

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING — July 25, 2023

Town Hall Room 9

Called to order at 6:07 pm

Committee Members Present:

Mike Champoux

Greg Maynard

Valerie Gingrich

Suzanne Sullivan

Patrick Giroux

Carol Boisvert

Frank West (Select Board Representative)

Absent: Rob Oliveiri

Attending:

Jayne Wierzbicki

Approved 10/17/23

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TOWN CLERK
2023 NOV 13 AM 9:35
TOWN OF WILMINGTON, MA

1) Roll Call - all present except Rob.

2) Review / Approval of Minutes of April 13, 2023 WEDC Meeting

Motion to approve by P. Giroux. 2nd by S. Sullivan. unanimously approved (F. West abstain)

3) Report from Planning office Recent Projects – V. Gingrich

203 Lowell – possible change of commercial use – Drive-through Coffee shop.

Planning has strongly urged Procopio to consider dine-in full-service Restaurant.

-Ms. Sullivan discussed Upton Drive and desired warehousing zoning change..

Chapter 40R consideration = should be spearheaded by Town Administration / Planning.

4) It Starts Here campaign:

Jayne presented summary of campaign from Sterling Brandworks.

~1000 unique visitors t Landing Page ` avg 1.46 mins each

- Majority from paid ads & organic content
- Industrial Space = High Traffic online

- 2 direct leads – Temezzo & Urgent Care inquiries
- Intent is to continue to post on Social Media
- Printed signs at 4th July Building for use during celebration.
- Frank West: Reach out to WCTV for help promoting campaign on TV locally.
- S. Sullivan: Work should continue to get outside the border of Wilmington

5.) Façade Improvement Grant Program

F. West Recused himself from this section of meeting.

Jayne W.: Inquiries in from Simards, Franks Plaza, Application in from Pacific Grove.

Carol B.: Challenge is that business owners are not always property owners.

Jayne W: Send info about program to property owner at corner of Main and Church St. Bldg is condoized.

Deadline for submissions is 8/1

Valerie G: Requested subcommittee to review grant applications. 2 people from WEDC plus Valerie and 1 person from Planning board and possible a couple town employees.

Sub-committee will evaluate and make recommendations in August to make awards in September.

S. Sullivan and P. Giroux volunteered from WEDC for Sub-committee.

G. Maynard suggested that the email and social post referring to grant program be posted on the Wilmington Townie Referrals and Community pages on Facebook.

6.) MBTA Zoning for Housing Discussion:

Valerie G: State requires all towns in MA w/ MBTA stops to allow multi-family as-of-right in district. 2021 – Law was passed. 2022 – HLC came out w/ strict guidelines – Must have 50 acres – minimum of 5 acres connected – ½ mile radius to station.

Info session scheduled: See section 3A

M. Champoux: Could state allow for eminent domain?

Valerie: No – This is not for forced multi-family devt. This is for future changes to parcels in zone.

S. Sullivan: Arguing this is a Ponzi scheme for builders.

F. West: Parcels will be changing value based on new zoning

Valerie: Cannot be in groundwater protection district. Valerie highlighted possible site options including Main street, West Street, Jefferson Rd, 175 Lowell St/

P. Giroux: Is the goal to get resident support / Vote on options?

Valerie: Goal is to seek feedback from residents.

S. Sullivan: Concerned w/ loss of commercial areas on these zones.

Valerie: Metro is non-compliant to section 3A – Needed to be “affordable”

Summarized schedule leading to Town Meeting in Spring.

S. Sullivan stated she plans to argue against this.

F. West observed that residents in MBTA proximal areas still need cars to get around.

S. Sullivan and Carol B both voiced concerns that MBTA zoning undermines WEDC efforts.

S. Sullivan asked about MWRA water use.

F. West asked if other Planning Directors around MA are voicing concern to State.

Valerie stated she believes that most Planning Directors are not happy with it.

F. West: Have other communities addressed this yet?

Valerie stated perhaps Stoneham has put some measures in place.

M. Champoux: encouraged that we end discussion at this point and ask for town feedback.

7.) Election of Charman & Vice Chair – Passed over. M. Champoux continuing in capacity of running meetings.

8) New Business: Items not known by the Chairman at the time of agenda posting.

F. West: Suggested WEDC look for / Request new members.

P. Giroux attending next Select Board Meeting and will make request on behalf of WEDC for new appointees to committee. Mike Champoux sending Pat the WEDC organization docs and the letterhead we’ve used for outbound communications.

9) Public Comments –

Mike McCoy: Highlighted his business history on Lowell Street and the challenges he has had with tenants and with state orders.

Said he was able to get building back in July ‘22

Cited hardships associated with Covid 19 pandemic related to property taxes & Govt Shutdown and Town of Wilmington shutdowns. \$56k plus \$36k insurance.

Final Point: Mr. McCoy planning to reopen and improve the restaurant on his own.

He cited his decades of contributions to town as a businessman.

He indicated he does not like the new sign tenant placed there.

Seeking to participate in Façade Improvement grant program

Has sign company quoting new sign.

Will be submitting application for review

Asked WEDC subcommittee for consideration for sign cost assistance.

8) Next Meeting Date – Not determined – As needed.

Motion to adjourn made by Frank West, seconded by Suzanne Sullivan. Voted unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 8:10pm.