

Economic Development Committee

October 25, 2021

Butterick Building, 1 Park Street, Room 205

8:30 am

Minutes

Meeting called to order at 8:30 am by Chairman James Patacchiola

Present: Chairman James Patacchiola, Keith Cordial, Richard Maki, Roseann Mapp, Maureen Cranson and Paul Cathcart (via Zoom)

Absent: Michael Pineo

Other Attendees: None

Past Meeting Minutes: Chairman Patacchiola moved to approve the minutes of the 9/27/21 meeting. Richard Maki seconded. Motion carried, minutes were approved.

Town Planner Update: Patty Page (Planning Board, Master Plan Committee) will fill in for the Town Planner for now and while a search is conducted for a new Town Planner.

Community Branding and Wayfinding: A new contact person is needed for this project.

Sterling Inn Status and Disposition: The Inn will probably be auctioned rather than put out to bid. The Select Board plans to meet with the Auctioneer and Tax Lawyer to determine how to proceed. To ensure EDC involvement in this process, Chairman Patacchiola moved that a subcommittee be formed, chaired by Paul Cathcart, to generate a list of suggestions/guidelines for what to do with the Inn. Mr. Cathcart seconded. Motion was carried. Roseann Mapp will work with Paul Cathcart on the subcommittee. In addition, members may make suggestions about the Inn directly to the Town Treasurer or Select Board.

Sterling Business Development: The coffee shop should be opening in November.

The EDC is very much in line with what Sterling residents have indicated they want for downtown. A meeting between SMLD and local businesses is scheduled for November 3. Maureen Cranson and Paul Cathcart have been invited to this meeting.

Town Center Revitalization: SMLD poles will be placed in the center of town this Spring.

Town Beach Drainage Update: The Town needs to get on the Governor's list for funding. Representatives Ferguson and Kilcoyne work well together and are helping and supporting us to do that. Since we need to be aggressive, there was discussion about reaching out directly to Lt. Governor Karen Polito vs. waiting to see what Reps. Ferguson and Kilcoyne can do first. As a Republican, Kim Ferguson might have a better chance connecting with Lt. Governor Polito who can then talk directly to the Governor's office on our behalf. Chairman Patacchiola will contact Kim Ferguson again to check the status of the whole project.

Bridge Vandalism Prevention: The State has painted over the graffiti on the 190 overpass bridges. The camera and lighting system seems to be working well, police are notified when the system is activated, and the system continues to be refined. If it continues to work well,

Generation 2 devices will be installed at other locations. Thanks to SMLD for all their work. EDC will check in again in 6 months.

Mass DOT Rt-12 Median Between the Traffic Circles: The median has been cut back to ground level but we're currently at an impasse with DOT. In addition to looking bad and filling with trash, the median was overgrown and obstructed visibility. EDC would like to take it to ground level permanently and keep it mowed and neat. Medians don't seem to be a good location for a "natural" landscape. DOT is resistant to change and the medians are State property. EDC will revisit this issue again in the Spring.

Business Recognition and Awards Program Next Steps: Keith Cordial suggested some businesses to be recognized for giving back to the Sterling community. These include Village Pizza, Davis Farmland, Pandolf-Perkins, Don-Jo Manufacturing, Sterling Self-Storage (a new business). After some discussion, Richard Maki moved that the next award (plaque) in recognition of a local business for its contribution to Sterling be given to Village Pizza. Keith Cordial seconded. All were in favor and the motion carried. New businesses can also be recognized with a certificate of welcome, we appreciate your being here.

Select Board Update: Covered above.

Other/New Business: Master Plan Committee requested that the EDC respond to its Timeline for Action (copies sent to Committee members) with likely timeframes for completion of the items for which EDC is the main responder. Richard Maki facilitated discussion of the following:

Development of a "business development guide"	1-4 years
Engage younger populations to identify opportunities/barriers for attracting them to Sterling	N/A
Define/promote types of commercial developments that appeal to younger populations	1-4 years, in progress
Create/promote entrepreneurial opportunities	1-4 years, in progress
Establish partnerships between business and students to promote employment and careers	N/A
Revitalize Town Center	1-4 years
Create marketing materials to promote Town's assets/resources	1-4, in progress
Conduct economic development study re: Sterling's performance in the region and identify opportunities for cross promotion	5-9 years
Develop strategies for building upon strengths of Sterling's agricultural business	1-4 years
Encourage growth of small businesses	1-4 years, in progress
Leverage energy of EDC to carry out Master Plan's strategies	1-4 years
Participate in Wachusett Area and North Central Mass Chambers of Commerce	5-9 years

Richard Maki will respond to Patty Page with these timeframes.

The next EDC meeting is scheduled for **November 22 at 9:00 am in Room 205 of the Butterick Building.** **PLEASE NOTE: THE NEW START TIME IS 9:00 AM**

James Patacchiola moved to adjourn the meeting. Roseann Mapp seconded. The motion carried and the meeting was adjourned at 10:30 am.

Respectfully submitted by Melissa Chalmers, Recorder.