

Economic Development Commission Meeting Minutes - March 15th, 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: March 15, 2021 at 6:30 p.m.

Location: Zoom

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

Members of the public: Amy Linnell (Liaison NSV), Matt Elder (Liaison Greenbush), Michelle Wood (Harbor Business Association), Seth Pfeiffer (SCTV), Kelly Bower, Sytske Humphrey, Lynda Ferguson (The Inn), Jack Zarbauskas, Kevin Cafferty (DPW),

Minutes of Last Meeting: not everybody had the chance to read the minutes, so they will be approved at the next meeting in April

Call to Order: Sue Dipesa called the meeting to order on 6:35 pm.

Agenda:

Old/New Business:

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

Chairperson Report: Sue Dipesa

- Select Board Update

Election of Commission 1-year positions:

- Chair: Sue Di Pesa
- Vice Chair - Susi Hofmeister

Discussion: Business District Reports:

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

EDC Initiative/Committee reports:

- Scituate Loves Local - Sue
- Visitor Center - Geena
- North Scituate Sewer and Zoning - Sue
- Pier 44 Re-use and Water Resources - Paul

Other Business:

- Scituate Harbor Business Association Request

Chairperson Report: Sue reports of the town filling the position of the Director of Planning and Development. They hired Kyle Boyd, he is an excellent grant writer. He is very familiar with the town, because he has worked with the town for a long time in the coastal division. Today, was his first day and Kyle will join our EDC meetings from next month on. The biggest project of the moment is to work to establish a cohesive town wide calendar of events through SLL. It is done with the help of many people. Kelly Bower, Fran McMillen and Michelle Wood are the main people working on this. The merchants in the harbor are planning to having events, and the EDC is supporting them, making sure, they can host those events. The Visitor Center project is moving along very quickly, and Kyle is joining us there in the weekly meetings. The Visitor Center will make a formal presentation to EDC in April. Kevin Cafferty is with us today, and will bring us more information about the sewer project for NSV. Karen Canfield might join us later today in this meeting. Scituate Loves Local is still active with the social media campaign and working with the merchants to make sure they get a good head start. We work collaboratively with the Scituate Chamber of Commerce on SLL. The EDC will finish the work with SLL in the spring. We are happy with all the relationships that were build and for the work that was done in the past year. It has been a great opportunity for EDC and the businesses. As a result of our meetings with the business associations we have learned that they do need some help with landscaping, lighting or tables. The EDC might hear today a request from the harbor merchants. There is an Easter Rising Event on April 25th at noon, the West Cork committee is hosting this dedication/commemoration of the monument that was erected in Coleparkway last year.

Discussion Business District Reports:

North Scituate- Amy: The new businesses are great. A new store opened across from Wilder Brother's. It is a plant store, (they also have jewelry and decoration) called Good Roots and the owner is Jen Murphy. At the moment, the store is only open at the weekends. There is also a new store by an interior designer, Emily. She has cabinets and all great things in her store. And the collective company (located in the old bank building) has a lot of work space for women and is opening soon and will generate a lot of foot traffic in NSV. The business association of NSV is planning a sidewalk sale in the spring. More details are coming soon. It is great to see all these new businesses popping up in North Scituate, and that these businesses are all different. No news about the old Jamie's site.

North Scituate Sewer- Kevin Cafferty: Hull is very interested in taking sewer from North Scituate, but unfortunately Cohasset is not interested in this. And we have to go through Cohasset to get to Hull. Kevin and the TA met with the town of Cohasset (Cohasset TA, one member of their select board, and one member of their sewer commission) last week and they seemed to be interested in setting up meetings with Hull again. It looked like Cohasset were interested to make a deal with Scituate, but they were not interested to make a deal with Scituate, Cohasset and Hull. They seemed to be interested to get certain areas in Scituate sewered near the Gulf river. So, we have to see how it will work out and what Cohasset will propose. These were preliminary talks with Cohasset and we are standing at the beginning. Meanwhile, the town of Scituate is working to eliminate as much I and I (Infiltration/Inflow causes dilution in sanitary sewers, increasing volumes) as we can, so that we can fit NSV sewer into our own system. We

worked on Cedar Point, Oceanside Drive, where we knew we had high infiltration with seawater. Our attempt are to eliminate enough leaks, so that we could add North Scituate into our own system. Because, we are in a drought year, the groundwater is not getting into our pipes, it is harder for the town to find the leaks. The DPW did the smoke test to look for leaks and they are also in the progress of purchasing cameras to detect leaks in the pipes. A timeline for sewerage NSV is hard to estimate. If Cohasset would agree today, we would have years of engineering ahead of us. It would take us at least up to three years. To add NS to our own system, would take roughly the same amount of time. We have to prove it to DEP that we eliminated enough leaks to add this next section. We might have to show the numbers during a wet year, too. To connect NSV to our system, we have to put pipes into the ground. We did not repave Gannett Road after we put new fresh water pipes in the ground, because we did not want to rip off a new road to start putting sewer pipes in. There was infrastructure installed when the train project was done. These pipes were put alongside the train tracks. This creates a maintenance problem for the town. Right now, we have a lot of back ups from people flushing wipes, which clog the pipes. We would not be able to get easy access to the pipes next to the tracks, because this would disrupt the commuter service, and we would always need permission from the MBTA do to any work at those pipes. The other concern is, that these pipes were put in 18 years ago, with a train running next to it for the same amount of time. We do not know, in which condition these pipes are. We need to do a full design and environmental study of the area to decide which way we want to go and what areas we would like to include in the future. The discussion came up, why Scituate still talks and waits for Cohasset to come around and not just try to do the sewer of NSV with our own system. But, Kevin made the important point, that sewerage is a very expensive project. We spent \$7 million on Cedar Point alone. The regional project would definitely be a good alternative.

Other things DPW is working on right now: DPW is flushing the fresh water pipelines to reduce the brown water. New water lines are going in into several areas. But, they also put new hydrants in, so that pipes can be flushed.

A new water well is worked on on Hollett Street to have something in the hot summer months. The reservoir is planned to be raised, too.

The town of Scituate got a \$400,000 grant from Complete Streets to continue the sidewalk down Country Way. We might be able to connect sidewalks all the way to Greenbush.

The burned out streetlights in North Scituate village could be replaced as soon as the weather is warming up. Susi will provide a map with marked burned out lights and broken street lights, which she will share with the highway department.

Harbor-Fran: Commemoration of Irish Heritage Memorial on April 25th. Cole Parkway will be still under construction, but we could talk to Steve Moan to find out, if we can get enough space there for the event. Sidewalk dining for some restaurants was permission by the select board. First event is the annual paddle parade. We got 60-70 kayaks and canoes, this will take place of the First Friday event in June. A business survey was delivered to the select board about the closing of Front Street.

Michelle Wood: A list of events was sent to to the EDC, including poetry month for April. The Harbor Merchant Association will come with a request for EDC in April.

Lynda Ferguson: Lynda was working on the SeeScituate guidebook app. Because of Covid, The Inn was told not to give out maps or guides to guests, which brought Lynda to the idea to make all this information available digitally. Since the pocket guide book might not come out this year, it is very important to have something promoting Scituate and the businesses. The SeeScituate app includes all businesses Lynda could think of. It also has a QR code and a URL web link. The whole guide is interactive. You can click on coffee and find all coffee shops in Scituate. It always automatically updates. If you download the app today, and new businesses are added to it, they will be linked to it, when you open it the next time. Lynda would like to make two-sided cards with the SeeScituate website on it, so that people can find the information and come to Scituate. 2500 cards would cost \$275 to print, plus putting them at the side of the tourist center would be a maximum of \$575 in total. The Chamber of Commerce is giving \$375 to Lynda. Fran has figured out funding for printing the cards and position them at the tourist center in Plymouth. It would be great if Lynda could join one of the next visitor center meetings and we could talk about her great app and how to bring all the great work of the visitor center, Lynda's app, SLL and SeaScituate together.

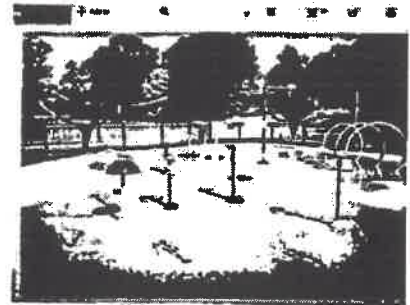
Greenbush - Matt: The new gas station is moving ahead with a planned opening at the end of this year. They got the final approval of the town. Gas pumps are in the back, convenient store and deli and coffee shop in front. Drew project is starting in the spring. Restaurant workers are soon eligible for vaccination and you can pre-register online. Good news for all the food and beverage businesses.

Friends of NSV: The train canopy project is on hold until the spring. The Streetlights and banners will also be worked on in the spring, as soon as the weather warms up. Tom O'Brien decided to clean up the old Jamie's Pub site by himself.

Visitor Center - Geena: There is an event hosted by the Metropolitan Area Planning Council on April 1st, at 2 pm over zoom. It is all about economic development, administration and their funding opportunities over the year. This event will be very important for the visitor center, but also town groups could apply for funding. The visitor center project finished it by-laws, as a first stepping stone to become a non-profit. The advisory board hosted Patrick Kearney's office. Funding opportunities were discussed and Patrick said there would be a positive outlook on funding for the visitor center. A grass root campaign with EDC involvement was suggested, which would include writing supportive letters why funding for this project would be good for Covid relief and business development in the town of Scituate. The Plymouth County Commissioner already agreed to write such a supportive letter and the advisory board is now looking for other groups which could be supportive in this matter. The advisory board is developing a power point presentation about the visitor center with data about business in Scituate and Covid effects. Bill Carey is working with Nancy Holt to figure out the effect of Covid on the town's businesses. The next advisory board meeting is on March 22nd and they will host Patrick O'Connor. The Scituate Visitor Center is now a member of SeePlymouth. The next steps will be to initiate the grass root campaign, identifying groups which could provide letters of support and reaching out to MAPC about creating a strategic plan. EDC will be involved in this and hopefully provide funding for this. The visitor center project will also reaching out to the Hingham Board of Selectman, because Hingham started a similar visitor center project, but we don't know how far they came along. It would be great to combine forces.

The advisory board is still being established and people, like Patrick O'Connor and Patrick Kearney are constantly added. It would be great to get input from the EDC, what kind of people, professions, town groups should be added in the future, also keeping in mind that the visitor center will become a regional tourism center. The website should be up and running in mid of June 2021. Scituate has to do some work to offer tourists attractions. The visitor center will work with the historical society to open the historical sites in Scituate for visitors. Beach access should be thought through, too. Maybe, using GATRA to bring people from town parking to beaches. **North Scituate Sewer and Zoning - Sue:** Sewer was discussed with Kevin Cafferty in detail earlier. Rezoning will be on the warrant of the town meeting on April 12th.

Pier 44 Reuse - Paul: Andrew Goodrich is an initiator for the reuse of Pier 44 on the select board. The survey of the residents in town revealed that the majority wants a recreational park at the Pier 44 site. A take-out or snack bar, ice cream, a small meeting room, a pond and a splash park would be favorable. A harbor walk would be extended to tie in the flood resiliency plan, it would be elevated. A pier would extend from the harbor walk, like TJ's, just to enjoy the view of the harbor. It would be a non-staffed park, except for the snack bar. This is all in process, it is a priority for the town.



Lynda Ferguson explains that a similar park was all designed for the Cole Parkway. There was a study done and Kyle Boyd was part of it. Maybe, the town should look into this.

Water resource committee: The Water resource Committee revised their bylaws with water use in drought conditions and restrictions and penalties, which was approved by the select board. There is a Citizen's Committee, headed by Stephanie Burke, which has a petition which would require mandatory retrofitting single family/ multi-family homes, municipal/corporate buildings with water efficient fixtures. They did bring it before the select board, but the select board did not support it. However, the select board would support a voluntary rebate program. And one could tie in a local business to sell those fixtures. Paul helped to rewrite the petition, but it might be too late to change it before town meeting. The advisory committee voted 9:0 not in favor of it, because it was not clear how it would be funded and it would have been mandatory for everybody by 2024. Stephanie Burke was advised to work with the water resource committee to figure out all the details, so that this could become a bylaw and could be enforced to save water in the future.

Old/New Business:

- There were no pending bills.

Sadly, RJ Dwyer will not seek a renewal of his position on the EDC. He will leave Scituate, but he will finish out the rest of his term. We will have our election of positions at the next meeting. The harbor business request might come in April, at our next meeting.

Next EDC meeting: April 26th 2021

Adjournment 8:10 pm.

Respectfully submitted: Susanne Hofmeister 04/07/21

Approved: April 26, 2021