

Aug 11, 2022 7:00 p.m. EDC Meeting Minutes - Virtual

- Attendees:
 - Jodi Harris, Donna Roy, Margaret Eklind, Tina Lane, Martha Mazzarino, Georgeanne Richards, Town Administrator Brendhan Zubricki, Town Planner Dana Menon, Selectman Ruth Preen, Julie Schofield, Mike Dyer, Patrice Murphy METC, Matt Plum, Olivia Perez
- Meeting called to order at 7:04 pm by Chairman Harris.
- Chair announced that Westley Burnham will be stepping down from the Planning Board effective 8/18/22 therefore a new EDC rep will be selected to represent the Planning Board.
- Public Comment: Mike Dyer expressed concern for the committee's effort to sell town owned properties especially along Southern Ave. which he viewed as "greenbelt". He referenced the goal to increase protected land and improve the health of rivers and marsh land in the town's Strategic Plan.
- Minutes from the 6/23/22 virtual meeting was approved
- Lighting Grant – Dana Menon shared updates of the \$160,000 award from "Shared Streets and Spaces" grant program to fund design and installation of pedestrian streetlights along a section of Main Street from Dunkin Donuts to Essex Wine Exchange. The project needs to be completed by Dec '23. The fixture design options will be considered once the formal grant letter is received.
- Potential warrant articles for Fall Town Meeting – Brendhan Zubricki
 - Sale of Town owned parcels
 - On Gregory Island: Has the support of BOS. Mike Galli, who lives in the area says there is interest by residents.
 - Town parcel at Dodge and Spring will not be considered as it is used for drainage.
 - Margaret questioned how the price will be set. Brendhan said the town can set the floor and the high bid wins.
 - Create stabilization fund
 - A discussion determined that funds from a newly created stabilization fund would not be available in time to fund lighting and pocket parks
 - Brendhan suggested that 3 articles be presented to FTM to accomplish the EDC goals
 - 1. Pocket Park funding from free cash. Maintenance of park by Town employee vs Subcontractor TBD
 - 2. Lighting balance funding from free cash
 - 3. Establish another stabilization fund from free cash. FinCom can determine token or other sum to open.
 - Need concrete list of what we want done for maintenance.
 - Members were encouraged to research
 - Jodi shared that income is strong from meals tax and short-term rental
- Centennial Grove Soil Testing update – Brendhan Zubricki
 - The cottage area, garage at the end of the road and the picnic area were soil tested on July 19. Tight tanks at the cottage and picnic area were considered. The cost to dump the tanks is a disadvantage.
- Centennial Grove as Potential Rental Space Financial Review – Donna Roy
 - Donna researched other towns' rent potential
 - Lake Dennison is inexpensive 75.00 full day and overnight
 - Tuck's Point provides an open ocean water view (without swimming), overhang, space for food prep, no cooking in kitchen

- Rental 2 times a day (9:00am-2:30pm and 3:30pm-9:00pm) to residents & non-residents, weekdays and weekend
 - 73K most conservative annual income. 275.00 weekday resident.
 - 2/3 of rental comes from non-residents 325.00-700.00
 - Renters need to clean up and are charged for trash and electricity to string lights. Need \$1M insurance rider
- With the Pavilion closed Essex has no structure to offer for rent. We need our pavilion
- Cottage needs too much work. Pavilion rental funds could be used to finance work
- Ball field is potential rental opportunity
- Brendhan reminded that we have a Centennial Grove Fund
- Donna suggested that the regulations need to be reviewed as currently they discourage rentals while Manchester encourages rentals. Brendhan explained that the background for the current regulation was to justify a residents only policy
- Brendhan suggested we invite Dan Mayer to the next EDC. Dan has offered to work with the town on the Pavilion project.
- Update on “Guide to Doing Business in Essex” – Margaret Elkin and Jodi Harris
 - Margaret is working on the layout and content presentation for the next meeting
 - Jodi had asked Tina to review licenses and permitting applications information on the town website. Tina reported that there was no step-by-step process for new businesses. The information provided was hard to find and that some of links appeared to be out of date. Donna, as a member of the Essex Merchants Group appreciates our effort as many EMG members have expressed the same
- Jodi reminded that the EDC’s work is for the long term, sustainable goals. The only quick goal is the lighting project.
 - Dana says the EDC work is not just to bring new business but also to support and retain existing businesses. To assure them that their contribution to the town is reinvested to their benefit
 - Jodi’s vision is to benefit both businesses and residents. She shared her acronym D.E.C.A.: Data, Enforcement, Capacity (police, fire, DPW) & Accountability, which she uses to guide the committee’s actions
- Next EDC meeting will be held virtually (if still an option per the Governor) on Thursday, 9/15/22 at 7:00.
 - Dan Mayer will be invited to attend
 - Margaret offered to be liason to ConCom
- Meeting Adjourned 8:32

Respectfully submitted,
Tina Lane