

Economic Development Commission Meeting Minutes - February 22, 2021 @ 6:30 pm

Committee Chair: Susan Dipesa

The mission of the Economic Development Commission is to enhance the existing business community, attract new business, attract new customers, and encourage redevelopment and new development as may be advisable in order to increase the Town's property tax revenues, income, job base, and overall economic health.

Date: February 22, 2021 at 6:30 p.m.

Location: Zoom

Attendees: Sue DiPesa (chair), R J Dwyer (vice-chair), Jack McInnis, Paul Bartkiewicz, Matthew Nelson, Geena Savage and Susanne Hofmeister

Members of the public: Amy Linnell (Liaison NSV), Matt Elder (Liaison Greenbush), Fran McMillen (Liaison Harbor), Seth Pfeiffer (SCTV), Kelly Bower, Jennifer Kuhn, Bob MacLean, Jack Zarbauskas, Karen Canfield (Select Board)

Minutes of Last Meeting: November 16th, 2020: approved

Agenda:

Old/New Business:

- Approve the EDC's meeting minutes - January 2021
- Review, approve and sign pending bills - Review approved bills under the Municipal Modernization Act

Chairperson Report: Sue Dipesa

Discussion: Business District Reports:

- North Scituate - Amy/Caitlin
- Friends of North Scituate - Susi
- Scituate Harbor - Fran McMillen
- Greenbush - Matt Elder

EDC Initiative/Committee reports:

- Scituate Loves Local - Sue
- Visitor Center - Geena
- North Scituate Sewer - Paul
- North Scituate Rezoning Initiative - Sue
- Pier 44

Other Business:

- EDC Election Slate
- Select Board Liaison Report- Karen Canfield

Chairperson Report: Sue

Chairperson Report: Sue reports about a successful business forum with the chamber. They had about 25 people attending and it was the third meeting in the last 6 weeks. They are making progress with the businesses community coming together and having communications about what can be done. Drew, from the board of health, answered questions from the business community.

Sue introduces Kelly Bower, who wants to help with the businesses and the visitor center. The only news from the sewer in NSV is that the existing sewer line under the train tracks is not usable to connect NSV to our treatment plant. This is a setback, but the town is looking for alternatives to solve this issue.

The Drew project in Greenbush is supposed to start in the spring. EDC has to prepare for elections in March.

All board members, please let Sue know about any ambitions for chair, vice chair or secretary.

Pier 44: Paul gives an update about the town's plans to use the Pier 44 property. A study and survey was done a few years ago. One idea for a new purpose was a senior center, but that has resolved. Most of the select board members seem to be in favor for a park there, comparable to the Hingham Bathing Beach. It could be developed like a recreation area for the town. There could be a pond, which could be an ice skating rink in the winter. There could be showers, bathrooms and a snack bar with nice food, like lobster rolls and fried clams. The existing building would come down. The new building could have a meeting room. A pier could extend into the harbor, for residents to walk out and enjoy the view. A splash pad for little kids could be build. The site could also hosts art shows, farmers' markets, etc. Andrew Goodrich has a lot of ideas for this park. The town holds a survey right now and they will be assessing the results. There is no specific time frame, but it seems the Board wants to move ahead with this decision and wants to come to a solution, what to do with this property.

Water resource committee: Paul gives an update of the last meetings of the WRC. They are working on a bylaw revision to include water conservation efforts. They want to include penalties for excessive water usage. It will all go in front of the town meeting in the spring. The WRC tried to include restrictions on private water well usage during droughts or during other strains on the water supply. The select board has a different view on this. It says, that private wells are by definition not putting any strain on the town's water supply, because they are only allowed at the periphery of the water wells and water supplies. So, they don't see the need to put any restrictions on existing private wells. WRC is also looking into a water fixture rebate program. Subsidies for replacing old shower heads and toilets that are not water efficient. It is a low cost way to preserve water in town. You typically tie the program in with a local merchant, who sells these fixtures. So you get a local business benefit as well.

Karen Canfield: Pier 44 was identified as a priority for this fiscal year (which ends in July 2021). And the solution or plan should be found by the end of this fiscal year (June 2021). The survey which was done in 2012, was very consensual. Most people want to see recreation, open space and public bathrooms. 79% of people were in favor of this kind of usage. If the town has a plan what Pier 44 will become off, then they will go and find the funds and grants for it. NSV sewer: The select board sent out a letter to Hull asking what Hull's plan are for a regional sewer project. By the end of March, Scituate should know, if the regional project goes forward or not. Meanwhile, the town of Scituate is working on their own town sewer to free up more capacity. The sewer department started design work on Oceanside Drive, because they think there is a similar problem like in Cedar Point.

There is a Select Board meeting tomorrow night and they will be reviewing the EDC budget. It will be lower, because there are less meal tax money. Karen would like to have the EDC presenting their work in front of the select board at a later date, because she thinks it would be really important to show the select board what work is being done by the EDC.

There are discussions going on, on how to clean up the old Jamie's Pub site. One abutting property owner is in contact with the Jamie's Pub site owner and the site should look better, if they can come to a conclusion, how they can clean it up. It is a private site, so it is more difficult for the town to get involved. But it is a good sign that the two property owners are communicating and The Friend's of NSV are involved, too.

Old/New Business:

- EDC's meeting minutes - January 25th, 2021 were unanimously approved
- There were no pending bills.

Discussion: Business District Reports:

- North Scituate Rezoning Initiative: There is a new public hearing on February 25th at 6:30 pm. The NS rezoning will come up at 7:15 pm on the agenda.
- NSV- Amy Linnell is the owner of ABC Reading Adventures in NSV. Amy is our Liaison for NSV. She reports that there are a lot of new businesses in NSV: One new business will be opening soon. She is an interior designer or something like that. Across from Wilder Brothers is a new plant/flower shop. In the old Hingham Savings Bank, is now a Co Op and there seemed to be no empty spots available. Caitlin Munro is hoping for The Fall for Scituate in the fall, but they are not planning it right now, because they want to wait, what is possible in the fall in regard of Covid restrictions. Stacy is hoping for an outdoor event with food trucks in the summer. NSV businesses are hoping to get the community together, like they used to do it with Christmas in the village. The banners look great in the village. With Jamie's gone, the village closes down at night and it is dark and deserted. Wit all these new businesses going up in NSV, they hope for a more vibrant activity.
- Sue reports, that Jamie's still holds a liquor license and has special permits for pumping his sewer. He has approval from the town to rebuild. Maybe, Jamie's owner would like to sell it, for somebody else to rebuild. The town would be definitely welcoming this step. If anybody knows anybody interesting in developing, spread the word.
- Scituate Harbor: Fran invites everybody to an open house zoom on March 4th at 6 pm. It is to inform people what is going on and what is planned for the future. This event is posted on Facebook and in the shops around town. The themes for 1st Fridays are set for the next months. They will celebrate the Irish in March, Poetry in April, Arts Walk in May, Opening of the harbor in June. In the past they had a Paddle Parade, which included up to 60 paddle boards, kayaks, boats, power boats, the harbor master and the coast guard. They had a blessing of the fleet. This year there might be a schooner coming in and sails will be available. Right now there is a beach contest going on from February 17th until St. Patrick's Day. Any kind of art which you could put together on the beach (for example: stacked stones) and photographs can be entered. The harbor businesses association board is looking for board of directors. They have a survey open now about closing Front Street, what effect it has for the restaurants, the

businesses in the harbor, the people living and working there. They had not a lot of response yet. They did come out with a new map. If anybody wants to get on it, please let Fran know. The harbor lost 7 businesses last year, but they gained 7 new ones, but there are lot of ifs in the air. So they hope, it will be not a deficit and they come out on the plus side. For example, the movie theater is gone and there is a plan of converting it into 4 condos and Nona's might extend their operations and get some more space. Riva, Wishbones, Creyo's, ZUKI's hair salon, Molisse Realty Group, Silvia's by the Sea (has another 4-5 days left), they are all out of business. New businesses in the harbor include Starling Bakery, Hibernian Tavern, Learning Edge Tutoring, and Salt Society. Jimmy Burke is supposed to go in the old Riva space, but it is not yet finalized.

- Greenbush - Matt Elder: Stockbridge workshop is gone, demolished. A new development will be going up. Untold is preparing to reopen in the spring with some more outdoor seating. They were closed since March 2020. Oro and Rivershed are plugging along. Oro is now opening for Sunday brunch. BirchBarn Design had a good holiday season. The Chronicle feature on them might have helped, too. Recurve K9 seems to be a new business on the Driftway.
- Widow's Walk: Jack - The old Tibbits place got approved to become a gas station. Gas backwards with a convenient store and food. Alan Capparella (Mother Anna's) is doing the food (sandwich shop take out), Aaron Cutler (Petro Realty Brokers) bought that plot. He owns the Mobil station on 3A in Cohasset.
- Friends of North Scituate - Susi: The friends of NSV are in contact with the property owner next door to the old Jamie's Pub site and they are in a preliminary planning stage to help clean up the site. The canopy project is still stalled and might not get restarted before the spring. The work is weather dependent. The rest of the banners will go up in the spring, too.

EDC Initiative/Committee reports:

- SLL - Sue: Scituate Loves Local will completely go to the chamber of commerce in April. Sue is working on a plan of action: This will include working on getting a town wide calendar of events in place, working with the board of health to get permission for the different events, working with the select board to get approval for the events and for special permits. It also includes to continue the close relationship and communication with the restaurants and businesses.
- Visitor Center - Geena: The visitor center group is still meeting weekly on Tuesday mornings. They recently broke up into two groups, one is working with a website designer in building a website for the visitor center. The other group is working on developing an advisory board, board of directors with voting power and bylaws, and to gain non-profit status. They are now beginning on working on a presentation for the EDC and then they will present the project to the stake holders, the town and use it to getting funds and grants. The visitor center group is working on a strategic plan and it will be town independent, and also independent from the EDC. The goal is to become independent from EDC in April 2021. The goal for the website is to be up and running in June 2021. The website is set up as a regional website, but they start as a website for the town of Scituate. The plan is to be going virtual only for the first year. Later, the visitor center would like to have some brick and mortar sites like kiosks, located in the Harbor, Greenbush, NSV and Humorock.

Adjournment 7:33 pm.

Respectfully submitted: Susanne Hofmeister 02/25/21

Approved: March 15, 2021

