

## Committee Members

Zachary Knowlton, Chairman

Khalid Abdi, Vice Chair

Richard Di Iulio, Member

Mark Schultz, Member

Cassandra McKenzie, Member



Medway Town Hall

155 Village Street

Medway, MA 02053

Telephone (508) 321-4890

Email: bsaintandre@townofmedway.org

www.townofmedway.org

# TOWN OF MEDWAY COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

### Minutes

Thursday, October 15, 2020 at 7:00 p.m.

Virtual Meeting via Zoom

Pursuant to Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, and the Governor's Orders imposing strict limitations on the number of people that may gather in one place, no in-person attendance of members of the public was permitted at this meeting. Information for participating via Zoom was posted at the end of the Agenda on the town website. All persons participated remotely in the meeting via Zoom

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

### **Members Absent:**

### **Also Present (virtually):**

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

Katherine Mitchell, Recording Secretary

Jeff O'Neil, Finance Committee

Chair Knowlton opened the meeting at 7:03 p.m.

### **New Business**

#### **Assistance to business owners affected by COVID-19 emergency**

Ms. Saint Andre had forwarded the members the Governor's order extending outdoor dining up to 60 days after the state of emergency ends as a local option. The Board of Selectmen added this to their agenda Monday night and passed it. There is a lot of anxiety for when the weather gets colder as people prefer to eat outside. Ms. Saint Andre stated it gives businesses the option to continue with outdoor seating in case they are able to. Ms. McKenzie asked if Medway asked to receive additional funding to support businesses/shared spaces. Ms. Saint Andre stated no one requested to use a sidewalk or parking spaces on a public street, so the town did not see it as necessary. If there is interest, the Town will look into applying. Restaurants are using their own lots and property for outdoor dining spaces.

Chair Knowlton will connect with Mr. Peden regarding an update on partnership with Medway Business Council.

#### **Outreach to owners of land available for commercial lease**

Mr. Di Iulio discussed the Governor's potential plan to assist renters and landlords during this time. Some

of the plan could help small businesses as well. Ms. Saint Andre attended a 495 MetroWest Partnership webinar where the Commonwealth's Secretary of Housing and Economic Development, Mike Kennealy, mentioned the Commonwealth will soon be announcing a new assistance program to assist small businesses with more than 5 employees. The previous program was only for small businesses with 5 or fewer employees. A question arose whether the Commonwealth would help mid-size businesses as well with federal or local assistance. Ms. Saint Andre reminded committee members to sign up for 495 MetroWest's email list, it offers a lot of helpful information and programs.

### **Proposed goal on creating a skills data base**

Mr. Abdi stated the Medway Business Council is already working on a very similar project and there is no need to duplicate efforts. Chair Knowlton agreed.

### **Central Business zoning district – input on potential Zoning By-law changes**

Ms. Saint Andre mentioned Ted Brovitz is meeting with business owners and land owners along Route 109 to gather information regarding the efforts to transform the stretch of Route 109 to make it more appealing. Mr. Brovitz will then ask for a meeting with representatives of some of the Town boards for their input. This is for zoning amendments for the spring town meeting.

### **Ideas for Spring Events**

Ms. Saint Andre mentioned a restaurant week would be beneficial for restaurants as well as consumers and the local economy. It will drive people to go out on an unexpected night for takeout and possibly notice a store they've never seen before and generate business. Ms. Saint Andre questioned the best timing for a Restaurant Week. Mr. Knowlton stated Boston has one in late March and late August. Spring or Fall may be better depending on vacations. Mr. Abdi mentioned he thought the idea of Restaurant Week was excellent.

Mr. Di Iulio suggests asking the restaurants what the best time would be. Decide if we want a few towns or just Medway, and gather a list of businesses. Mr. Knowlton agrees and suggests working with Medway Business Council for collaboration. Start with Medway restaurants first. Ms. Saint Andre stated she would reach out to Mr. Prutsalis of the Medway Business Council. Ms. McKenzie offered assistance. She is going to share information on Fall River's event, which used online ticket purchase. It was suggested we include pop up stores as well as outdoor seating, and standardize the price or discount.

A Farmer's Market on Route 109 is another idea.

This will remain on agenda so we continue to think of ideas.

### **Cultural Council and EDC involvement**

Ms. Saint Andre shared an email from Jennifer Kendall. The Cultural Council is working on possible Window Art or Murals at the Medway shopping plaza. These would brighten up store fronts. Ms. Saint Andre will contact Plaza representative to see what they think and go from there. Any other unique ideas within the community? Perhaps a contest with place making.

## **Reports**

### **Use of Economic Data**

Refreshed data from Metrowest Partnership was released for the area and the Town. Discussion on whether there is a way to track professional certification or trade school education. There are a lot of

members in the community that work in trades. Mr. Knowlton will look into making this request, potentially as a survey format.

**Planning and Economic Development Board**

Mr. Di Iulio mentioned they are continuing work on the same projects. The last few meetings consisted of discussion regarding the proposed zoning by-law amendments for the November Town Meeting and voting on items for the warrant.

Chair Knowlton filled Mr. Schultz in on the meeting, as he was having connectivity issues. Mr. Schultz informed the committee that he went to the Plaza to see if there was space for bulletin boards, and believes it would require funding from the owners. Mr. Schultz suggested enlisting local artists to show something creative along the edges of plaza, but there is not much green space. Mr. Schultz suggested putting boards around the parking lot to decorate and provide something along perimeter of plaza. Ms. Saint Andre stated this is a similar idea to something the Cultural Council is working on. Ms. Saint Andre stated she would continue to liaise and share this thought with them.

**Minutes Approval September 17, 2020**

On a motion made by Ms. McKenzie; seconded by Mr. Di Iulio, the Economic Development Committee voted unanimously by roll call vote to approve the minutes of September 17, 2020.

<b>Zach Knowlton</b>	<b>Aye</b>
<b>Khalid Abdi</b>	<b>Aye</b>
<b>Richard Di Iulio</b>	<b>Aye</b>
<b>Cassandra McKenzie</b>	<b>Aye</b>
<b>Mark Schultz</b>	<b>Aye</b>

Ms. McKenzie left the meeting 7:44 PM.

**Support for Site Readiness Program**

Ms. Saint Andre discussed the Grant Program from Mass Development which helps sites get ready for economic development. Medway Redevelopment Authority is looking to redevelop the Oak Grove area by consolidating the numerous small lots along with the large lots to develop. The Site Readiness Program provides grants to assist economic development throughout the Commonwealth. The MRA is eligible and applying to seek funding from Mass Development. The MRA is meeting next week to finalize this application. It is planning to apply for \$100,000 for pre-development costs for this complex plan, including appraisal costs, surveys, title work, etc. The application process includes showing community support for the project as well as support from the Town. The Board of Selectmen will have this on its next agenda to seek the Board’s support for the application. Paul Yorkis, a member of the MRA and a former member of EDC, suggested support from the EDC would be helpful and welcome to show community support. The Town has shown a lot of support for the project over the years. The result will hopefully be a mixed used development, but it is a large expensive project.

On a motion made by Mr. Di Iulio, seconded by Mr. Abdi, the Economic Development Committee voted unanimously by roll call vote to approve support for Medway Redevelopment Authority’s application for this state grant to help with Oak Grove Urban Renewal Plan.

<b>Zack Knowlton</b>	<b>Aye</b>
<b>Khalid Abdi</b>	<b>Aye</b>
<b>Rich Di Iulio</b>	<b>Aye</b>
<b>Mark Schultz</b>	<b>Aye</b>

Ms. Saint Andre suggested adding EDC to the Letter of Support from Board of Selectmen. Mr. Di Iulio believes this would show great support.

### **Next meeting: November 19, 2020**

On a motion made by Mr. Abdi; seconded by Mr. Di Iulio, the Economic Development Committee voted unanimously by roll call vote to adjourn at 8:08 p.m.

<b>Zach Knowlton</b>	<b>Aye</b>
<b>Khalid Abdi</b>	<b>Aye</b>
<b>Richard Di Iulio</b>	<b>Aye</b>
<b>Mark Schultz</b>	<b>Aye</b>

Respectfully submitted,

Katherine Mitchell, Recording Secretary

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