

Economic Development Committee

Tuesday, March 8, 2011 7:00 PM
Old Library, 5 Fairbank St., Harvard, MA

MINUTES

Members Present: Rich Maiore, Chairman, Bruce Stamski, Jim Higgins, Elaine Lazarus
Members Absent: Al Combs

Present: Kara McGuire Minar

The Committee discussed preparations for the annual town meeting on April 2. It was noted that article 30 will ask that town meeting authorize the filing of special legislation so that the Town can join the Devens Economic Target Area, with the whole Town so designated. Elaine will check to determine whether ETA communities receive extra points on certain grant applications. Rich asked Kara whether the Planning Board will support the article, and she replied that she would ask the Board. Questions about ETA designation and what it would mean to the Town were discussed.

The Committee discussed a one page handout for town meeting that explains what is being asked and provides answers to anticipated questions. Newspaper publicity was also discussed. It was decided that Elaine would work on a handout and that Rich would work with the press and look into who is responsible for writing the description in the warrant.

Bruce described a meeting with Tim Bragan, Bill Johnson and Devens engineering/utility personnel held recently. He noted it was stated that there is ample capacity to provide water and sewer service now and in the future, based on the capacity of the Devens system. He stated there would be costs involved and no specifics were discussed. He noted that the system has expanded outside Devens to provide a company in Ayer with water, so there is precedent for that. He stated that the Devens personnel stated that they would like more sewage in their system to improve its performance. He stated that they have a 4 million gallon facility with a lot less going to it, and Harvard would need to define what wants so more specific information can be provided.

Bruce noted that he did preliminary calculations using the ratios in Title 5 applied to the uses that people said they wanted in the EDAT survey. He noted that it could range from 45,000 gallons per day for a small area to about 163,000 gallons per day for the whole C district. He noted that there are two possible routes to Devens, either cross country or via Old Mill Rd. He noted that the Old Mill Rd. route could open up land for development along the route and the sewer main would be available for abutting properties to hook into. He added that Ayer and Shirley have already reserved capacity at Devens. He noted that with respect to water service, if provided by Devens, it would open up land that is currently set aside as the protective radius of public water supplies on C district

lots. It was noted that a water supply would also improve fire protection. Elaine noted that potential concerns about the loss of aquifer recharge would need to be discussed if only sewer is provided to the area. Kara asked about costs, and Bruce noted that it depends, but the base cost is probably \$100 to \$120 per linear foot. She asked if such costs are typically funded by businesses, and Bruce noted that it is typical for there to be betterment fees and tie-in costs to the property owners.

It was noted that a memo with the understandings of what was discussed at the meeting should be prepared for future reference.

Jim discussed ongoing efforts with respect to communication with C district businesses, noting that Jim Stevens had contacted some businesses and had received good feedback, which can be summarized for the next meeting.

Rich noted that the Committee now has a web page on the Town's website, and the Minutes and other information will be posted there.

Kara described the role of a new committee that would guide preparation of the Master Plan, if funded, and the hope that a member of the EDC can participate. It was noted that at least one member of the EDC would participate.

Adjourned: 8:30 pm