

Town of Maynard
Economic Development Committee
September 30, 2014 –8:30 a.m and room??

Committee Members Present:

Andrew Scribner-MacLean, Bill Nemser, Kate Hogan, Chris Worthy
Chris Worthy, Melissa Levine-Piro, Jack McKeen, Ron Calabria
Also present: Lynda Thayer, Paul Nickelsberg (Orchid Technologies)

Chair Worthy opened the meeting. Chris asked for Town Planner Bill Nemser to provide updates since the last meeting.

Bill Nemser reported that he has attend the MaynardFest this past weekend, he talked to people attending to get a sense of who is local, the most people were from out of the area. The town has executed an agreement with MAPC to go ahead with housing needs assessment; this is funded by a grant and will be ready mid winter.

Chair Worthy asked if there was an update on the video. Bill reported that he has coordinated with WAVM and have a guest present today who is in video /tv production, she will help oversee the creation of the video, will give an outside professional prospective, hopefully will be worked on starting next Monday.

The committee discussed the major impediments to business moving/staying in Maynard. Paul Nickelsberg of Orchid Technologies stated he has a business in town for 11 years, it started in Clock Tower Place and used to have four large clients who also were located in Clock Tower. He watched the decline to where it is now, his company moved out because changes in attitude from want to help keep people here to why not leave. Maynard can be amazing, he bought the property across from Clock Tower thinking Maynard would be vibrant and there must be a way to keep growth going, there is a reason it is empty, that needs to be explored. Melissa Levine-Piro commented that her company experienced the same issues at Clock Tower Place. There used to be another property manager, then a new person came in, they were negative about changes, increased rent , very large clients moved out over the last few years. It was questioned whether it is financial stress or management wanted to go in different direction, debt restructuring? Ellen Duggan commented that she doesn't want to disrespect what the mission is but part of revitalize Maynard it is critical that there be businesses in the building, there is something wrong with the management, the town gave them a 15 year TIFF, the emphasis is draw the people in. The property management was given leads on tenants that were looking for big areas and they never called them back. West Concord is booming. Joe Mullin is on this committee as a representative of Clock Tower, lets table until he is here to address some of these questions. It is vital to Maynard to fill some of those spaces. Jack McKeen asked is Mill building our number one priority, and if so, they need to be cooperative if there is another objective, it has been discussed that Joe Mullin wants to tear some of the buildings down and build new apartments. Monster moved to Weston because the rent was cheaper. For the purpose of this committee there was the economic plan and prioritizing , should we set that aside, is it feasible to go down two tracks, what can be done immediately with the Mill and 129 Parker Street, then secondarily institutional things to do to have ongoing viability of EDC.

Assistant Town Administrator Andrew Scribner MacLean stated he can gather some data, bring some of the information talked about regarding developable land, road map about where municipal services

should be, potential residential growth, what can the school system support. Maynard can afford some growth without an impact on the schools.

This group should pull this information together and move forward. Representative Kate Hogan mentioned that this winter the 495 MetroWest Edge community committee will begin to meet, this group is made up of 23 communities, they can do a presentation at one of these meetings.

The focus turned to the downtown vacant properties, it was stated that most of these buildings are owned by the same seven or eight people, these landlords have inherited the property have no vested interest in Maynard. It was questioned whether there is an avenue to address derelict properties. Andrew will look at other towns that have programs set up.

Bill Nemser – action items short term first steps handed out, most were covered today.

The next meeting will be on October 9th at 5 p.m.

Meeting adjourned at 9:34 a.m.