

These are the minutes of the EDC meeting of 8/16/18, held in Room 9 of Acton Town Hall.

Present: Selby, Larry Kenah, Mike Majors, Dave Didriksen, Jon Benson, Derrick Chin, Josh Fischel

Absent: David Foley, Ann Chang, Shirley Ming, Peter Daniel

Guests: Terra Friedrichs & Danny Factor

1. Minutes

There are some leftover minutes to catch up on approving. We *did* unanimously approve Selby's minutes from 7/19 as amended. I have yet-to-be-approved minutes from 5/14 and 6/21.

2. EDSAT

Larry Kenah explains that his perspective on EDSAT is that we were Johnny-Come-Latelys to the process, and that we lacked its context. He said Acton Town Manager John Mangiaratti will attend the 9/6 meeting to help us reset.

3. Acton Manufacturer Workforce Summit

This will be an invitation-only event on 8/20, to support the manufacturer companies in town in meeting their job expansion projections, which they were not doing. Selby called up an organization that will soon be re-named Mass Hires, for AES, Insulet, and Haartz. There will be career development representatives from various local colleges and at least one vocational high school. Sen. Jamie Eldridge and Rep. Jennifer Benson will also attend. The goal is to connect potential employees with employers, and Mass Hires will facilitate the discussion about what's needed and what can be provided in terms of education and training. You'd need to be paid \$30/hour to afford a two-bedroom apartment in Acton, according to a slide from an event that Terra attended (she objects to this calculation). Dave Didriksen is worried that the message being conveyed is that this is creating a slippery slope to talk about creating more affordable housing. Selby says that isn't where this is headed.

Terra asks if it's a public problem or a private problem. Larry says forcefully that, as the economic development committee, it is our public role to help improve the economic development of the town. We are not primarily focused on housing. Jon Benson and Selby agree that the summit will not get sidetracked into housing, at least in the short term. Selby asserts (not controversially) that housing and economic development are not in separate silos. Transportation is related to workforce, too. We have to care about Insulet and AES because we gave them lots in tax breaks; we have to care about Haartz because they're our largest private employer. Thus, anything we can do to help them, we'll do our best to support them. Mike Majors offers a verbal thumbs-up.

4. Updates from Members

Derrick Chin reports on the latest Planning Board meeting; WRAC is hosting a day-long forum on water-related disaster scenarios.

FUN FACT: Aretha Franklin passed away on the same day as this meeting. My favorite EDC-related lyric from any Aretha Franklin song is the first stanza of "Do Right Woman, Do Right Man," which could be interpreted to be about businesses' relationship with Town Hall: "Take me to heart / And I'll always love you / And nobody can make me do wrong. / Take me for granted, leaving love unsure / Makes will power weak / And temptation strong."

FUN FACT BONUS: This meeting also fell on Larry Kenah's birthday, which he shares with the anniversary of Babe Ruth's and Elvis Presley's deaths.

4a. More Updates from Members

Larry reports that, at the KCSC meeting, Lindsey Barbee presented responses from MassDOT to the 25% plan for Kelley's Corner. It was a dense spreadsheet, but she and Andy Brockway pulled out some takeaways; for instance, MassDOT's no fan of bricks (and neither, as it happens, is the Committee on

Disabilities). There were probably 20 people in attendance. Larry recognized about half of them, and he lists all of them. We are impressed at his recall, though no one says so out loud. The signal at the end of Charter Road did not draw lots of praise; nor did they want one at the top of Community Lane. Danny Factor arrives at this point.

The people reviewing this did not seem very into or impressed by aesthetics. For instance, Larry wants traffic islands, which provide a certain amount of pedestrian safety. MassDOT doesn't do lighting for projects as small scale as this. They also think bike boxes provide a "false sense of security" to bicyclists. The timeframe now is for a design hearing in January; that timeline is set by MassDOT, says Jon Benson, which Selby thinks is a long time. (Geologically, it's not.)

Mike Majors says he toured the Minuteman High renovation; what's threatening the winterization of the new facility is the NStar lockout. That might mean having to deal with Lincoln and heating the building with alternative fuels, which could be problematic as a temporary solution. The building permit is still up in the air.

There was a brief discussion of how to support Rapscallion's parking; Selby and Jon suggested a revised site plan to accommodate 8-9 more spaces, which would require BoS approval.

5. Updates from Selby

Selby says that recreation is under his umbrella; the concerts at Nara Park have been under-attended. Recreation is self-funded, so they just have to break even. Selby was directed to the Merrimack Valley CVB; he had lunch with its director, Tom Fitzmaurice, and we'll join as a town, and get our events publicized. Dave says that the problems with Nara are (a) that it's so big, but (b) there's little parking for big events. And there's a (c): the bandshell acoustics are so bad that you need to provide your own sound equipment, which makes it more expensive to play there. Selby also saw this brochure that the CVB produces about Lexington and Concord; they print 250,000 copies and put it all over the eastern seaboard. Selby wants us added to this, and thinks we can make that happen. The CVB can even fund a rail trail brochure, as long as it's not Acton-only. Dave and Larry haven't met with Maynard's EDC yet; Selby wants to have something done by the spring.

Adjourned at 8:40 pm. Go Patriots!

Next Meeting: 9/6