

Economic Development Committee

Minutes of October 3, 2023

Town Hall, 235 North Street, Room 14 and Zoom (<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/9854300926>)

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Attendees: Maria Freccero (Chair), Pat Lee, Dave O'Neil, Jeff Griffin (Members) 2024 FEB -8 PM 1:49

Staff: Danielle McKnight

TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE
NORTH READING, MASS.

Maria Freccero, Chair, opened the meeting at 6:15 p.m.

Approval of Minutes

Mr. O'Neil moved, and Ms. Freccero seconded, a motion to accept the minutes of 6/2/22, 7/19/22 and 1/25/22, as written. The motion passed 4-0.

Promotional Video

Feedback for the draft video is as follows:

- At the mention of the historic buildings, include a few shots of the (surrounding) historic town center.
- Prefer a different shot of Concord St (eliminate the truck zooming by), and the road there is in poor condition.
- Where the sign for 93 is shown, we would like to see the 93 South (Boston) entrance rather than the direction of Lawrence, to emphasize the orientation toward Boston, and since most people commute south rather than north.
- Show shots of signs with mileage to other communities, as well as signs for Harold Parker state forest and Martins Pond.
- Would like a few additional shots of the restaurants in town, as well as a few more retail shops.
- At the mention of the two golf courses, note that the Hillview Country Club is municipally owned and that businesses and residents can host events there, and the facility seats 300. Some interior shots would be good too, as it was recently renovated.
- At the mention of the graduation rate, note also the high school's high ranking.
- The shot of the 246 Main St shopping center was taken when the storefront on the left was empty. It's now full – is it possible to update that shot?
- A few more shots of community activities would be good.
- A closing statement and image of some kind is needed. An aerial shot of the town is suggested.

Mr. O'Neil mentioned a real estate summary of the community his business has used and offered to send it along to include any important details/facts.

Wastewater Update

Mr. Griffin, the CPC's representative member to the newly formed Wastewater Project Committee, gave the group an update on the new committee's activities. He said the purpose of the committee is getting accurate information out to the community. He noted there has been a lot of misinformation on social media and confusion about the different possibilities and scenarios for sewer. He said there is a need to clarify how costs would be different for various households. They would like to have information on what this would look like physically. The task at hand is the message. They would like to communicate a direct, to the point, factual message that will educate and also quell misinformation on social media.

Old/New Business

Social Media:

Mr. Griffin suggested the EDC have a brief, 20-30 second social media spot created regarding the sewer project. Ms. Freccero asked for discussion on whether the other members agreed that this would be a good project for the EDC's budget. Other members agreed this would be a good role for the EDC. Mr. Lee noted that the older demographic in town needs to be targeted too, in more traditional ways, since they may not use social media. However, he'd be in favor of the EDC taking the lead on something like this, spending in the neighborhood of \$3,000 of the EDC budget.

Mr. Griffin said he thought the EDC would be a good lead for this project because of their experience in creating what is so far a good promotional video for the town. Ms. McKnight reviewed the lessons learned from the EDC's work on that project, including the need to reach out to several vendors for quotes, the importance of discussing and agreeing on a full scope of work to be sure the vendor was capable of taking on the project, and allowing any discussion of services to go through town staff to ensure all procurement procedures are followed prior to costs being incurred and Norcam footage is not used improperly.

It was agreed that content would be needed prior to engaging a vendor – at least a list of facts it would be desirable to communicate. Ms. McKnight agreed to reach out to several possible vendors.

Ms. Freccero said it would be important to include a QR code to allow people to access more information.

Clothing Bins:

Mr. Griffin mentioned the many clothing donation bins around town and asked if something could be done to clean them up. Ms. McKnight noted that if the bins are not approved and if they constitute a zoning violation, the building inspector would enforce.

Warren Pearce, CPC chair, joined the audience at 7:15. He noted that one of the reasons the bins are there is to assist charitable organizations.

EDC Membership:

Ms. Freccero noted that we have had some changes in membership. Lisa Egan of the Chamber has resigned from the EDC due to taking a different job. Mr. Griffin is now the EDC member representing the CPC after replacing Mr. Hayden on that board.

Adjournment: 7:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Danielle McKnight
Town Planner