

Economic Development Council Meeting
Minutes: December 27, 2007; 9:30 am
Judge Welsh Room

Present:

Members: Chairman Steve Melamed, Thanassi Kuliopulos, Bonnie Adams-Campbell, Alix Ritchie

Staff: Assistant Town Manager David Gardner

Absent: Astrid Berg, excused; Marty Huey, excused; Michael Carroll, excused
William Dougal, unexcused; Todd Dever unexcused

Meeting called to order by Chairman Steve Melamed at 9:40 am

Alix moved to approve 11/29/07 minutes.

Thanassi 2nd. All vote to approve: 4-0-0

Discussion held on EDC presentation to BOS.

66,000 cap/limit has been placed on H2B visa applicants in legislation passed during recently adjourned Congressional session. No additional action will be taken until next Congressional session. Continuing issue of Hispanic Caucus posing stumbling block in its use of this H2B provision as a bargaining chip in pursuing their political agenda on immigration may make resolution of this issue very difficult.

There are still many, many unknowns in this regard and it may well be that questions remain unanswered until the beginning of April 2008. Town is still continuation with efforts and attempts to deal with this critical issue for this area. Provisional plans are still required as there is so much still to develop in this issue.

If alternative labor source is to be needed, the town must be prepared to move quickly as, Cape-wide, this is an issue. BOS is undecided as to whether or not the town would take a role in this issue. Information request/survey was sent out to businesses in a mailing by the licensing department to develop the demographic data to assess town's employment needs. This will allow us to develop an understanding of the size of the need, but an action plan must also be developed to meet these needs. Seasonal, workforce housing is a component to be considered.

Development of a structure for advertising for a labor pool, as well as transporting a labor force into town is essential. Most likely that this will need to be taken on by the private sector and assume the town government will not be able to provide significant support or leadership on this issue.

Ask for assistance from the Cape Cod Chamber of Commerce. Mid and Upper Cape are already working to develop strategies. EDC should consider communication with Chamber of Commerce and PBG that a coordinated, immediate effort needs to be made. The town will help collect the data, but further assistance may not be forthcoming.

David Gardner: 440 licensed businesses in town. Town website has posted information, email blast has been sent out. Mailing went out yesterday (12/26/07) with a response date of January 13. Michelle J. will receive data and collate information. Town will do as much as they can to assist with the resolution to this issue.

Is March 18th date confirmed for the next Business Summit? Yes, but there is flexibility.

Thank the town for providing the \$5000 to complete the CCEDC/Mt. Auburn study. CCEDC has approved the grant; County Commissioners still need to approve new grant. CCEDC is the body that will be producing the RFP. Michelle J. will be overseeing the grant/RFP processes.

Discussion held regarding the timeline for Phase II. There is the potential for Mt. Auburn to begin working by February or March 2008. Town's business focus will be lost as gearing up for the 2008 summer season begins in May; either begin presentations in early May or wait until Fall. Should the RFP build in a 2-part implementation to address

this seasonal presentation issue? Possibly take a preliminary first look in the spring and an in-depth presentation/facilitated discussion in the fall.

Subcommittee Reports

Steve invited to attend a preliminary conversation/ strategy meeting with members of the Pier Corporation. BOS, EDC and Pier Corp. should work together. The possible investor in the Cabral marina is a part of the conversation. BOS would need to direct the EDC whether or not to work on this issue. EDC Chair will contact Pier Corp. Chair to set up joint meetings. BOS needs to be informed of this in the effort to keep all parties on the same page.

Discussion held on policies of harbor control with the Harbor Committee and the Harbormaster as the enforcement agent. As Harbormaster reports to Pier Corp, this may be somewhat of a conflict as Pier issues are separate from harbor issues. Pier Corporation is charged with running the Pier in a businesslike manner and not with the larger policies of the larger harbor. The Harbormaster is answerable to town, state and federal agencies and is the enforcement agent for their rules, regulations and policies.

Harbor economic development planning should include BOS, EDC, Pier Corp. (and also VSB although harbor development is more than a tourism planning avenue.) Accommodation of fishing, lobstering, aquaculture and other economic drivers for harbor usage must also be a priority. Development on the pier is akin to streetside development. Pier economic development is a small piece of the pie. Watersheet zoning may need to be developed. Harbor Plan determines Chapter 91 issues.

Discussion on the purchase of Cabral's Fisherman's Pier (Cook' Pier); Newburyport developer may be in negotiations/due diligence to purchase. It was suggested that may be beneficial to look at this developer's prior work. State has already approved a development plan for Fisherman's Pier and final steps in that process may never have been completed.

Next meeting January 9, 2008 9:30 am

Discussion held regarding open EDC board positions.

Get a sense of CCEDC timing of RFP. Alix will contact County; Steve will follow up with Michelle J.

Wishes made for a healthy and happy New Year to all; Happy Solstice as well.

Alix moves to adjourn
Accepted by Chairman Steve

Meeting adjourned at 10:49 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Amy Germain

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Recording Secretary