



TOWN of NEEDHAM
MASSACHUSETTS

PLANNING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
Economic Development
781-455-7550 x213

MEETING OF THE COUNCIL OF ECONOMIC ADVISORS
WEDNESDAY, June 1, 2016 7:30 AM
Charles River Room PSAB

Present: Matt Talcoff, Chair; Rick Putprush; Glen Cammarano; Bob Hentschel; Marty Jacobs; Bill Day; Peter Atallah; and Devra Bailin.

Not Present: Elizabeth Grimes; Janet O'Connor; Brian Nadler; Tom Jacob; Bruce Herman; Moe Handel; Michael Wilcox; and Matt Borrelli.

I. Approval of Minutes

The members approved the minutes for the meeting of May 4, 2016.

II. Reminder of Next Meeting Dates

Our next meeting is scheduled for August 3rd. The members decided to cancel the July 6th meeting. Members decided to try to meet on the August 3rd to spend time discussing the streamlining initiatives. Future meetings will be scheduled for the first Wednesday of the month (unless a holiday) in the Charles River Room at PSAB. (The members also agreed to cancel the October 5th meeting due to Devra's planned vacation.)

III. Update on Needham Crossing

Devra received notice that, although the Babson MCFE program did not accept our application, a group of Babson graduate students will be undertaking the project in the fall. Devra had also received a request from a Babson MBA student to assist us over the summer as an intern. The prospective intern found employment elsewhere so could not do volunteer work this summer.

Boston Properties has agreed in principle with housing a sign: "Needham Crossing: Gateway to N²". All parties agree that an easement will be necessary and the DRB must approve. Mark Gluesing brought this to the attention of the DRB and advised that members agreed that a sign could be 100 sq. ft. as a matter of right; if we wanted to make it larger, we would have to get a special permit. Mark suggested we design the sign and bring it to the DRB informally even if we don't want to exceed the as of right allowance.

At Mike's suggestion Mike, Rick and Devra did a site inspection of the First Avenue properties for the location of a sign visible from 128N. Due to the topography of the Boston Properties' property,

the height of the new ramps, and the actual location of the property line between BP and MassDOT's layout, there really isn't a location on that property providing visibility from 128N. The group examined the properties along Route 128 N on First Avenue. There might be a possible location on Maric's property or on Town's layout of First Avenue. (Although latter is quite narrow, Devra made inquiry of the Engineering Department and is awaiting the reply.) At the member's suggestion Devra emailed Steve Tanner regarding the size of the sign, but has not heard back. She will also try to discuss with him our ability to put visible signage on a narrow strip of land adjacent to 128. Mike said Tina will help us design it.

Members discussed other alternatives. Perhaps we could get permission to put up a sign at the end of MBTA ROW (where bridge was removed) to post a sign (both directions)? Members wondered whether we could put a sign up on the Highland Avenue Bridge (over 128) for "Needham Crossing". (Since the interchange will likely remain under MassDOT control, it was not thought this would be likely.) Bill suggested we just rename Kendrick Street in some manner as "Needham Crossing". Members discussed that changing the actual name would likely meet resistance from businesses located on Kendrick but they would not likely oppose if "Needham Crossing" became part of the name. Sixth Avenue in NYC is known as Avenue of the Americas. What if Kendrick Street were Kendrick Street at Needham Crossing? Or something like that. Then the actual exit could be so noted. Devra relayed this idea to our BOS representative (Moe) to bring to the attention of the BOS for consideration.

IV. Update from the Downtown Subcommittee

The members noted that we still have no approval to hold public hearings regarding streamlining. There was a lengthy discussion about how to get this moving. There was discussion about how certain changes were made but that, after the meeting between the BOS and Planning Board, nothing materialized. As the CEA has made this a priority, the members directed Devra to forward to all of them copies of all of the memoranda written in regard to this issue. This topic will be discussed at the August meeting with particular attention on how best to market changes already made and move along those which the CEA recommends be implemented.

V. Update on Industrial District Subcommittee

Devra met with Mark Gluesing regarding the elevation drawings and received his written proposal. Funding his work is now in process. Members will need to consider our timing of our neighborhood meetings and zoning amendments in light of the closure.

VI. Update on N² Innovation Corridor

Due to the need of several members to leave early, this topic was not discussed.

VII. NNCC Committee on fostering connections between Israeli companies and N²

Due to the need of several members to leave early, this topic was not discussed.

VIII. Update on Infrastructure Improvements in Needham Crossing, Downtown, and Elliot Street/Central Avenue Bridge.

Due to the need of several members to leave early, this topic was not discussed.

IX. Other Business

Due to the need of several members to leave early, this topic was not discussed.

X. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 9:00 a.m.