

Minutes
Economic Development Committee
Tuesday, September 19, 2017

Present: Kevin McLaughlin; Todd MacGregor, Bob Espindola, Wayne Hayward, Bernie Roderick, and Eddie Lopez

Absent: John Seed

Ex-officio Members Present: William Roth and Mark Rees

Meeting opened at 6:32 p.m.

Acceptance of Minutes: August 9, 2017 – Bernie Roderick made a motion to approve as written and was seconded by Todd MacGregor. Motion passed unanimously.

Economic Development Study – Kickoff Meeting – FXM Associates

William Roth stated the contract has been signed and recorded with the Town Clerk. He explained this was the first kickoff meeting with FXM Associates.

Frank Mahady, President of FXM Associates was present and thanked the Board for hiring his firm to do the Economic Development Study. He anticipated his project would be fourteen weeks long with several interviews of the business community, and meetings with the Committee. He encouraged the Committee Members to talk about how they felt about doing business in Fairhaven and told them they could email them any suggestions or comments. His goal tonight was to hear from the Committee Members.

There was discussion on how the mixed-use zoning would fit, if it would fit into the time schedule for Town Meeting. Mr. Roth advised that the implementation of the Master Plan would take several years and he felt that the earliest it would be on a Town Meeting warrant was May 2019 for any zoning, mixed use recommendations, or possibly a Fall Special Town Meeting in 2018.

Mr. Mahady said they didn't want to come up with things Fairhaven couldn't do.

Mr. Roderick asked about the gathering information stage, and how FXM approaches that avenue.

Mr. Mahady discussed gaining information/support from EDC's Meeting and then they would do a certain amount of analysis – retail gap analysis would need to be done in order to see what consumers are looking for. He said they would do a trade area of a 5-10-15 minute car ride in either direction, from Wareham to Fall River.

A discussion took place on recruiting new businesses to the Town.

Questions to think about, brought forth by FXM:

Who do you see as your competitive community?

To the Healthcare outfits in Town, why are you here and would you expand?

Mr. MacGregor stated he felt that they needed to look at adding valued manufacturing companies as a long term goal. Mr. MacGregor mentioned Titleist and Brahmin Leather.

Mr. McLaughlin asked how FXM wanted to get the Committee's opinion on leads for them to talk to the business associates.

Mr. Rees recommended that the Committee Members send their emails with suggestive names to Bill Roth, perhaps 5 contacts each and Mr. Roth would compile the list together for the next meeting. Mr.

Rees recommended that the Committee give the Chairperson permission to discuss the list with Staff and then bring it back to the Committee at the next meeting.

A discussion was had on “incubator” space and what if the Town could offer such space and/or trainings.

A brief discussion on Atlas Tack and the old Fairhaven Drive-In property was had.

Mr. Roth agreed to mail out a copy via email and mail of the latest Draft of the Master Plan’s Economic Development Section to each committee member. FXM wanted to know if the committee members agreed to what the objectives and goals were in that document.

More discussion was had on property values, the tax rate for businesses in Fairhaven and things to consider to support Fairhaven businesses.

Committee Member’s Discussion Items: Todd MacGregor

Mr. MacGregor spoke about the space he currently rents in Town that is considered an “incubator” space. He says it’s a great idea and the Town should capitalize on it, perhaps in the sense of Rogers School if it becomes available or perhaps the Citizens Bank (the big building on Plaza Way). He says he believes the space is definitely needed. There is no shared office space in Fairhaven other than where he rents.

Mr. MacGregor also spoke about promotion and expansion of the waterfront, especially Union Wharf, since it is owned by the Town. He said, “We have something to offer.” Different ideas were discussed: bait shop, fish market, restaurant, boat tours, charter fishing.

The next meeting is scheduled for October 3, 2017, at 6:30p.m.

Bob Espindola made a motion to adjourn and was seconded by Todd MacGregor. The motion passed unanimously. Meeting ended at 8:35 p.m.

Respectively submitted,

Patricia A. Pacella
Recording Secretary