal application has been presented to the Board on that front. Ms. Chabot further explained that the fall town meeting warrant articles have been completed – most of the changes have to do with housekeeping. The Board is proposing a small change to the central business district by allowing some additional height on a building with the goal of getting more conservation land. This is a direct request from the owner of the property that the Post Office used to sit on – this is posted publicly if anyone would like to review. Mr. Schultz asked about the lot where Burger King sits on because he heard that the Burger King is also closing down. Ms. Chabot explained that the same person that owns the Postal Office lot also owns the Burger King lot. They own a parcel from Elm Street to about the bank, including the car wash, fueling station, etc, and are planning on developing it. There has not been an

application yet, so unclear what they plan to build there. The Town Manager and the Select Board have primarily been in discussions with the owner. Ms. Saint Andre elaborated that on Main Street, the owner is planning mixed use spaces – where the first floor would be commercial and above that would be residential units, with parking in the back and walkways in the front, but we need to wait and see how this plays out. Mr. Schultz asked how many buildings, Ms. Saint Andre explained that the scope of it has not yet been determined.

3. Approval of minutes

On a motion made by Ms. Chabot, seconded by Mr. Presswood, the Committee unanimously voted by roll call to approve the minutes from August 17, 2023.

Mr. Salerna	Aye
Mr. Presswood	Aye
Ms. Chabot	Aye
Mr. Schultz	Aye

4. Any other business:

Ms. Chabot asked if we could discuss nominating a new chair since we haven't heard from Liam McDermott, who hasn't attended the last four meetings. Ms. Saint Andre offered to reach out to Mr. McDermott again to ask if he is still interested in being a member or Chair of the committee.

5. Next meeting scheduled for October 19, 2023.

6. Adjournment

On a motion made by Ms. Chabot, seconded by Mr. Presswood, the Committee unanimously voted by roll call to adjourn the meeting at 7:39 p.m.

Ms. Chabot	Aye
Mr. Presswood	Aye
Mr. Salera	Aye
Mr. Schultz	Aye

Respectfully submitted
Stuthi Balaji

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