



TOWN of NEEDHAM  
MASSACHUSETTS

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

**MEETING OF THE COUNCIL OF ECONOMIC ADVISORS**  
**WEDNESDAY, August 3, 2016 7:30 AM**  
**Charles River Room PSAB**

Present: Matt Talcoff, Chair; Glen Cammarano; Moe Handel; Michael Wilcox;  
and Devra Bailin.

Not Present: Elizabeth Grimes; Janet O'Connor; Brian Nadler; Tom Jacob; Bruce  
Herman; Rick Putprush; Bob Hentschel; Marty Jacobs; Bill Day; Peter Atallah;  
and Matt Borrelli.

Also Present: Ted Owens

**I. Approval of Minutes**

The members approved the minutes for the meeting of June 1, 2016.

**II. Reminder of Next Meeting Dates**

Our next meeting is scheduled for September 7th. 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 5<sup>th</sup> meeting due to Devra's planned vacation. A decision about whether to schedule an additional meeting will be made in September.)

**III. Update on Needham Crossing (Signage)**

Because the Boston Properties' PTC property lacked a workable location for a "Needham Crossing: Gateway to N<sup>2</sup>" sign visible from Route 128N, Devra spoke with the Engineering Department about Needham land along Route 128N. It was determined Needham's land was too narrow, too removed and/or too encumbered to accommodate such signage. The Engineering Department recommended Maric Inc.'s property at 195 First Avenue. Members agreed contact should be made so Devra will contact Mark Rubin.

We are awaiting the BOS's response to Bill's suggestion that 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.

#### **IV. Update from the Downtown Subcommittee: Detailed discussion and prioritization of streamlining initiatives**

Because of the number of members unable to make the meeting, those present discussed several of the initiatives, including expanding the insignificant modification policy to include post construction changes, changing site plan and special permit decisions to expressly permit use of that policy and de minimis changes, reintroducing the language to exempt modifications to preexisting nonconforming parking lots which do not trigger waivers in the number of spaces from the necessity of seeking special permit for design waivers alone, parking study moratorium, special permit transfers, and the like. Devra pointed out to the members that the BOS is looking to the CEA to frame 3-5 streamlining initiatives as priorities. We will take this up again in September.

Because our numbers were so depleted, the members decided to focus primarily on suggestions for moving forward generally. Ted suggested that we break the initiatives down into categories and prioritize from there; changes that require zoning changes, changes reflecting changes in Planning Board rules and regulations, changes reflecting changes in administrative practice, etc. Members agreed that that made sense. Once the CEA has prioritized the streamlining initiatives, representative members should meet with the Planning Board to discuss them. It was thought that the CEA, as advisory to the BOS, should seek permission first from the BOS to bring our suggested priorities to the Planning Board.

#### **V. Update on Industrial District Subcommittee**

Mark Gluesing has been hired to make the elevation drawings for the CEA's meeting with the neighborhoods about zoning changes. It seems very unlikely we will be able to hold neighborhood meetings until next year and, therefore, unlikely that the zoning amendments for these districts will make the Annual Town Meeting. It was noted that the closure of the Elliot Street/Central Avenue Bridge renders neighborhood meetings problematic.

Devra pointed out that the traffic report, especially as to Central at Gould Street, demonstrates that certain traffic mitigation measures are required whether development takes place or not. A signal is warranted at Central and Gould. Moe noted that this should be addressed soon, as it takes time to get such work on the list and funded.

#### **VI. Update on N<sup>2</sup> Innovation District**

The Camoin report has been received by the Newton Needham Regional Chamber and a staff member hired. Chuck Tanowitz, a marketing expert and active member of the committee overseeing the Camoin project, has agreed to serve for at least three months as staff to the Implementation Board. The salary for those months has been funded by the Chamber. Given Chuck's expertise and active knowledge of the project, the Chamber and municipalities will be very well served. Devra and Greg Rieberman will be appearing before the BOS on August 16<sup>th</sup> to explain where we are with the project and what we hope to accomplish. We will be asking the BOS to demonstrate municipal commitment to continuing the initiative by funding \$10,000 per year for at least two years. (Moe noted that Newton will need to match Needham's investment.)

#### **VII. Update on Infrastructure Improvements in Needham Crossing, Downtown, and Elliot**

### **Street/Central Avenue Bridge.**

There was discussion of the various infrastructure projects. With the exception of the Downtown, the others appear to be moving on or ahead of schedule. It was noted that Kendrick Street looks like it's almost done. Devra noted that MassDOT is still holding its original dates—Kendrick Street second lane into Needham Crossing to be complete sometime this month and the Kendrick Street ramps onto 128S and off 128N September 26<sup>th</sup>.

### **VIII. Other Business**

Devra understands that Virginia Fleisher's and Ted Owens' names will be sent to the BOS for approval as members of the CEA. Another man has applied; he is being vetted.

### **IX. Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:50 a.m.