

Town of Bolton
Economic Development Committee (EDC)
Minutes to EDC Meeting
Monday May 17, 2010
Town Hall, Bolton
Final

Attendees:

Helene Demmer, Stephen George, Dina Mazzola, Lysa Miller, Chris Nelson,	James Riseborough, Bruce Slater
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Non-member attendees: Steve Bing, Martha Remington and Rich Mattock

Not present EDC/planning members: Jennifer Atwood Burney, John Karlon, Eileen Schomp

Next meeting: June 7, 7:30pm Town Hall

Minutes

- **First order of Business, administrative follow-up:**
 - Again, Dan Weadock, Ray Grenier, Reta Rupich will not serve on EDC – omit from EDC e-mail distribution list

- **EDC Website Development:**
 - Will begin to build the content management portion of system – some thought into how to maintain, can be costly – need to think this through to have minimal expenses.
 - Need more commercial pictures
 - Action: Chris Nelson and Dina Mazzola to develop web site content map which will be outlined for review, discussion, revision at the next meeting.

- **Comments from non EDC members:**

Rich Mattock VP TRB Develop. Group (mattocksrp@aol.com 603-361-7160)

Mentioned he may be able to help in populating the website and cautioned us to focus on good simple systems, as well as to be aware that changing the system after development can be an issue.

In addition, he reconfirmed that developers often find it difficult to do business in Bolton since they do not know how long and/or if things will get approved. He also talked about different businesses, particularly CVS, looking at the Salt Box and their thoughts that Bolton may not be a viable economic site for them (customers), as well as CVS's own requirements (set back, frontage, etc) that probably would not be accepted in

Bolton. He also mentioned the Kane property and different grocery stores thinking about that site and their reluctance to move in without understanding the RTE 62 - Berlin grocery store development first. Potential types of businesses looked at for Bolton: grocery store, assisted living facilities and schools.

He also mentioned that he lives close by in Hudson and has the time/interest to keep looking in Bolton knowing the acceptance for business/retail may be growing, especially since the newly created Economic Development Committee was formed. He has done a lot of viability studies and feels Bolton is an up and coming area - and is being patient with the hopes things will change.

Stephen Bing, Bolton resident

Mr. Bing stated that the enthusiasm for the potential Smith Property development is not shared by the abutters, saying they are concerned about the scale and impact to the residential community.

He presented the EDC with a written 3 page letter dated May 12, 2010
To: Town of Bolton Planning Board, Economic Development Committee
CC: Jennifer Atwood Burney, Town Planner
Re: Proposal by Bolton Crossing, LLC to develop the Smith Property
From: Roland Ochsenbein
702 Main Street

No EDC members had seen this letter prior to the meeting. The letter outlines the concerns Mr. Ochsenbein has related to the potential Smith Property development:

- Impact to the residents living in the immediate village area
- Potential environmental impact beyond the Brownfield aspects (i.e. wells and septic)
- Potential impact to traffic and safety within the village
- Scale and potential increased commercialization of the village area
- Wants to ensure significant broad and open discussion with those who live in affected areas

Comments:

Chris Nelson indicated that all plans which have been presented by potential developers of The Smith Property are PRELIMINARY since the property has not even sold. The EDC was excited over the idea that someone is thinking of taking action to the run-down, toxic property in the center of town, however nothing has happened as of yet. In addition, in order for the property to be developed as a commercial/retail property, it would need to be re-zoned and obviously adequate and well thought out discussions would be facilitated prior to any actions.

Helene Demmer brought up the need to develop an official strategy for commercial/retail development and we as the EDC could help get the BOS/others establish a plan so we are not doing things piece-meal (i.e. every time property becomes available we are re-creating the wheel). **Chris Nelson felt this was something the EDC could help facilitate and we should think about the next steps.**

In addition the group discussed that Bolton's zoning approval process was difficult to maneuver and cumbersome to get things approved; and the EDC felt there may be ways to enhance/improve this approval process. Dina Mazzola mentioned you could have a thought out process which is not necessarily slow – slow does not always ensure a thought out, effective process. **Need to look at other towns and see what their approval processes are and/if they are easier to work with.**

Martha Remington, Bolton Historical Society

Martha expressed her concerns about respecting specific guidelines and historical issues. However, she understood that commercial development may take place and there is a respectful manner in which we can proceed, giving examples of other towns which have been successful at this. Need to have specific building guidelines, understand abutter and historical issues.

NEXT STEPS:

- Provide individual comments on an enhanced approval zoning process and Town of Bolton Development Strategy
- Start to get feedback from developers
- Website design
- Website data map
- Which towns have good approval processes
- Keep in mind building guidelines, consistent signage