



**Town of Barnstable
Planning & Development Department
Economic Development Commission**

www.town.barnstable.ma.us/economicdevelopmentcommission

EDC Meeting Minutes

October 3, 2017

Members Present: Britt Beedenbender, Alan Feltham, Joyce Flavin, Hartley Johnson, Chris Kehoe

Absent: Hank Farnham, Tom Geiler, Michael Schulz

Also Present: Michael Trovato – Planning & Development, Stacey Hurwitz - Administrative Assistant, Mark Ells – Town Manager, Andrew Clyburn – Assistant Town Manager.

Chair Chris Kehoe called the Economic Development Commission (EDC) meeting to order at 8:34 am.

Approval of Meeting Minutes: Motion made by Britt Beedenbender to accept the minutes of August 1, 2017 as written, motion seconded by Hartley Johnson. Vote: All Aye. Minutes approved as written.

Approval of Meeting Minutes: Motion made by Britt Beedenbender to accept the minutes of September 5, 2017 as written, motion seconded by Hartley Johnson. Vote: All Aye. Minutes approved as written.

Election of Officers:

A motion was entertained to postpone the elections to the November meeting, when everyone is in attendance. Motion was made by Hartley Johnson and seconded by Alan Feltham. Vote: All Aye.

Mike Trovato – Planning & Development Update:

Business Barnstable website: The new Business Barnstable website www.businessbarnstable.com was previewed for the Commission. Planning & Development is working with Commercial Brokers to get the word out about the new website. We will have full update capabilities on the website. Permitting, Licensing, Regulatory Services, Zoning & Planning information is included as well as forms and applications and link to the permit module going forward. Other highlights of the new website include; checklists for businesses going through the permitting process, new business start-up information, procurement and RFP (Request For Proposal) information & a commercial site finder. Trovato encourages the BEDC to read the project section of the website.

Discussion:

Johnson asks about design he states we talked about outreach ie. Hyannis Chamber / Civic Associations in the form of a product like a documentary that has way more information. Johnson believes a slideshow or video would be an appropriate format to market to other organizations & asks if we will have video or other format?

Trovato clarifies the website is critical for business. It is a one stop resource guide & tool for new businesses.

Flavin suggests a link from this website to Johnson's video/documentary about the Town. Johnson asks for a Wow Factor. Johnson requests the tools not be solely tourism based.

Ells: States, Yes. Barnstable deserves a Wow factor and that is the direction we are going with this.

Kehoe: The website seems to be year round business oriented. Are you getting buy in from the Commercial Realtors?

Trovato: We are working with developers and brokers to get feedback from them. People ask us all the time where is there space? So if we work with brokers and realtors it is a partnership. We are getting full support on this.

Feltham: Wonders if there is a word or two (technology/cutting edge) that shows we are thinking outside the box for new opportunities that raise the standard of living, a competitive edge others don't have.

Ells: I don't think I have told you what I am doing. I am talking with a 70 employee light manufacturing business that is looking for space here. People are looking for work and life experience. They are here talking to us. I don't think we are marketing ourselves properly enough because when I talk about the schools (Division 1 Schools, Sturgis Charter School, Technical High Schools, and Cape Cod Community College) they don't know all these resources are here. These are the type of conversations I am having. I went to the Blue Economy MEDC and spoke with someone from Silicon Valley. There are a few places people are looking to go start businesses & Barnstable / Cape Cod is one of them.

Johnson: We need a proactive aggressive outreach. We can't slap it out somewhere & hope people find us. We need to do outreach – go to tradeshow & associations and present ourselves.

Ells: By partnering with the local Chambers and groups like the BID (Business Improvement District).

Trovato: The Cape Cod Chamber is trying to bring more Blue Economy here – on the fore front.

Beedenbender: Spoke with Rob Brennan. The trades are always looking for the raw materials to build with that will survive this type of environment like hinges that don't corrode/rust - an Innovative Economy creating building materials that are suitable to a coastal community. Cape Cod could be a leader in this field.

Trovato: We are trying to find space in town for the Innovative Work Space. Coastal Communities need FEMA rated construction materials that could be exported over the bridge. His project is based around prefab.

Ells: There seems to be a lack of recognition of all players involved. Ells has been actively working with Cape Cod Chips & SencorpWhite for two years to keep them here & help find a place they could expand. Rob Brennan is looking for a 14 acre site to do light manufacturing for coastal construction materials. I reach out to commercial retailers & larger land holders to find parcels of land to accommodate these industries. That is actually a real barrier. You would think this opportunity, as positive as it is, it would move quickly, but it does not. The underlying assumption here is that Barnstable is the barrier, I can assure you we are absolutely not the barrier.

Flavin: I challenge you to communicate more. You are doing a lot, this group is talking about what should be done and you are doing almost everything, but the communication is lacking.

Ells: Many times when we talk with the private sector and they don't want their business out there, publicly. I have spoken to major retailers, corporations and educational institutions and they all say that.

The Economic Development Coordinator position is discussed. The search is ongoing. Feltham is participating in the search for the Economic Development Coordinator position.

Ells: We are actively doing this. I hear we don't communicate enough & that we need to market ourselves better and do more outreach. You have no argument from me, I hear this.

Flavin: We are advisory. We need to understand what you are doing so we can advise you. We need to know what our group should be doing.

The Business Barnstable website is discussed again. Trovato thanks the BEDC for their input. Feltham states this (website) is a big update.

Feltham asks about the visioning of each village. It is clarified that the Comprehensive Plan states exactly what each village wants in their village.

Business & Permitting Guide: (Exhibit B) The Guide was a collaborative effort between Planning & Development, Regulatory, Licensing, Health, Conservation, Building & the Town Clerks Office. It answers a lot of frequently asked questions and is geared for a small business. It will be available in hard copy format and electronic format.

Clyburn: There are a lot of people working on this, it is a priority. I know things don't happen as fast as you would like but many people are working to get the word out. We want your input, we are asking for it - please keep it professional.

Kehoe: This provides a plan for people to follow (a,b,c,d). Kehoe can send it out through the Hyannis Chamber.

Clyburn: This is a priority to the Town, a lot of work went into these tools. It doesn't happen quickly, but rather than looking back to see how long it has been we are moving forward, as quickly as we can. Things are changing.

Strategic purchasing is brought up by Johnson.

Trovato: Elizabeth Wurfbain & I recently met with a retail consultant who deals with downtowns and works specifically on business attraction. He is showing us tools ; retail market analysis, retention/implementation plans, marketing collateral, stakeholder meetings. Current focus is on down town but we can widen the scope.

Johnson: We have been grappling with our role in this effort. Everything effects economic development. We need to coordinate, communicate & collectively work on things. We can be a positive force, I don't think we have been, looking at our history. We could be more positively feeding this effort and we should be.

BEDC Mission and Purpose – Member Assignment:

Beedenbender: When this Commission was initially formulated the town government was different, the departments were different. We were in a totally different time & space. I have been wondering how this commission can be effective. We are in an advisory position, I feel a conversation needs to happen between us, Town Departments & the Town Council; to ask them how can we assist? We are here to serve Town Council / Town Departments. Ask them if there is a role/focus for us? Ask the Town to give us a direction of where we can help rather than saying to them- this is what you should do.

Kehoe states we are an Advisory group we can get the word out through speaking & public support. We have created subcommittees to change zoning, more has happened in the last 6 months than the last 3 years. We should look at West Main Street zoning & work on the Marketing Plan. I think we need to look at the big plan.

Jenkins: The aid the EDC gave us on the zoning changes on Rte. 28 was invaluable. That is a perfect sort of partnership to facilitate communication between the business community and staff here to increase our capacity of what we can do. We do outreach, I think we are pretty good about it but if all the people in this room are going out there & getting feedback and bringing the feedback back here, would be invaluable.

Johnson: We have a three legged beast; Planning & Development, Town Manager & the Town Council. We are coming to a better understanding of what our shortcomings. We have a major communication & coordination issue with the Town Council (third leg). We need to speak to the Town Council.

Clyburn: We meet with leadership quite regularly and the Town Council wants Barnstable to be #1 in Economic Development. It is on us to see where it is you can help us better. It's got to be 2 way street. We can tell you what we need & you can let us know where your best interests are served.

Open Meeting Law is discussed / 48 Hour Notice reviewed. Johnson asks if anyone has asked to weigh in on Total Athletics & School Street Condos. Stuart Bornstein was asked to attend an EDC meeting and he declined.

Flavin: Collectively Town Council, Planning & EDC should work on an agenda to see if there is interest to meet. We have so many ideas & are talking to so many people (with a lot of ideas). Flavin suggests a brainstorming session.

BEDC Strategic Audit / Mission & Purpose (Exhibit C)

Feltham would like a full Commission present for this discussion. There has been a lot of discussion of what has been done & what has not been done, we need to put that to rest and move on.

Feltham Thoughts: Opportunities for Improvement. Feltham shares his thoughts on the assignment that was given at the last meeting. For the EDC to become better recognized, become better utilized, become known to be a group to go to for advice on economic development. Set specific goals, objectives, set milestones/benchmarks/time tables. We need time tables and to monitor results, we need accountability. EDC Self Audit Thoughts;

- 1) Improve the ease of doing business in the Town of Barnstable.
- 2) Suggest Education initiatives
- 3) Help to create better quality and better paying jobs in Barnstable
- 4) Create an opportunistic business environment of an employment based culture instead of too much welfare and social service based agencies
- 5) Conduct Annual BEDC Self Audits
- 6) Partner more with other town groups as Economic Development consultants
- 7) Retain membership
- 8) Town Council Liaison must be more involved with the EDC
- 9) Change EDC leadership and/or hold EDC leadership accountable (with tasks & goals)

Strategic Audit Assignment for November:

- Assignment for next month existing EDC members that have been here a while to provide a 3-5 minutes Strategic Audit of their role and what has been done. Where we have been & where we are going.
- New members should prepare some thoughts/brainstorming of what the EDC role should be. Flavin believes there is a lot of value in the room and we need to see where that is best used.

Kehoe believes the Strategic Marketing Plan will continue with the hiring of the Economic Development Coordinator and we will learn what our role is down the line. Where we have been is important but where we are going is 99% more important.

Flavin: At the beginning of each meeting we should talk about what we have done over the last month and then we can see where we can add value to what is going on. I would be happy to participate & just ask questions that help trigger different trains of thought. From talking to people, I get the impression you have your own teams and you don't need us (as retirees in the town).

Public Comment: None

Additional Discussion - Matters not reasonably anticipated:

Perspective / Paradigm Shift, Hierarchy of Needs & Brainstorming:

Flavin: Hierarchy of Needs handout (Exhibit D) BEDC. Poses the question what benefit as a business would I have to locate here? How do we become a more competitive community? We want to raise people up on the hierarchy of needs, put a program together to help them move up and get new people here. There is a lot of value provided by the social service agencies but it is not appreciated by everyone. If we get together and brainstorm to understand each other better it might bridge different viewpoints. A paradigm shift; looking at things differently - it changes the way you see it. Look at the hierarchy of needs for the people.

Johnson asks about Hyannis Civic Association & about representation on the Seaport Council.

Clyburn: My first speaking engagement for the Town was at a Rotary meeting and I explained our charge was to be a business friendly community. I turned it into a Question & Answer session.

Flavin: We need a strategy, a picture that we can speak to and help other people understand.

Jenkins: To help you I can start to inventory all the resources that are out there. She advises Flavin to start with the Local and Regional Comprehensive Plans as good resources.

The group speaks towards brainstorming at the next meeting.

The meeting is adjourned at 9:43 am.

Next BEDC meeting November 7, 2017 at 8:00am

List of documents / exhibits:

Exhibit A: Agenda dated October 3, 2017

Exhibit B: Barnstable Business & Permitting Guide

Exhibit C: Email from Alan Feltham dated 9/4/2017 – BEDC Mission and Purpose

Exhibit D: BEDC Hierarchy of Needs handout

Respectfully Submitted, Stacey Hurwitz, Administrative Assistant

Public files are available for viewing during normal business hours in the Growth Management office located on the 3rd floor of Town Hall, 367 Main Street, Hyannis. **Further detail may be obtained by viewing the video via Channel 18 on demand at www.town.barnstable.ma.us **