

## **Economic Development Committee**

**November 28, 2022**

Butterick Building, 1 Park Street, Room 205

### **Minutes**

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 am by Chair James Patacchiola

**Present:** James Patacchiola, Richard Maki, Maureen Cranson, Rosanne Mapp, Mark Stoeve, Paul Cathcart (via ZOOM)

**Also Present:** William Caldwell (Town Administrator), Stephen Wallace (Town Planner), Joseph King (FinCom and Capital Budget Cmte.) and Brian Kindorf.

Minutes of the October meeting were approved.

**Joseph King, Fin Com,** attended the meeting to discuss the FY'24 budget. The first input to Fin Com (funding needs, budget amount) is due Jan 6, 2023. The Committee should focus on needs rather than wants and try to think 2-3 years down the road. The current budget is \$16,000; this number has remained fairly steady over the past few years. The Committee will discuss the FY'24 budget at the December 19th meeting.

Paul Cathcart brought up **storefront renovations**. This is a special challenge . We are awaiting an architectural rendering of potential renovations (this is in the current budget). The Committee needs to keep after the building owners (most of whom live out of the area) about maintaining their buildings. Let them know how this will benefit them. Mr. Cathcart suggested a sub-committee to follow up on this and show our seriousness.

**Town Planner Stephen Wallace** discussed the promotional map/brochure. It should be both printed and available online. According to current information, 3,000 copies can be printed for \$2,700; design should cost about \$4,000. Price quotes are still coming in. North Central Mass. Regional Chamber of Commerce may be willing to contribute to the cost. Rosanne Mapp suggested that the Montachusett school system be contacted. Monty Tech does a wonderful job with work like this.

Mr. Wallace plans to give each EDC member a list of 10-15 businesses to contact for information for the brochure (address, phone number, hours, short description of the business, etc.), He said the Committee should hold off on wayfinding/signage and other projects until the brochure is completed.

**Downtown Renovation Update:** The Town was awarded a grant for underground infrastructure design and engineering.

Is Sterling “**Business Friendly?**” There was a discussion around championing businesses and keeping ongoing contact with them to say: “We are here for you; what can we do to support you?” Committee members should check the Zoning Board of Appeals agenda in case there are businesses that the EDC wants to support at the ZBA meeting. Rosanne Mapp made a motion that “The Economic Development Committee approves a representative of the Committee to attend town board and committee meetings to support businesses in Sterling and those interested in locating in town.” Jim Patacchiola seconded and all present (James Patacchiola, Richard Maki, Maureen Cranson, Rosanne Mapp, Mark Stoeve, Paul Cathcart [via ZOOM] voted “aye.” The motion was approved unanimously.

**Town Beach renovation** is waiting for design work/plan and Con Com approval. Construction can begin in the Spring, break for summer activities, and finish up in the Fall. Security lights and camera are up and operating.

**Sterling Clean Up Day** will be discussed at the December meeting. Committee needs to discuss the budget and someone to coordinate the event. Last year was a huge success. We will need volunteers to pull it off again. The Garden Club was a tremendous help last year.

**Rosanne Mapp made a motion to adjourn**, seconded by Maureen Cranson. All approved and the meeting was adjourned at 10:55.

Next meeting will be **December 19th**.

Submitted by Melissa Chalmers, recorder