



Economic Development Committee

Butterick Building, 1 Park Street, Room 205

ZOOM Meeting due to COVID-19

May 24, 2021

Time 8:30 AM

Minutes

Present: Chairman James Patacchiola, Keith Cordial, Paul Cathcart, Maureen Cranson

Absent: Michael Pineo

Non-Members present: Domenica Tatasciore (Staff), Kellie Hebert, Town Administrator (staff), Dick Maki, Mark Favermann, Favermann Design

Open Meeting: Chairman Patacchiola opened the meeting at 8:35 a.m.

Approval of Past Minutes: James Patacchiola made the motion to accept the minutes of the April 26, 2021 meeting. Paul Cathcart seconded. The motion was unanimously accepted.

Business Recognition and Awards Program

Keith Cordial has a sample of the award plaque, although he may decide on a smaller plaque. The plaque he has needs wordsmithing – he feels it should have the new proof of Sterling seal on it as well as the words “Economic Development Committee”. Since Meadowbrook Farms is the clear winner based on it receiving 22 votes in the town survey, he would like to make a presentation with the owners recognizing the company and thanking them for their various contributions to the town of Sterling. Mr. Cordial would like to see a letter of recognition accompany it, which hasn’t been drafted yet.

Town Planner Update:

1. Domenica Tatasciore, Town Planner, emailed the EDC members the final draft of “The Sterling Town Center Design Guideline” for their review and comments. The members agreed to send her any comments they had.
2. Ms. Tatasciore stated that the Zoning changes were addressed at a meeting last week.

3. Dick Maki had spoken separately with Ms. Tatasciore regarding a Mass DOT grant for \$126,000 for 2 flashing beacons for the town center, ones that could be removed and put away when work was being done on the sidewalks.

Local Rapid Recovery Planning Grant: Mark Favermann

Mark Faberman of Favermann Design gave a comprehensive presentation of case studies of town development and town center ID's and signage that his company has worked on for other towns.

Comments following the presentation:

- Keith Cordial remarked that it was a good presentation.
- Paul Cathcart felt that the presentation showed variety and an outside perspective.
- Maureen Cranson remarked that she had expected the presentation to be based on the town of Sterling's needs as opposed to other towns' specifications. She cautioned that the "people n town don't like signage".
- Mr. Favermann asked, "What do you think of when you think of Sterling?" He said that signs are a help for people who are looking for a destination. Chairman James Patacchiola agreed. Favermann added that signs add to the dynamics of energy of the town. He stated that he needs to get EDC's input rather than tell the Committee what he thinks.
- Mention was made of the signage over Memorial Park and whether the town would use those or start over with new ones. Domenica Tatasciore added that Memorial Park has a variety of benches. To this, Paul Cathcart remarked that the town needs continuity.
- Dick Maki felt that Mr. Favermann's presentation was a good one. He mentioned that Sterling already has an image from the Cultural Commission. Mr. Maki put things in a slightly different way by saying that people might come to Sterling for the Davis Farmland, stay for a while and then go home again. The town needs signage that will get them from the farmland down into the town.
- Chairman Patacchiola asked Ms. Tatasciore if she could come up with a signage program. However, Domenica Tatasciore stated that the "people in town are committee'd out". She suggested the EDC combine with the Cultural Commission and the Historical Committee for ideas. Chairman Patacchiola agreed and said that he would contact Roseanne from the Cultural Commission. Maureen Cranson said she would look into who the committee could contact on the Historical Committee.

- Town Administrator, Kellie Hebert, stated that there has already been a lot of work done, for example the Master Plan. She recommended we use it rather than start all over again. She said the Committee should give a copy of it to Mr. Favermann. Domenica Tatasciore said she would send each member via email a portion of the Master Plan that addressed this issue. Town Administrator Hebert continued by suggesting that there was an opportunity to get people's ideas and enthusiasm on town signage at the Town Meeting.
- Mark Favermann was asked to provide an estimate of costs which he has done. He added that these programs could be implemented in a phased way.
- Town Administrator Hebert asked Mr. Favermann if his proposed costs were for designs or materials or both? Mark Favermann said he would use our \$15,000. budget balance to get this project started.
- Domenica Tatasciore reiterated that the EDC has money (\$15,000.00) left in its budget but it will only be available until June 30, 2021. With this time factor in mind, the committee decided to have the next meeting two weeks earlier with the primary target of further discussion if needed and voting money on Mark Favermann's signage proposal.

Town Center Revitalization

Paul Cathcart reported that the Santander Building sale is done. Plans for a coffee shop should be going forward. Mr. Cathcart also reported that Monadock World is not prepared to buy the Sholan Building property as yet and plans to sell its products through No Town Goods Gift Store.

Town Beach Drainage Update

Paul Cathcart said that the redesign of the beach drainage area is done. The next step is to go out for bid. Mr. Cathcart continued by saying that he plans to reach out to designers in town for ideas on the beautification of the beach area itself. He wants to include the new Recreation Director in the discussions.

Additonal Comments

Dick Maki has requested being added as a member of the Economic Development Committee. He is welcome and need only fill out the necessary form and get it to the next Select Board meeting.

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Adjournment of Meeting

Chairman Patacchiola made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Paul Cathcart seconded. All were in favor. Meeting was adjourned at 10:07 a. m.

The next EDC meeting date has been moved up two weeks to June 7, 2021 at 8:30 a.m. with the primary target of voting some of the remaining money that is in the EDC budget for town signage. The money is available to the committee only up until June 30th. Mark Faberman is expected to attend.

Respectfully submitted by Barbara O'Connor, Recorder