

Economic Development Committee

15 Feb 2024 – Meeting Minutes

Time: 12:00pm – 1:08 pm

Attendees:

Glenn Brown

John Drohan

Alex Ferro

Chinmaya Gogineni

Patrick Hafford

Viktoria Sadlovska Anshu

David Thorn

Also in attendance:

Melanie Hamblen: EDC Coordinator

Discussion

Meeting opened with Pat and David

Accepted January meeting minutes motion to accept by David seconded by Pat

Confirmed next meeting was 21 March 2024 @1200

The meeting began with the EDC coordinator update: Melanie discussed the “meet and greet” that happened at Barn Swallow Quilts and was also attended by Chinmaya and Tina Hein. This was the first of a series of events that she is looking to schedule in an effort to connect to the business community as a whole. The next meet and greet was tentatively scheduled to happen in the second half of March but not officially scheduled yet.

This brought her to the “Shop Hop” concept which is a nationwide event where there is a magazine and passport where they encourage people to visit local businesses. She said she is working on a Holliston Business Map to be used as part of this idea as well as connect it with the Holliston 300th celebration. Some other ideas that came from this was a tagline on the map such as “I love Holliston” or “Small Town – Big Heart.” The question of people / businesses being left out was a concern when putting this together.

Melanie went on to suggest the idea of the EDC participating in the parade on 11 May for Holliston 300th.

Next we discussed the business outreach program and Melanie reminded everyone to pick up the introduction letters and business cards to pass to businesses in their respective regions as part of the outreach. The significant development was an interest in the purchase of the Apple Orchard Farm by the Bean family. The concept would be starting the farm up again along with

a large farmstand. Melanie also discussed the potential sale of the Pope Industrial Park as potentially happening.

Next discussed was the Select Board voting to no longer pursue 799 Washington street. Viktoria brought up the point of why something like this should probably go to town meeting. Melanie had done quite a bit of work providing a potential use for the building of a multi-use facility for the town. Melanie and Travis were planning to reach out to the business owner to see if he would be willing to still pursue selling the property or possibly developing it. Melanie did some work on finding out if any grants are available for the 799 Washington owner. The group discussed that if the 799 Washington was NOT the building then perhaps there could be another option to use.

The team also debated the financial ramifications of such a commitment for the town to include who would be the group or person responsible for running the operation. Still everyone seemed interested in continuing this possibility.

For next meeting the group agreed to discuss the possible connection to the 300th celebration as well as content for the “business playbook” that the EDC is looking to create for potential businesses to move to Holliston.

Meeting adjourned at 1:08pm