



Economic Development Committee

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FAIRHAVEN,
MASS.

Fairhaven EDC Minutes
April 22, 2021

Present: Kevin McLaughlin, Jessica Fidalgo, Cathy Melanson and Robert Espindola via Zoom

Absent: Bernie Roderick, Todd MacGregor and Eddie Lopez.

Town Planner, Paul Foley was also present

1. Quorum & Attendance:

Mr. McLaughlin called the meeting to order and reviewed attendance for a quorum

2. Review and Approve minutes from March 18, 2021:

Motion was made by Cathy Melanson to accept the minutes from March 18, 2021, Jessica Fidalgo seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Mr. McLaughlin asked about EDC meeting minutes on the site. Mr. Foley will provide to Town Clerk for the site to be updated.

3. Goals of Economic Development:

Ongoing goals agenda item, Mr. McLaughlin asked if there was anyone who had comments or questions. No discussion on the goals.

Mr. Foley read the revised open meeting law for the record

Mr. McLaughlin congratulated Bob on his successful re-election and for his service to the town and thanked him for his commitment to the town.

Mr. McLaughlin raised a question about renewal for EDC appointment terms and timeline. Mr. Espindola explained it takes place after elections, late April into May and it goes through Administrative Assistant Ms. Vicki Oliveira. Mr. Espindola said an email would be coming from Ms. Oliveira. Mr. McLaughlin will add this to the next EDC agenda.

4. Rt. 6/240/Opportunity Zone:

a. Grants Update

- i. Mr. Foley reminded Committee we received a \$75,000 Site Readiness Grant and Mr. Foley met with the MassDevelopment team. The grant is for a broad environmental overview of target area. The contract has been signed and agreed on the scope of services. At the meeting the grantee gave us two choices and asked which approach was preferred before told who the consultants were. One option was detailed look at every property in the district with zoning analysis; the second option was a broad overview and focus on 3-5 parcels (scope of services says 3). Mr. Foley said we chose the second option and the consultant will be Fuss & O'Neill (F&O).

Mr. Foley attended the quarterly economic meeting (RESC) at SRPEDD on Wednesday 4/21. We increased our EDC commitment to \$6,000 as local match plus \$4,000 community municipal assistance hours = \$10,000 and were approved for local technical assistance grant from state for \$27,500 and waiting on EDA match of \$37,500 for total of \$75,000 if the EDA comes through. Then looking at industrial side, market conditions and plausible redevelopment scenarios. Halfway there until we know about EDA.

Site Readiness Program within MassDevelopment. Mr. Foley mentioned this has been reviewed previously, the consultant will look at properties, with an eye towards converting abandoned and obsolete facilities and get them ready to be developed again. Mr. Foley reviewed details from the Scope of Services in the contract with Fuss & O'Neill

Task one, meet with the town and Mass Development team, gather information and GIS Info and discuss plan and schedule. Mr. Foley will be preparing for this meeting and talking to various stakeholders. He has spoken to owner of the roller rink and her lawyer, they already have environmental study data to send to Mr. Foley. The roller rink at 4 David Drown Boulevard abuts the Town Fair Tire where a dry cleaner used to be and was the property identified in a 21E as causing a toxic plume under the roller rink property. Once three key parcels are identified for a phase 1 environmental assessment the next step is to obtain Brownfield money for further assessment (up to \$100,000) and potentially then for Brownfield remediation (up to \$500,000).

Task two for them would be initial parcel screening, evaluation and prioritization. They will create a matrix for prioritization which will include a brief look at properties, hazardous materials, soil, ledges, natural resources (wetlands, buffer zones, and endangered species), transportation access and utilities and access. Once gathered, they will meet with the Town and review preferred parcels.

Task three would be Phase I ESAs to identify the properties most in need and move forward to further assessment and remediation.

Task four, site condition analysis for selected properties. The consultant will work with the Town to identify the development objective and assessment of constraints and recommendations on the environmental next steps.

Schedule would be to sign contracts, begin work soon after. They will conduct a project initiation meeting. Mr. Foley mentioned would need to discuss if someone from EDC wants to participate or if they come to the committee and talk to us about it. Timeline to be determined summer into the fall. Mr. Espindola asked to review the EDC involvement. Mr. Foley asked if the EDC would appoint or if could ask F&O to prepare a presentation for the EDC to review. Ms. Melanson stated a presentation would be preferred and Mr. Espindola agreed. Mr. Foley will encourage F&O to present at a future EDC meeting via zoom.

ii. EDA/DLTA Grant

Mr. Foley said we are halfway there, waiting for the \$37,500 match from EDA Potential for future involvement in marketing studies. Their goal is to foster business and create jobs where EDA is more towards manufacturing and industrial job growth not retail .EDA study would be north of Bridge St and 40R would be south of Bridge St.

b. EDC Budget

- i. EDC annual budget has been \$8,000 the last few years.
- ii. Recording Secretary \$1,000 (about \$200 left this year after speaking with Anne Carreiro).
- iii. That leaves us about \$7,000 for projects or local matching for grants.
- iv. Potential for about \$900-1,000 left to spend on projects in FY21
 1. Maybe have someone do drawings
 2. Working on grant, Planning Grant for 40R overlay
 - a. Need design guidelines, number of units and what it would look like. Developers looking for less permitting. He sees it as we develop the conditions before any projects and present the permitting as simple "if you can do this" as described in the design standards.
 3. Mr. Foley asked EDC to think of project ideas to use the monies on

Mr. Espindola asked Mr. Foley to review the criteria for one of the major grants regarding training and if this budget could be used for that and if there is relevance to this committee. Mr. Foley said that will be part of the discussion on One Stop for Growth.

c. Grants Update (cont.)

- i. Rt. 6/240
 1. April 2020: \$30,000 Best Practices (\$26,400 left)
 2. March 2021: \$75,000 Site Readiness
 3. March/April 2021: \$75,000 EDA/DLTA (pending)
 4. Transportation Bond Bill: \$1,000,000 for work on Bridge Street,
 5. Just got word that the Prioritization Plan for Complete Streets was approved. Fairhaven is now eligible for \$400,000 for 4 years. Mr. Foley met with consultants today and looking at about 5 projects to potentially fund and will be meeting Monday 4/26/21 to review and prepare application which is due in a week.
 - 6.

5. One Stop For Growth/Expression of Interest:

- a. 10 programs that are administered through Community One Stop For Growth: MassWorks, Urban Agenda, 43D Expedited Permitting, Housing Choice Community Capital Grants, Massachusetts Downtown Initiatives, Community Planning Grants (NEW), Rural Development Fund (NEW), Brownfields, Site Readiness and Underutilized Properties (NEW)
- b. Key Dates:
 - i. Expressions of Interest was turned in. We are waiting on feedback. Five Projects/Initiatives (updated to replace waterfront which will go to the Seaport Economic Council).
 1. Rt. 6/240 - future MassWorks Grants: Their focus is housing, if we can get housing above retail with a 40R we would be potentially eligible for MassWorks.
 2. Large Underutilized/Abandoned Buildings/Properties: We have several such as Rogers School, Bijou (as a for-profit they can also apply for individual grants). The Town will focus on Rogers School for this grant at this time.
 3. Traditional Mixed Use Areas (Benoit Square-redesign traffic pattern)
 4. Comprehensive Stormwater & Water Management Plan (spoke with BPW Vinnie Furtado re upgrade of sewage treatment plant, potential for money through MassWorks and having a plan makes the town eligible for an interest free loan.
 5. Rt. 6 Outside of Target Area (may revise due to discussion with Complete Streets consultant, money from Bond Bill and if can get match money from MassWorks)

Mr. Foley pointed out Mr. Espindola's question earlier about training and use of money. In completing the Expression of Interest, among the list of criteria that gets points, one was a question as to whether the land regulatory boards have annual training. This is a topic which Mr. Espindola has brought to the Select Board.

Mr. Espindola asked about MassWorks amount and Mr. Foley said potential for \$500,000 to \$5,000,000 for capital funds for infrastructure. They focus on and prefer mixed-use projects that include housing. Mr. Espindola asked how the monies get from the town to the private entities. Mr. Foley explained it is to support the infrastructure, for example to improve roads in the area to be built.

Mr. Espindola also asked about stimulus money from federal government and what other opportunities could be coming such as water, sewer, and broadband. Mr. Foley said he would need to look into, so far they are looking at "shovel ready" projects.

- ii. May 3, 2021 – June 4, 2021 –Application period.

6. Planning Update:

- a. Study Update – Mr. Foley showed mapping of the town areas and labels, pointed to the areas of 40R within the overall target area

i. Mr. Foley spoke to the town interests such as green space, housing above retail and that providing images to show people and increase interest and understanding. Mr. Espindola asked about the process and Mr. Foley explained that 40R is an overlay that retains the existing zoning and it allows the Town to provide incentives if developers do what we want and worthwhile for them. He plans to reach out to the real estate and development firms. Mr. Espindola asked to clarify the areas and Mr. Foley explained plaza where Staples, Dunkin' Donuts and McDonalds plaza. The plaza where WalMart is, plaza where Job Lot is, the plaza next to the older Mazda where Sea and Ski is. Ms. Melanson mentioned there are individually owned condos in the area where Sea and Ski is.

Mr. Espindola asked how EDC would be involved or would it be Planning or Zoning Board and would by-laws need to be changed. Mr. Foley said if someone wanted to build up in a plaza it could fall under 40R. The goal is to have 40R on Town Meeting agenda in spring 2022. Mr. McLaughlin asked if someone has a plan could they go to the Planning Board and get approval for a mixed-use. Mr. Foley said currently no, the property would need to be re-zoned. 40R solves that and gives the property owner an option. Mr. McLaughlin pointed out could be a marketing tool to draw people in to develop.

Mr. McLaughlin asked for clarification on money left in EDC budget and when it needs to be used. Mr. Foley said \$1,000 to spent before June 30th. He will look into the training suggestion or the suggestion of getting conceptual drawings. Mr. McLaughlin asked what area the drawings would be of. Suggestion was either old K-Mart plaza area or between Citizen's Bank and Bridgewater CU. Ms. Melanson suggested Mr. Foley ask for drawings of both areas when meeting with Kelleher on 4/23 as he mentioned. Mr. Foley mentioned another potential consultant who he would reach out to and see if he was interested in also providing drawings.

Mr. Foley is the representative for the monthly SRTA meeting, they are extending the night service on the New Bedford-Fairhaven line and will continue it for another year.

We did get money for an independent feasibility study for Union Wharf, got the signed contracts and need to put a bid out for a consultant. He study will look at the wharf and see if there is any way to increase our use through efficiency or other means. For example, for a Harbormaster office and or storage. Mr. Espindola asked if there were any economic development opportunities for that area. It's \$60,000 (\$50,000 from Seaport Economic Council and Town Meeting voted \$10,000) to use for a consultant to evaluate current use and development, for example restaurant or other use like making it more accessible for maritime research.

7. Any other business: no other business was raised

8. Next meeting Thursday, May 20, 2021

Ms. Melanson made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Ms. Fidalgo seconded. Motion passed unanimously.