

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, May 21, 2020 at 7:00 p.m.

Virtual Meeting via Zoom

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

Also Present (virtually):

Barbara J. Saint Andre, Director, Community and Economic Development
Katherine Mitchell, Recording Secretary, joined the meeting at 7:50 p.m.
Art Prutsalis

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

New Business

Assistance to Local Businesses

Chair Peden introduced Art Prutsalis, a resident and member of the Medway Business Council, who has agreed to help act as a liaison between the Committee and the Business Council. Mr. Prutsalis gave a short description of his business background and his community involvement.

Chair Peden stated that the Board of Selectmen has discussed assisting restaurants in town by allowing for outdoor dining areas. Ms. Saint Andre stated that the Board of Selectmen discussed this at its meeting on Monday, and that town staff is now working on guidelines and an application form for the Board to consider at its meeting on June 1st. It is anticipated that the Governor's re-opening plan may initially allow restaurants to serve diners only at outdoor seating, and will restrict indoor seating capacity when indoor dining is allowed. The outdoor seating will allow restaurants to maximize revenue during the transition. The Board of Selectmen is trying to get ahead of the anticipated state re-opening plan so that approvals for restaurants will be in place. She also noted that the state Alcoholic Beverage Control Commission currently must approve any changes to premises that have liquor licenses, which will also take time.

Mr. Prutsalis offered to assist with information from restaurants in other towns as to their plans for re-opening. Chair Peden inquired as to the level of detail in the guidelines and the extent of the town's dialogue with local restaurant owners. Mr. Prutsalis stated he would be happy to contact restaurant owners at the Plaza and perhaps distribute the Town guidelines to restaurants. Ms. McKenzie asked if the Committee could assist the restaurants with the signage that will be required when re-opened. Mr. Knowlton stated that communication and transparency are key, and suggested perhaps a survey of businesses. Mr. Prutsalis will reach out to restaurants in the next few days.

Outreach to owners of commercial lease property

Mr. Knowlton explained his outreach to the owners of the Medway Commons Plaza. The owner was appreciative of the outreach and mentioned a restriction on the number of seats at the site of the former McDonalds. Mr. Di Iulio stated he is not familiar with any such town regulation. Mr. Knowlton believes additional outreach in the future should be explored.

Route 109 Development

Chair Peden stated that the Plaza redevelopment discussions are on hold for the moment. Mr. Di Iulio stated that the Plaza has a site plan application pending that is scheduled for June 9th. Chair Peden will be having discussions regarding properties on the south side of Main Street in the future.

Skill set database

Mr. Schultz indicated that this is a promising idea, but there are still a number of items to be resolved, including whether persons on the list would be anonymous. Chair Peden stated that he and Mr. Schultz had discussed this, and there are great untapped skills in town which people may be willing to share. The database could be used to provide mentoring, develop the Maker Space, or help with business plans by linking persons with skills with those looking for assistance. It could also be used to create a business incubator, perhaps in the Oak Grove development or Middle School. Mr. Abdi asked if this would be volunteer, or for a fee, the answer was it could be both.

Reports

Use of Economic Data – Zach Knowlton

Mr. Knowlton is interested in seeing what data could be leveraged for Medway after being in contact with representatives from Framingham State University. The data was demographic related, to help paint a better picture of the Town. This leads to the possibility to have more up to date data. Government Census is not updated on a frequent basis. Mr. Knowlton would like to get a better understanding of Medway's data compared to other towns. This will give the ability to see trends with towns similar to Medway. This data could also provide better leverage within our community. Mr. Peden stated there are two objectives here. Replace the data and keep current on our website. "Is this a community I want to start a business in or live in?" Data gets to be old. The website could be refreshed on a regular basis and collaborate with other communities.

Planning and Economic Development Board- Rich Di Iulio

Medway Mills is looking to add additional parking. Its application is on hold until June 9th. The PEDB recently permitted two multifamily projects. Discussing permit next Tuesday. In process of accepting Forest Road. Road is private but Town has been plowing. Medway Plaza - 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.

Ms. Saint Andre noted that there are three major affordable housing developments in the works. Timber Crest (work has begun); 39 Main Street rental apartments received final approval (hopefully will apply for a building permit within the next month or two), and apartments on West Street (looking to break ground this summer).

Minutes Approval February 20, 2020

On a motion made by Rich Di Iulio; seconded by Cassandra McKenzie, the Economic Development Committee voted unanimously by roll call vote to approve the minutes of February 20, 2020.

Keith Peden	Aye
Zachary Knowlton	Aye
Richard Di Iulio	Aye
Mark Schultz	Aye
Cassandra McKenzie	Aye
Khalid Abdi	Aye

Next meeting: June 18, 2020

On a motion made by Rich Di Iulio; seconded by Cassandra McKenzie, the Economic Development Committee voted unanimously by roll call vote to adjourn at 8:10 p.m.

Keith Peden	Aye
Zachary Knowlton	Aye
Richard Di Iulio	Aye
Mark Schultz	Aye
Cassandra McKenzie	Aye
Khalid Abdi	Aye

Respectfully submitted,

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

List of Documents Reviewed at the Meeting

1. Skills Database EDC Discussion Guide