

April 22, 2013

**TOWN OF STERLING
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

A meeting of the Economic Development Committee for the Town of Sterling was called to order at 6:30 p.m. on Monday, April 22, 2013.

Those in attendance were:

Jeffrey Donaldson – Chairman

James Patacchiola – Vice Chairman

Kevin Sanders – Secretary

Michael Pineo

Paul Rehrig

Mr. Donaldson, chair of the committee, called the meeting to order, and Kevin Sanders, Secretary, kept minutes of the meeting.

The first item of business was review minutes from the previous meeting. After discussion, and upon a motion made by Mr. Pineo and seconded by Mr. Rehrig, the minutes were unanimously approved.

The second order of business was an update on the Clark University MPA Intern. Mr. Donaldson has not heard back from the program. He is awaiting assignments for interns. Mr. Donaldson will continue to follow up.

The third order of business was to discuss research parameters and suggestions for developing a database of all businesses in Sterling. Mr. Sanders gave an overview of the Google Fusion table database he started in the past month. Google Fusion tables is a public or private database that can map data on a goggle map with color options for different data such as business type. The committee discussed the private vs. public database with consensus on a two tiered approach being agreed upon by the members. There will be a public database for the public with basic data and a more complex database for the committee to use as a research and development tool. Mr. Pineo mentioned the public database would be useful for community members to located businesses within town. Mr. Sanders will check in with Matt Morrow to potentially get shape files (zoning, aquifer, utilities, etc.) to insert into the database.

Mr. Donaldson mentioned that he could check the Secretary of State's business website for potential listings. Mr. Donaldson would also like us to check with Town officials for listings. Mr. Patacchiola will meet with town officials.

Mr. Pineo brought the town zoning map to the meeting for review. Mr. Sanders discussed the use of overlay zones that may attract business and may be used to limit certain undesirable uses.

The discussion turned to the town's infrastructure as Mr. Pineo mentioned how bleak our water issues are within the town. Mr. Sanders recommends that we have the Water Department come review the state of the town's water system at a future meeting.

Mr. Sanders raised the question of solar farms for unbuildable land. Mr. Pineo mentioned the solar in town today.

Mr. Rehrig said that the committee needs to look at why businesses are staying and leaving.

Mr. Sanders asked about the feasibility of the airport. Could the land be more profitable for the town as commercial land? Mr. Patacchiola asked if it potentially could be a regional airport like Worcester.

Action items for next meeting:

- Mr. Sanders will try to get Shape files and to add more data to Google fusion maps.
- Provide Mr. Rehrig samples of business surveys.
- Mr. Pineo to look into overlay maps.
- Mr. Patacchiola to meet with town officials for business lists.
- Mr. Donaldson to check state websites and follow-up with Clark Intern Program.
- Mr. Rehrig to review business surveys provided by Mr. Sanders.

Other business: We still need another member, potentially a business owner in town. Next meeting Monday, May 20, 2013, 6:30 p.m.

VOTED: To adjourn.

Adjourned as voted.

Kevin Sanders, Secretary