

Economic Development Committee

February 27, 2023

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, Rosanne Mapp, Mark Stoever, Paul Cathcart, Maureen Cranson

Also Present: William Caldwell (Town Administrator), Stephen Wallace (Town Planner) and, from the North Central Massachusetts Chamber of Commerce: Sandie Cataldo (Sr. Economic Development Manager); Maribel Cruz (Economic Development Manager); Travis Condon (Government Affairs Manager); and Roy Nascimento (CEO and President)

Minutes of the January meeting were approved.

Chairman Patacchiola read the minutes of the February 22nd joint meeting with the 1835 Building Committee:

Members Present: Jim Patacchiola, Dick Maki, Mark Stoever, 1835 Committee Members. This was a joint meeting with the 1835 Building Committee which began at 6:30 PM in the 1835 Building. We toured the building renovations and discussed possible uses that would attract people to the town center. We also discussed parking, septic and demolition of the brick storage shed. The meeting ended at 7:35.

These minutes were also approved.

Roy Nascimento of the **North Central Mass Chamber of Commerce** gave a presentation on the Chamber's One North Central Economic Development Plan which is a regional economic development plan intended to help guide the region's collective economic development efforts for the next 10 - 15 years. The Chamber has identified as a weakness the reduction of the labor force due to the aging population and the fact that younger workers are not moving into the region. However, the availability of land, the area's accessibility, and the centralized location could help address this issue. Transportation is also a problem..

For its part, Sterling can support the Chamber of Commerce, incorporate the One North Central Plan into its own economic development efforts, and partner with the Chamber on regional tourism promotion. Information is available online at **Northcentralmass.com**

Sterling Clean Up Day, April 22nd. Dick Maki reported that we will need about \$800 for materials, signage and advertising. Rosanne Mapp made a motion to budget \$800 for Town-wide Clean Up

Day, 2023. Jim Patacchiola seconded. Approval was unanimous. Dick Maki also said that Casella Waste Management may be able to make a contribution to the event. Rosanne Mapp noted that the Garden Club is interested in assisting and the group Keeping Sterling wants to participate as well.

Outreach to business owners re: the Sterling map/brochure. Steve Wallace reported that response has been good to the letter sent to local businesses re: the Sterling commercial/retail map/brochure. Follow-up will be conducted for those who haven't yet responded. Also, we should be able to meet with Monty Tech in April to give them the content for the brochure. Hopefully, the final design will be done before the school's summer break. A bid of \$2,800 has been received for the printing. The Chamber of Commerce has a grant program that will cover about half of the printing cost.

Weston & Sampson will work through the summer on the **downtown revitalization** design and should be done by Fall. Paul Cathcart has a meeting planned with Structural HD re: ideas for developing concept drawings.

Maureen Cranson reminded the Committee that it's time to start pulling together information for the **2022 Annual Town Report**.

Town Beach Update. Tree work will hopefully get done before the season begins. A carpenter and stone mason are lined up for the ADA work on the restrooms. Matt Morrow (Conservation Commission) wrote a \$25,600 grant for ADA renovations (doors, grab bars, counter tops, etc.) that will hopefully be in place before the season begins. Also, the ADA mat will be going down this season.

EDC's long term goal is to work with the Planning Board to minimize problems around bringing business into Sterling. Jim Patacchiola announced that there will be a ZBA meeting on 3/14 at 6pm on special permits; he encouraged members to attend.

EDC website agenda item was tabled for the next (March) meeting. There was discussion of the mine on Rt. 12, available properties for commercial development, what to do about "eyesores" in town and the need for bylaws.

Meeting was adjourned at 11:07. Next EDC meeting will be held on March 27th.

Submitted by Melissa Chalmers, recorder

