

Economic Development Committee (EDC) Minutes December 18, 2008

Attending: Doug Tindal, Cochairman, Kristin Alexander, Terra Friedrichs, Selectman
Bill Lawrence, Chris Pappas

Witness: Dick Calandrella, Leigh Davis-Honn, Joe Ianelli

Meeting called to order at 8:00 PM.

II. Public Input

Rick Warren, owner of Concord Party Rental of 10 Craig Road, Acton, MA presented to the committee his proposal to obtain from the Town of Acton a request to provide truck rentals. The number of trucks to be parked on the premises shall not exceed six trucks. A suggestion was made for Concord Party Rental to obtain an asphalt contractor/engineer to analyze the parking lot layout and design to determine how the Groundwater Protection District Zone 2 would be protected if a hazardous waste spill occurred on the site.

III. Approval of Minutes

Bill Lawrence moved to approve the minutes of November 20, 2008 as amended, and Doug Tindal second. All voted in favor. Corrections to be made by Kristin Alexander.

IV. Discussion of Current Events

The EDC discussed current banking conditions and frozen market lending.

V./VI. Summary of Results of Brainstorming Session / Path Forward

- Doug Tindal is exploring software with the new version of Windows Live, though it must conform to the open meeting law.
- Kelley's Corner:
 - Doug Tindal has been attempting to contact Stop & Shop on their Kelley's Comer property.
 - Need to pursue public thinking.
 - Bill Lawrence noted the aesthetics' of Kelley's Comer and the possible placement of the parking lots.
 - Kristin Alexander briefly explained a Tufts University-Town of Acton Kelley's Corner project and the Planning Department's attempt to obtain an abutter's list for Kelley's Corner.
 - Bill Lawrence moved - the EDC with help from the Planning Department, Planning Board, and Outreach Steering Committee will form a trial Economic Development Subcommittee to assist in Kelley's Corner Strategic Issue Management (for defining what the issues are and how to fix them). Doug

Tindal seconded the motion and all voted in favor. Dick Calandrella and Joe Ianelli will work on the subcommittee.

- Tourism and Hospitality:
 - The current tourism and hospitality industry could improve the Town of Acton's economic condition. Given Leigh Davis-Honn's background, she can assist in moving forward the marketing of the Town of Acton in the tourism and hospitality industry. Terra Friedrichs gave an example of the carefully planned town of Portsmouth, Maine and the positive outcome that they have had.

- Discussion on the Sewer system in the West Acton Area - Terra Friedrichs's concern: will it create a new set of problems? 40B projects, infill, may create problems. She said the Town must look at the total picture.

- Potential EDC Subcommittees/Work Groups:
 - Demographics – EDC members thought Bruce Reichlen wanted to be on this subcommittee.
 - Selling Acton to Businesses –
 - Should send a message to existing and potential businesses.
 - Should review State economic development assistance programs.
 - Issue Management (big strategic issues and policy management re: economic development)
 - Should research “what kind of issues”?
 - How do you get more businesses into Acton?
 - Infill Development Projects (smaller issues)
 - Little stuff that happens every day.
 - Understanding the implications of little projects (like 10 Craig Road).
 - NEW: Strategic Issues - define the issues, prioritize, action plan (economic development and planning).
 - Public / Private Leverage – (example: Exchange Hall) Need to get people who have expertise in this area.
 - Selling Acton (Tourism/Marketing) –
 - Need to define Acton/package Acton.
 - Tie into the State tourism office/information.
 - School tours, leisure, group tours, niche markets, etc.
 - Archaeology.
 - Site down with other towns for regional issues.

Next potential EDC meeting – first Thursday of January 2009. Kristin Alexander will send out an e-mail.

Doug Tindal motion to adjourn and Terra Friedrichs second the motion. All voted in favor. Meeting adjourned at 9:45 PM.