

## Economic Development Committee Meeting Minutes

5/11/2021 - 6 PM

Virtual meeting: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/9854300926>, Meeting ID: 985 430 0926, phone +1 301 715 8592

EDC members present: David O'Neil, Chair; Pat Lee, Vice Chair; Christopher Hayden, Vincenzo Stuto,

EDC associate members present: Tom Ollila

Others present: Liane Gonzalez, Select Board Liaison; Danielle McKnight, Town Planner; Michael Gilleberto, Town Administrator

Mr. O'Neil calls the meeting to order at 6 p.m.

Approval of minutes (3/9/21, 3/30/21 & 4/23/21): Tabled for next meeting.

Presentation: 146-150 Park Street rezoning proposal

Attorney Brad Latham gave a presentation on the proposed project of Bruce Wheeler, owner and developer (also present), for 146-150 Park Street. Attorney Latham discusses the Town's needs for senior housing, referring to the Housing Production Plan and Master Plan, and discusses positive economic impacts to the Town in terms of retail/service patronage from new housing. The EDC makes generally positive comments but does not make a recommendation; they discuss the possibility of making a recommendation on this to Town Meeting at a future date once the Select Board gives feedback, but does not commit to doing so, as they are not required to. Ms. McKnight notes that the CPC has voted to support the project and recommend it to Town Meeting.

EDC event and marketing activities - planning and updates

Mr. O'Neil asks for feedback on the invitation Ms. Egan has made for the upcoming June 8 EDC business event. Feedback is positive. Mr. Lee and Mr. O'Neil discuss the proposed budget for the Shop the Readings program (EDC funds to be spent encouraging patronage of local businesses, in partnership with the Chamber). It is explained that Town funds would be spent on activities directly supporting North Reading businesses (though the effort is targeted at North Reading and Reading businesses). Budget items are as follows:

Clear Channel	\$1,850	Billboard June 7 - July 4
Mark Field Marketing & Design	\$2,500	marketing and design, brand development

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Siphon	\$2,900	Printing and mailing postcards
	\$1,000	Social media, advertising
	\$5,000	Web design, coding, management
Total expenses - EDC budget FY21	\$13,250	

It was discussed that the original budget included \$1000 for social media, but upon further exploration, the Chamber recommended devoting that \$1000 to print advertising and a text campaign.

As part of the discussion of the upcoming EDC event, it was discussed that Michael Gilleberto, Town Administrator, will be giving a brief update on wastewater efforts in the Town. Mr. Gilleberto updated the EDC about this as a means of providing a preview of his remarks, noting that the Town is currently exploring alternate routes and receiving budget updates.

Mr. O'Neil asked if we are looking at a 10 year timeframe; Mr. Gilleberto responded that this may not be the case but that the Town will eventually want to have workshop meetings with the Select Board to talk about various options, including getting design and construction funds, as was done when the Town was considering MWRA water. Mr. Gilleberto mentions the Town has recently hired a new public works director with experience with sewer in Gloucester and Rockport.

#### Old/New Business

Mr. O'Neil asks if we are still discussing zoning and tax incentives as a means of helping attract businesses. Mr. Hayden says we haven't had the right kind of projects to support in this way and that it is a possibility but would need Town Meeting approval. Mr. O'Neil says we won't get these unless that possibility is there; Mr. Hayden agrees but says we can't get that without having sewer. Ms. McKnight says there is little left to change in the zoning to incentivize new businesses since we already allow most things, except for more residential. The CPC is still looking at this with their Main St./Winter St. area, providing more residential as an enhancement to the commercial.

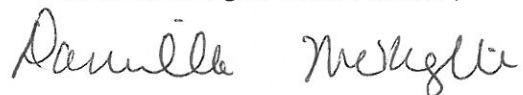
Mr. O'Neil says something like that around the Stop & Shop property would be a money maker and dress up Main Street. Mr. Hayden says if we had sewer, it would be much easier to do mixed use – residential with commercial above. Mr. O'Neil offers ideas of a park and ride at 70 Concord St. and a rink at the Stop & Shop property that is ice in winter and wood in summer. Ms. Gonzalez notes the property isn't for sale. Mr. O'Neil says it would be good to inquire about it; Ms. Gonzalez disagrees. Mr. O'Neil says it's sitting there almost vacant.

Mr. Stuto joins the meeting at 7:56. He says he believes Stop & Shop anticipates a significant price for their property based on Town interest.

Adjournment at 8 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Danielle McKnight, Town Planner ,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Danielle McKnight". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the typed name.

