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EDC Minutes – 30 May 2013

The Economic Development Committee (EDC) met on 30 May 2013 following the meeting of the Planning Board (PB). The meeting took place on at the Acton Town Hall. These are the abbreviated minutes from the EDC portion of that meeting.

The meeting was called to order at approximately 9:00 pm by Nancy Dinkel.

Present: Allan Gulliver, Ann Chang, Chris Pappas, Dave Clough, Derrick Chin, Dick Calandrella, Doug Tindal, Larry Kenah, Nancy Dinkel

Missing: David Didriksen

Background

At the EDC meeting on 16 May 2013, the EDC discussed making a recommendation on the proposed one-year building moratorium in West Acton Village (Article 9 at Special Town Meeting on 3 June 2013). Several committee members indicated that they needed additional information before making a decision. After exploring several options, the committee decided to meet jointly with the Planning Board on 30 May when the Planning Board would also discuss this article.

Planning Board Meeting and Decisions

The minutes from the Planning Board meeting can be examined to fully describe that meeting. The one relevant decision from the PB meeting was that the board voted unanimously to Not Recommend Article 9.

EDC Meeting

Although a quorum was realized at the beginning of the PB meeting, no EDC discussions took place until the PB meeting adjourned. At that time, the EDC began its own discussion of Article 9.

Article 9, Temporary Moratorium

There were several rumors that this article would be pulled at the last minute. But the article was still officially on the agenda so the committee proceeded as if the article will be discussed at Town Meeting. A short discussion followed.

- The philosophy behind the original Village Residential (VR) zoning designation, initially created in 1994, was that high density residential housing would cause a growth in retail. That has not happened over the ensuing nearly twenty years.
- The proposed moratorium would halt not only construction of complete housing units but all construction such as a garage or deck or similar improvement.

At this point, a vote was requested and taken.

- In an initial vote, 4 members voted to Recommend and 5 members voted to Not Recommend.
- A revote was requested.
- In the second vote, the committee reversed its initial recommendation. Five members voted to Recommend and 4 members voted to Not Recommend.

Article 11, Temporary Signs

A second article on the warrant for Special Town Meeting is also of interest to the EDC. Article 11 will remove the requirement that a property owner must sign a permit for a temporary sign. This article was a direct result of an earlier EDC meeting when the EDC and Roland Bartl, Planning Director, talked about many issues that affect existing and new businesses in Acton.

The committee voted unanimously to Recommend this article.

In Closing

The meeting adjourned at approximately 9:30 pm.

These minutes were recorded by Lawrence J Kenah, EDC Clerk.