

EDC Meeting Minutes 10/07/21

Approved

Chairman: Bob Nash

Commission Members: Sam Ivanov, Riche' Colcombe, Sara Edie

Town Administrator: Laura Buono

Planning Director: Robyn Payson

Supt of Schools: Patricia Parenteau

Excused: Patricia Parenteau

Members of the Public:

None

Guest: Susanne White

Meeting Minutes 09/23/21

Robyn Payson made a motion to approve the minutes. Sara Edie seconded the motion. The motion carried with Laura Buono abstaining

The idea of having a “public comment” portion of the EDC meetings and having special meetings for the benefit of the public was brought up.

Sam Ivanov said it was to address the feeling of some in the community that the EDC was inaccessible.

Laura said if the EDC had a project it would go before the Board of Selectmen for their approval and that would be before the public.

Bob said he was thinking about how the Board of Selectmen allow 15 minutes at the beginning of the meeting to allow for public comment.

Laura suggested that if anyone wanted to speak before the EDC that they be put on the agenda. They will still have an opportunity to speak but it will be more structured. If people come to the meeting it is up to the chair to decide if they are allowed to speak.

Following further discussion, the consensus of the commission was to not add a “public comment” section to the agenda.

There was a discussion about the possibility of holding one evening meeting per quarter.

Sam Ivanov said the idea was to highlight projects the Commission was working on and increase public awareness about what is going on.

Bob suggested it be put on the agenda to schedule those meeting after the first of the year.

Sidewalk Project

Laura explained that the Sidewalk project has not been pushed off until 2025. How things are scheduled in the 10-year plan is that it is based on where you are at in the project today. We are still in preliminary design and there is the drainage plan that still needs to be completed. We have been moving forward at a good rate. We are still planning to put it out to bid sometime in 2022 and DOT is on board with that. We have just cleared a major hurdle by moving the beginning of the project to the opposite side of the street. We don't have to worry about doing anything with the headwall or the guardrail. We are moving the crosswalk and there will have to be a streetlight there.

There was discussion about the financing and asking for more funds via town meeting. The money being raised will be for construction. The state will pay 80% of the cost and the town is responsible for 20%.

2 and 8 Bridge Street

There is another investor that is interested in the property. Laura said she told him to put his proposal in writing and give a presentation. Laura has not heard back from him. Bob said he reached out to Jason Kovarik and he had not heard from him.

There was mention of a plan Katherine Charrette had. Bob said it had not gone beyond the talking stages, there is nothing in place. Robyn asked what Katherine's plan was. Sara said it was a community investment in 8 Bridge Street that was like a co-op. Riche said she had not heard anything further about this plan.

Hometown Grant

Susy White said she had been doing more work on the grant, but she had a lot of questions. There need to be more specific information in order to qualify for the grant. They are looking for "shovel ready" detailed plan. If there will be demolition and complete plan including costs and plans. There will also need to be a letter of recommendation from the Selectmen.

There were questions about the future of 2 Bridge St. and Zander Kempf's intentions. After further discussion the group considered moving forward to the spring round of submissions. In the meantime, the group will continue to gather information.

Riche said she had seen an update on the T-Mobile site that included projects that had been accepted for grants. They included public green space.

There were alternatives discussed other than applying for 2 Bridge Street.

The consensus was to wait until the next meeting to discuss this further.

Meeting Schedule

There was discussion about using social media and the EDC web page to post information without comments. There was also discussion about the set up and functioning of the Town website.

Sam offered to help maintain the Facebook page.

The upcoming meeting schedule is October 28th, November 18th, and December 2nd.

Riche reported that the “Emporium” building is up for sale. The building owner of Sloppy Joes and Taco Beyondo was in to the Planning Board asking to change the available space to storage units. Riche said she went out and spoke to him because that was one of the areas in contacting a food and arcade person. He liked the idea and had similar thoughts about the use of that space.

Sam volunteered to work on an update of the PowerPoint about the town that is currently on the website.

Meeting Adjourned 10:00am

Respectfully Submitted,

Robyn Payson, Planning Director