

Economic Development Council Meeting
Minutes: April 18, 2007; 9:30 am
Caucus Hall

Present:

Members: Chairman Steve Melamed, Thanassi Kuliopulos, William Dougal, W. Todd Dever

Absent: Astrid Berg, Gabrielle Hanna, Alix Ritchie,

Meeting called to order at 9:35 by Chairman Steve Melamed

Motion made by Thanassi

To approve minutes of the 4/4/07 EDC meeting as corrected

Seconded by Steve

All vote in favor; 3 for, 0 against, 1 abstain

Public meetings are able to be held outside of town hall. Request that Town Clerk notify all town boards of this.

Public Statements

Pam Parmakian – Seasonal licensing v. year round, specifically liquor (common victual) licensing and staggering the January renewal date.

Discussion regarding the EDC effort to overhaul both the fee structure and the timing structure of licensing to be presented to next Town Meeting. Corporation fees (state) in addition to town fees Cost of town services is greater for non-corporate entities. Increase cost of licenses based on time remaining open (shorter season, higher fees) as incentive for businesses remaining open longer.

186% increase in costs for a single family home from 2001 to 2006 (analysis by B. Dougal). Need to do a similar analysis for businesses. Financial issues for the Town

EDC presentation of findings of Mt. Auburn study next week (April 26) from 6 – 9 pm at FAWC.

Discussion regarding the need for the new BOS and Town Manager to take a global look at the economic needs of this community. Importance of developing long-term plan rather than the short-term fixes. Leadership needed from top down to develop and support a long-term plan and to apply that plan to current goals & objectives. Paradigm shift needed to support and value business and development at town level through BOS and Town Manager. Businesses also need to shift to respond to needs of the town by involvement in town government through private/public partnerships.

Need to bring people together to tackle the issues that exist in town with respect to economic development. The expertise and knowledge exists in town. We know best the unique issues in town. We know the problems and we can develop the solutions.

Discussion regarding the Shankpainter land deal/development process. Town still does not own property. Vote at Town Meeting to clear the title. Cumbersome and time consuming process still ahead regarding RFP's. Is there a way to fast track the contract process? Are emergency procurement rules applicable?

In developing a global vision, the process must be transparent and visible to all community members in order to develop trust and buy-in from the community.

Licensing review needs to be a group effort and work sessions should be schedules with the Licensing Agent. Look at what processes are cumbersome and needing to be simplified, what inequities exist within the current rules and regulations.

EDC draw up a resolution/position to be presented to new BOS to reiterate the support and mandate of the EDC on a forward going basis.

Extend an invitation to general public as well as prospective candidates at tomorrow afternoon's Meet the Candidates meeting to attend the April 26th presentation.

Discussion regarding the increase of costs of doing business in town. Should be included in presentation. Present in terms of restaurant, guest house, retail, etc.

Funds developed from licensing should be directed to an EDC line item in town budget.

With a town vision of the future, the EDC is primed to move forward, however that vision must be developed through the assent of the BOS. Structure our own unique strategies for our unique community and move forward towards that goal.

H2B workers are required to fill positions in town.

The nature of a seasonal economy is central to the issues of economic development.

Meeting adjourned at 11:10 am.