

Minutes – Joint Meeting of the Planning and Economic Development Board and the Economic Development Committee - November 19, 2013
APPROVED by the PEDB – March 11, 2014

November 19, 2013
Medway Planning and Economic Development Board
155 Village Street
Medway, MA 02053

Joint Meeting with Economic Development Committee

PEDB BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Andy Rodenhiser, Bob Tucker, Tom Gay, Karyl Spiller-Walsh, Matthew Hayes, Rich Di Iulio.

ABSENT WITH NOTICE:

ALSO PRESENT: Susy Affleck-Childs, Planning and Economic Development Coordinator;
Amy Sutherland, Meeting Recording Secretary;
Judi Barrett, RKG Associates.

EDC MEMBERS PRESENT: Chan Rogers, Paul Yorkis, Ken Bancewicz, Alyssa Parlee,
Hugh McKinnon

Present at the meeting was also Judi Barrett from RKG Associates. She provided to the Board that she is currently working with RKG Associates, but in the past has worked for Community Opportunities Group.

Ms. Barrett has been hired by the Board of Selectmen to do an assessment of the organizational structure of the land use departments/boards/committees for the Town of Medway. Once the assessment is completed, recommendations will be provided.

The purpose of this meeting is to gather information from both the Economic Development Committee and the Planning and Economic Development Board.

Ms. Barrett supplied the Boards with a set of questions to discuss. **See Attached.**

What do you consider to be the primary responsibilities of your board/commission?

Planning Board:

- The primary responsibility would be to respond to applicants for various prescriptive things.
- There is a responsibility to work according to the master plan of the Town of Medway.
- Respond to residents and the community as what they may see as the current and future climate of the Town of Medway to enable the zoning changes to make sure this is

parallel with the master plan which was last updated in 2009 when it went to town meeting for vote.

- The Board presents to citizens information at town meeting but there is low participation at town meeting.
- The Board has never had a failed initiative at town meeting, but residents tend to question the passing of the articles after the fact.
- It is the responsibility of the Board to reach out to the community for feedback in the process. For example, the Board will mail the advertisements beyond the 300 ft. by sending notices to those at 500 ft. since they think it is a better process.
- Another goal of the board is to connect better with residents through the web. This is an enormous undertaking and there should be a budgeted line item to address this.
- It was suggested to have a land planning site for residents to view.

Does the Planning and Economic Development have authority over other Committees besides permitting?

Susy explained that the Economic Development Committee is a committee which is appointed through the Planning and Economic Development Board.

The town did have an industrial commission for many years. This group then went off on its own without a lot of connectedness. The Charter Commission felt there would be value in consolidating. The industrial group then lost the steam to move ahead.

Another Committee created was the Design Review Committee. The Economic Development Committee and Design Review Committee are subordinate but equal. Both are appointed by the Planning and Economic Development Board and report back to them. These Boards are advisory and only make recommendations.

The Design Review Committee has specific projects, but the Economic Development Committee is broader. The Economic Development Committee is an advocate for business.

Economic Development Committee:

- The EDC are advocates for the business community and they bring up issues regarding parking and zoning. They also review policies and procedures.
- There is a concern about the lack of coordination among all of the boards. The Planning Board is the best board in the community since they take the initiative. It seems to be common that the squeaky wheel gets the most attention. An example of that is the impassioned resident at town meeting regarding the proposal for commercial shopping center. The proposal failed at town meeting.
- The EDC also feels that the permitting process is too complicated. There is sometimes problems with Boards and Commissions not being able to have quorums. This does not happen with the Planning and Economic Development Board. When this happens, the applicant is paying for an engineer, traffic engineer, and counsel. This costs money and

when a Board cannot have a meeting due to lack of quorum it gives the people a negative view of this community.

- Town has a problem for not thanking people who serve the town. People who put in time get no recognition.
- There is a lack of consistency with what some departments are doing.
- It was brought up that the town has a full-time person doing more than she can handle and result of this, the town needs to make a decision on how they need to function when the current staff is overloaded.
- The process for an application is too lengthy.
- When dealing with property except residential, we should be more helpful for getting commercial allowed in town. The Board should work to help this and not hurt this. For example, with the project by Mr. Calarese. He wanted to put money into site, but unfortunately he had to pay for two traffic engineers, town engineer and extra costs. This was double payment and gave up. (Chan Rogers)
- Do give more emphasis to commercial and help get permitted and not hindering, he has never seen this. Other communities help, but we hinder. (Chan Rogers)
- We have not invested money to make money.

What should a prospective member of your board or committee know before being elected or appointed to it?

Planning Board:

- Open minded flexible
- Apolitical
- Fair

Have you attended any boards/commission training programs (workshops/conferences)?

- Local programs
- Citizen Planner Training Collaborative
- Randall Arendt
- 495 Partnership

Economic Development works as an advocate to help that person to give guidance for the applicant. We need to facilitate and guide the applicants through the process.

The Committee has seen a turn around with committee members. The committee did start to make progress with the hiring of Claire O'Neill, but then her contract was not renewed. The EDC did not know that she was not rehired. The EDC found out when the Board of Selectmen met with the EDC in July, 2013.

We have not replaced the person but hired a redevelopment person who will function in that role for a period of time to be determined. The EDC wanted someone full-time.

This is an administrative issue for the other offices and it is how to make things work better and their functions. The secretary who supports both at 50% building and PB.

Are there topics that you would like to know more about to make your job better?

- Using the experiences from the past while looking at the rules and regulations as they apply.
- Making sure we have findings of fact which are defensible.
- The EDC indicated that when Claire was present, the committee had a staff member who assisted the business community. We have lots of data and research, but now we need to implement this.
- Understanding the scope within the Special Permit process
- The PEDB would like to know how to make the process quicker or better using the best management practices.

On a motion made by Karyl Spiller Walsh and seconded by Bob Tucker, the meeting was adjourned at 9:20 pm.

Prepared by Amy Sutherland, Recording Secretary