



These are the minutes of the EDC meeting of 6/18/20, held remotely at 11:15 am

Called to Order: 11:22 am

Members Present: Ann Chang, Dave Didriksen, Derrick Chin, Jon Benson, Larry Kenah, Mike Majors, Shirley Ming

Staff Present: Selby (Economic Development Director)

Members Absent: David Foley, Josh Fischel, Peter Daniel

Visitors/Guests: Dan Malloy, Emma Kearney

“Good morning. It is 11:22 am. This Open Meeting of the Economic Development Committee is being conducted remotely consistent with Governor Baker’s Executive Order of March 12, 2020, due to the current State of Emergency in the Commonwealth, and the Local State of Emergency declared by the Acton Board of Selectmen and Board of Health due to the outbreak of the COVID-19 Virus.

“In order to mitigate the transmission of the COVID-19 Virus, the Board of Selectmen has suspended all public gatherings, and in accordance with the Governor’s Order all members of public bodies are allowed and encouraged to participate remotely. The Governor’s Order, allows public bodies to meet entirely remotely so long as reasonable public access is afforded so that the public can follow along with the deliberations and Committee votes of the meeting.

“Ensuring public access does not ensure public participation unless such participation is required by law. This meeting will feature public comment from invited guests. For this meeting, the Economic Development Committee is convening by video conference via the Zoom application. The meeting agenda posted on the Town’s Website calendar indicates how the public may join.

“Please note that this meeting is being recorded and that some attendees are participating by video conference. Accordingly, please be aware that other folks may be able to see you and anything that you broadcast may be captured by the recording.

“All of the materials for this meeting, except any Executive Session materials, are available in the public DocuShare folder, and we recommend that the members and the public follow the agenda as posted.

“Meeting Business Ground Rules

“We are now turning to the first item on the agenda. Before we do so, permit me to cover some ground rules for effective and clear conduct of our business and to ensure accurate meeting minutes.

- Selby or I will introduce each speaker on the agenda (if applicable). After they conclude their remarks, the Chair will go down the line of Members, inviting each by name to provide any comment, questions, or motions. Please hold until your name is called. Further,
 - o Please remember to mute your phone or computer when you are not speaking;
 - o Please remember to speak clearly and in a way that helps generate accurate minutes
- For any response, please wait until the Chair yields the floor to you, and state your name before speaking.
- If members wish to engage in discussion with other members, please do so through the Chair, taking care to identify yourself.

“After members have spoken, the Chair will afford public comment as follows:

- o The Chair will first ask members of the public who wish to speak to identify their names and addresses only after first being recognized by the Chair, and will be afforded a few minutes for their comment or question.
- Finally, each vote taken in this meeting will be conducted by roll call vote. As I mentioned in a note that I sent earlier this week, this requirement extends to the vote to adjourn.”

I. Regular Business

1. Review of EDC meeting minutes from 4 June 2020 meeting

Motion to Approve Minutes: Yes: 6, No: 0, Abstain: 1

2. Notice of Reappointments

Ann Chang, Larry Kenah, and Joshua Fischel reappointed for a 3-year term (expiring June 2023). David Foley is not reappointed.

Shirley Ming is also made a full member of the EDC, advancing from her previous role as an associate member of the committee.

II. New/Special Business

3. Small Business Grant Program

Selby provides overview of small business grant program applications. Only a small handful of the 49 total applicants were deemed ineligible as they were either a chain or had no commercial presence in Acton. Nearly all applicants requested the \$4,000 grant maximum. Lottery will be held later this afternoon at 4:30 via Zoom.

Ann expresses that there was potential confusion over eligibility from the small business perspective. Selby also notes that many small businesses received applications, yet did not apply, indicating they may have ruled themselves out. Committee briefly discusses the eligibility criteria for a potential “second round” lottery. Selby brings up the possibility of pursuing funding for small businesses who lose the lottery. Derrick inquires about eligibility of physical therapist & dentist businesses. Dave gives

perspective as to why small businesses may be hesitant to send tax information to local government. Suggests a community vote of confidence on favorite businesses instead of a potential “second-round”, perhaps less expansive than 25 businesses. Derrick seconds, also commenting on specific plazas for their contributions & engagement to the community. Larry asks about the possibility of this community vote, and Jon mentions that Federal guidelines would make this idea difficult to carry out. Ann makes a motion that the EDC recommend that the BoS set aside additional funds to support the 19 validated applicants who will not be selected in this afternoon’s lottery. The vote to pursue funds for the 19 was UNANIMOUS.

4. Town Meeting Articles

Article 3 Kelly’s Corner Infrastructure Improvement Project – Right of Way Acquisitions

Larry provides overview of Article 3 and comments on the EDC’s support for the Kelly’s Corner Infrastructure Improvement Project for the past 6 years. Discussion is brief, and vote is UNANIMOUS. Larry agrees to voice the EDC’s endorsement of Article 3 at the town meeting and will urge town to support this article. Mike reiterates concerns about the EDC’s official endorsement for Article 3 being delivered prior to general public speakers.

Article 10 Real Property Disposition – 3 School Street

Selby provides overview and updates on 3 School Street property. He notes that 3 School Street is most likely to go to Habitat for Humanity. Larry inquires about the EDC’s position.

Dave expresses concern for a potential residential takeover of the property and supports the possibility of a commercial presence at the South Acton intersection in the future. Mike agrees with Dave on protecting the commercial viability of South Acton. Ann seconds this position. Motion to oppose Article 10: Yes: 5, No: 1, Abstain: 0.

Article 11 Amend Zoning Map – 32 Wetherbee Street

Selby provides overview of 32 Wetherbee Street property, reminding the committee that the article changes the zoning from residential to allowing for commercial presence. Both Larry and Ann continue speak to the objective of encouraging commercial properties in town as opposed to residential. The vote to support Article 11 was UNANIMOUS.

Article 12 Amend Zoning Map – 525 Main Street

The committee reviews Article 12 which requests a zoning change to help The Russian School of Mathematics alleviate traffic congestion on Route 27. Larry suggests that the EDC should not take a position on Article 12. Derrick and Dave argue the EDC should support the article on the basis of the main objectives of the EDC: to attract new

businesses, facilitate the startup process, and support existing businesses. The vote to support Article 12 is UNANIMOUS, and Larry agrees to draft an official EDC position.

III. More Regular Business

5. Next Meeting – date and time

6 August 2020 10:00 AM. Selby may request to meet before this date if the BoS approve additional funds for the small business grant program.

IV. Consent Items

6. None

Adjourned at 12:51—unanimous

Minutes authored by Emma Kearney