



Building a Better Brookline

**Economic Development
Advisory Board**
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Anne R. Meyers, Co-Chair
Paul Saner, Co-Chair
Dr. Robert I. Sperber, Founder
Cliff Brown
Derrick Choi
Susan Houston
Kenneth Lewis
Carol Levin
Thomas Nally
Marilyn Newman
Alden Raine
Donald A. Warner

Meeting Minutes: June 6, 2016

Attendees:

EDAB Members Present: Paul Saner, Ken Lewis, Tom Nally,
Carol Levin, Marilyn Newman, Cliff Brown, Anne Meyers, Don Warner, Derrick
Choi, Susan Houston

EDAB Members Absent: Bob Sperber, Al Raine

Economic Development Division: Kara Brewton

Materials: Agenda, draft minutes from May, 12/7/15 minutes - Planning for a
Changing Brookline Part 2 Event

1. Review and Approve Minutes

- Minutes from May 2, 2016 were approved.

2. Continued discussion of next steps for “Planning for a Changing Brookline

Paul Saner reminded EDAB that this May’s Annual Town Meeting voted to change the Economic Development Division name to Long Term Planning and add an additional position in the Division. The Human Resources Board recently agreed to change the job description of the existing and additional hire from Economic Development Planner to Economic Development and Long-Term Planner.

Paul noted the importance of long-term planning for the Town, as identified by Sergio Modigliani at an EDAB meeting more than a year ago. This work will require many of the same skills as Economic Development staff use for ED projects, but expand to other aspects of Town needs, e.g., school and municipal capital needs, appropriate long-term zoning for larger parcels in Town, etc.

Paul noted that with regards to Planning for a Changing Brookline:

- We heard the neighborhood point of view regarding development criteria for successful development
- Ken moderated an excellent panel describing what the Town needed to do to attract commercial development, including being proactive (taking action before development proposals are made) and improving processes so that they are better defined to the development community

Paul thought that EDAB's role with regards to long-term planning

- It takes a long time for development projects, and that's OK. However, because of long-term financial challenges, and regardless of the real estate market we're in, EDAB Board members need to focus on being far ahead of staff to bring new ideas to the residents early on, long before developers have a set idea of the type of development they're looking for.
- Reminded the Board that what residents told them in the first two sessions of Planning for a Changing Brookline was that EDAB should move from site by site zoning to district-wide planning.

Paul then opened the discussion up to the Board

- Ken noted the Town Meeting Member (TMM) listserv being excited about the Zoning 101 session offered by Planning & Building Departments; it would make sense to piggy back on that effort with regards to the next Planning for a Changing Brookline event. Paul and Cliff offered to work with Ken on this, and Paul wondered whether it would make sense to have Al Raine do a piece on transit-oriented development. EDAB members noted that opponents will always be out there resisting any change, but that it would be helpful to have TMMs learn more about the development process.

EDAB members then brainstormed ideas for the next event including:

- a self-learning video
- case study review
- additional sessions with abstract financial development requirements like Ken did previously
- using a "lightning rod" project to get more citizens interested in the topic
- connecting the demand for more revenue through commercial tax base growth with the demand for municipal and school services
- communicating to citizens and developers sites that are "ready" for development,
- having a bus tour of various sites similar to the recent Showcase Massachusetts event
- applying for another Urban Land Institute Technical Assistance Panel (TAP)
- combining one of the above strategies with specific sites that EDAB thinks are priority sites for future commercial development

Paul noted that for sites to be "ready", they likely needed to be studied taking a form-based zoning approach and minimizing residential impacts. There was some discussion about whether a list of Town-wide Economic Development sites should be brainstormed before or after the Town's Strategic Asset Plan and Large Parcel study. Kara asked that the Board not wait for this work to be completed, just as the Housing Production Plan would be an "input" into the upcoming Large Parcel study.

Carol led the discussion that EDAB should come up with a priority list of potential sites that should be further studied, perhaps with a simple rating of 1-5 for each factor. This matrix should include: tax revenue benefits, type of potential development supported by the location, ease of development, potential ability to provide a mix of uses, ability to be a transit-oriented development, follow-up with District studies that have already been

completed (such as the MIT Rt. 9 East Corridor study). The first cut would result in a top 10 list of potential Economic Development priority sites, although communication with property owners and residents early on is crucial.

Next Steps

- Derrick Choi volunteered to make a google map “KMZ” file of several sites that Carol had identified as potential future ED sites several months ago
- Don Warner volunteered to start an excel matrix that includes for each site:
 - Location (taking into account abutters, accessibility, visibility, site access, potential for public benefits, ability to be a transit-oriented site)
 - Type of use of potential development, with help from Ken Lewis, with regards to highest and best use
- Paul Saner will add ease of potential development, including political/ neighborhood support, development ease, and identification of major zoning hurdles
- Cliff Brown will add impact of future tax revenue, following Ken & Don’s work, including major zoning factors (FAR & height), existing and potential square footage, and existing and proposed tax value

3. Discussion of Updating 5 Year Economic Development Plan

The Division’s 5 year work plan was written in 2012. Kara noted that she and Andy Martineau were working on creating an updated version, reflecting the expanded charge and resources voted by May Town Meeting to include Long Term Planning. Kara noted that while we will continue to seek policy guidance and recommendations from EDAB for Economic Development work, staff would be relying on the Planning Board to make recommendations related to Long Term Planning.

4. Development Updates – This item was skipped due to time constraints.

5. Committee Member & Staff Updates – This item was skipped due to time constraints.

6. Misc./Other Business –

- Paul Saner shared the sad news that EDAB’s founder, Bob Sperber, has decided not to renew his appointment to EDAB for health reasons. EDAB members discussed expertise they would like to see in any new candidates, including: architect, designer, developer, and small business issues. Derrick Choi volunteered to send potential architect names to Anne & Paul. Anne Meyers volunteered to call George Cole for potential names.
- Kara Brewton shared photos of Andy & Meg Martineau’s new baby, Raymond. Don Warner noted that the baby looked very much like Andy. Marilyn Newman suggested, and the rest of the Board agreed, to officially send congratulations and best wishes to the new parents.

Meeting Adjourned