

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
Wednesday, May 22, 2024 @ 11 am
Online via ZOOM

MEETING MINUTES

1. Call to Order

Chair RA called the meeting to order at 11:04 am.

EDC present: Rob Anderson (RA), Karen Anglim (KA), Khoi Nguyen (KN), Michael Moorehead (MM),
Michael Nordstrom (MN)

Town/Contract Staff present: EDC Coordinator Leah Emerson (LE), Consultant Claire Reynolds (CR)

Attendees present: Selectman Sam Stivers (SS)

2. Coordinator Report | FY24 Budget Items and Discussion

Training resources | LE presented the EDC with [MA Municipal Association](#) (MMA) free to low-cost education and training resources for municipal appointees and staff via a link provided by Assistant Town Administrator Vanessa Hale, who is active in MMA. She [presented the handful of online classes](#) offered by [Citizen Planner Training Collaborative](#) (CPTC) in June 2024. LE said that CPTC had a limited roster of training and coursework but that it was highly applicable to Massachusetts. Their fee for a specially arranged training for a group in Southborough, whether it be the EDC or another board / committee, was quoted at \$400. LE said that unlike RA's preference for meeting in person with colleagues in neighboring towns, the only opportunity to do so will be at [CPTC's annual meeting](#) in March. She did say there are other opportunities to network as RA suggests and that she can share those with the EDC via email as they arise.

LE cautioned that Town Accountant Carla McAuliffe requires one-off training like CPTC to be purchased and completed by the end of the fiscal year, June 30, 2024. She then highlighted the [online learning platform Planetizen](#), for planning and planning-adjacent professionals and lay persons. Since Planetizen is subscriber-based and paid annually, the limitation from Town Accounting didn't apply, provided the annual subscription is purchased by or before 6/30/24. LE presented a number of [Planetizen course titles relevant to the EDC](#) among their 300+ courses available. She'd checked with Conservation and Planning to gauge their interest in CPTC and Planetizen offerings. The price goes down the more people purchase a subscription, and the EDC had the funds to cover it for their committee and one or two others. RA said there is always value in training and education and wanted to make it available to the EDC, the Planning Board, if interested, staff and a handful of others who might benefit. RA originally made a motion to pay for up to 12 subscriptions, ideally leaving a few open subscriptions available, but rescinded it when LE suggested that the motion might be more flexible based on a not-to-exceed amount, allowing up to as many subscriptions as a \$2-3k figure could cover.

KN asked if it was available on-demand through an assigned login credential per subscriber, which LE confirmed. He told RA that he preferred the flexibility to take the courses on his own time. LE then provided the breakdown of each individual subscription. At 11 or more it was \$179 per person, based on a group subscription. KN also asked what the acronyms below the courses stood for which MM clarified were professional licenses, certificates or designations, such as AICP (American Institute of Certified Planners), AIA (American Institute of Architects), etc. LE indicated that courses that listed those acronyms were those that professionals could take for continuing education (CE) hours to maintain or acquire those certifications. LE reiterated that the courses weren't perfunctory for EDC members or the Planning Board, but are purely optional based on time, interest, and motivation.

MM asked if the EDC at-large, and RA and LE specifically, if the EDC was spending the money simply because they had the funds available, or if it was more focused and intentional. LE and RA emphasized that it was the latter.

APPROVED

45 **MOTION:** RA restated that he rescinded his earlier motion based on 12 subscriptions. RA made a new motion to
46 purchase up to but not to exceed \$3,000 of training resources and/or subscriptions for the EDC and other
47 boards/committees. MM seconded the motion.

48 K Anglim, M Nordstrom-Aye, K Nguyen-Aye, M Moorehead-Aye, R Anderson-Aye (5-0-0)

49 RA asked LE if there were any other budget items to consider. LE said that as EDC consultant, Claire Reynolds (CR)
50 suggested consulting with Planner Judi Barrett re: recommended next steps for zoning amendments. As a highly
51 respected planner, LE would look into her hourly fee and availability for a consultation. CR had up to \$1,000 left to
52 bill for the Wastewater feasibility grant, and the EDC had \$9,000 available for other contracted services to cover
53 training and additional invoices. LE stated that she was going to keep the EDC's agenda at their next meeting on
54 June 10th brief, with only a few items to address.

55 4. Public Comment

56 CR told RA that she sent an email to Selectmen Andrew Dennington and Kathy Cook asking them to please not kill
57 the [One Stop](#) application for a Route 9 zoning review and analysis for the year. CR and RA didn't agree with further
58 delay and that the One Stop should be applied for for that express purpose. CR went through the previous year's
59 One-Stop Grant Awards and noted 52 towns that received money for corridor studies, developing design
60 guidelines, and revising existing zoning bylaws.

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62 LE reminded them that the Select Board isn't nullifying a One Stop application indefinitely, but instead made it
63 clear that they wanted the participation of the Planning Board. The SB wants to pursue it in the next round to allow
64 the PB to put MBTA Communities 3A compliance behind them, which has a deadline at the end of 2024. LE said
65 that work could begin on not only an EOI, but initial drafts for the grant application to apply next year. RA was
66 concerned that if the Town waited another year to apply for a Route 9 Corridor study, zoning changes wouldn't be
67 proposed until the following year, protracting a process that both he and CR felt is long overdue. RA agreed with CR
68 that the Town should apply this year.

69 LE told RA that as EDC Chair, he should attend an upcoming PB meeting to make the case. She pointed out that
70 there were only two weeks before the One Stop application deadline. LE already committed to assisting Vanessa
71 Hale with a One Stop grant for downtown wayfinding. Given her half-time hours, she said she couldn't work on
72 both and told CR if she was convinced that it couldn't wait another year, she and RA should take it up. LE pointed
73 out that with few zoning changes beyond those in the Downtown District, no other significant zoning updates had
74 occurred in over 15 years. LE recognized that it must be done, but she couldn't override the feedback from the
75 Select Board and Planning Board after she'd already attempted to further efforts toward Route 9 zoning
76 amendments repeatedly. She reminded the EDC that there are many other grant programs available beyond the
77 State One Stop program to consider. LE then mentioned that she, KN, Town IT Manager Jason Montijo and
78 Municipal Technology Committee Chair Matt Probst met with a representative from Placer.ai via Zoom, [a real-time](#)
79 [data tracking platform that can be used for economic development](#) in Southborough. She thought it would make a
80 solid contribution to grant applications, that it was a very powerful tool, but the \$17k annual price and its
81 capabilities were beyond their budget and their ability to fully employ it.

82 B. Next scheduled meeting: Monday 6/10/24 at 6:30 PM, location TBD.

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84 6. Adjourn

85 **MOTION:** RA moved to adjourn the meeting at 11:48 am, and seconded by MM.

86 K Anglim, M Nordstrom-Aye, K Nguyen-Aye, M Moorehead-Aye, R Anderson-Aye (5-0-0)

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APPROVED

88 REFERENCED ITEMS | DOCUMENTS at 5/22/24 EDC Meeting

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- 90 1) MA Municipal Association | [MMA Webinar Resources](#)
- 91 2) 5/22/24 [EDC Agenda and Training Resource Outline](#)
- 92 3) Citizen Planner Training Collaborative | [CPTC Training Resources](#)
- 93 4) CPTC [2024 Annual Conference Workshops](#)
- 94 5) [Planetizen Online Courses](#)
- 95 6) [Planetizen Course Sampler](#)
- 96 7) [MA Community One Stop for Growth grant application programs](#)
- 97 8) [Placer.ai locational intelligence for municipalities](#)