

Minutes of 8.13.2020 Maynard Economic Development Committee, 8 am. via Zoom

Meeting called to order at 8:01 am.

Members present: Jack MacKeen, Bill Nemser, Sarah Cressy, Dick Downey, Roz Greenstein, Lynda Thayer, Megan Zammuto, Jerry Beck, and Karen Freker.

Others present: Bill Cranshaw, Armand Diarbekirian (BOS Liaison), Tim Hess, and Christopher Jacobs (THC Depot).

Minutes of 7.23.2020 unanimously approved.

Public Art Program.

Beck reported that he and Justin DeMarco (DPW) have been discussing a crosswalk program. DeMarco has requested that ArtSpace initiate a “call to artists,” and that potentially, the program should reflect Maynard’s 150th anniversary. As result, Jerry proposed a draft policy defining how temporary public art programs might work in Maynard. By definition, such installations would be on public property.

Beck perceives these public art projects as temporary, ranging from one day to two years. Beck suggests that the Town needs to clarify process to site public art in the community, especially the downtown, and suggests that there are unlimited online models to replicate.

In response to a question on whether the proposed policy would work for permanent installations, Beck suggested that Maynard concentrate on temporary projects. Permanent installations require a different set of procedures, plus ongoing maintenance, and Maynard does not have “a ton of money to fix stuff.”

Group briefly discussed whether Maynard needs a budget to fix public art. Downey mentioned that the Murphy and Snyder mural was beginning to look weathered. Beck suggested that the only way to do this is to create a fund, and “get a big check for an endowment.” According to Beck, there are very few programs to maintain public art, and suggested that we create an educational program as a model. Beck also suggested that we treat the cultural district as Maynard’s museum.

It was noted that Beck’s proposal did not include process. Beck assumed that the MEDC would manage process. Beck, Zammuto, and DeMarco will meet to discuss. It was suggested that the branding subcommittee, in concert with Beck, could develop an application process.

Conversation with Christopher Jacobs, THC Depot (cannabis delivery service)

Jacobs has 20 years in the military and is presently an EMT. He desires to open a cannabis home delivery in Maynard, based on the “uber eats” model. While he will service everyone, his goal is to help the veteran community, especially with the side effects of PTSD. He is interested in Maynard due to its central location. He plans to lease an office, purchase wholesale and store product on site. Space needed depends on regulations regarding storage. He has not looked at space yet because he “wants to be flexible.” The MEDC suggested that Jacobs work with Nemser regarding a location.

Naylor Court

At present, efforts are on the Refuse Collection Project. With grant funds, the State hired Harriman to produce a space survey to map out private and public ownership of the “basin.” No decisions have been made yet, but the goal is to manage the quantity of dumpsters. Harriman’s deliverable is a final concept and action plan. Spirited conversation ensued.

-Downey asked how does this project fit into the “big picture” and if Harriman had been provided with all relevant prior documents, including the ULI report. Nemser and MacKeen noted that documents had been provided and were referred to in the presentation.

-Zammuto responded that at present, Maynard does not have a big picture plan for this area. Rather, this is an attempt to make progress on a single very visible item.

-Downey suggested that creating the “big plan” first would be more efficient.

-Nemser noted that the grant is specifically for the dumpster project.

-Greenstein commented that this space exhibits so much potential, but we are lacking in imagination. We should consider the collective impact and shift people’s perception. If successful, this project will propel addition projects.

Vacant Storefront Webinar

Both Downey and Zammuto attended this webinar. Zammuto reported that the program requires a municipal match, but she is not sure whether this match can be “in-kind.” The property needs to be vacant for at least a year. The property owner gets up to \$10K in tax credits. The Commonwealth’s committee meets four times a year. Zammuto would use Marlborough as a model. If Maynard is interested in utilizing this program, how many storefronts would qualify?

Other. Regarding Cannabis, Greenstein recommended that we look at the big picture. Should we consider capping this regulated industry to create greater competition. Greenstein also recommended that the Town could ask for things and assert its values. Cressy suggested that the group mull over the idea of Cannabis Tourism, is there a way to bring foot traffic to the CBD.

Meeting adjourned at 9:41 am.

Proposed Minutes Submitted by Sarah Cressy on 8.24.2020