

Minutes

Economic Development Advisory Board

March 13, 2023 7:00PM

Held remotely via Zoom

Committee members in attendance (noted by Y/N):

Anne Meyers, Co-Chair	Y	Derrick Choi	Y	Carol Levin	N	Marilyn Newman	Y
Paul Saner, Co-Chair	Y	Alan Christ	Y	Ken Lewis	Y	Al Raine	Y
Cliff Brown*	Y	Sandi Silk	Y	Tom Nally	Y	Zeina Talje	Y

*Arrived late or left early

Staff & consultants present: Meredith Mooney, Victor Panak, Aaron Norris, William Dorfman

Attendees included: Carol Gladstone, Perry Grossman

Meeting Materials: <https://www.brooklinema.gov/DocumentCenter/Index/2936>

- DRAFT 2023 Spring TM Article List
- DRAFT order for 2023 Annual Town Meeting
- DRAFT EDLT 5 Year Strategic Work Plan 2023 v3
- DRAFT EDAB Minutes 1.9.23

Meeting Recording:

https://brooklinema.zoomgov.com/rec/share/MjL8n_j7KUKXwUzPeCIH31DzMRPXgKb36-yl3b3dZptNuhAOPNwV1yP9SoqsN5-.eLqbveDY2bnPqbQK?startTime=1678747901000

Passcode: Vt?0=h1t

Opening Remarks

Anne Meyers opened the meeting and briefly reviewed the agenda items.

Review of Spring 2023 Town Meeting Warrant Articles and Selection of Articles Relevant to EDAB

Mr. Saner started the discussion by stating that the Board will be discussing its process for reviewing warrant articles at a future meeting. He then proceeded to discuss the articles that had been submitted to the Spring 2023 Town Meeting. Mr. Saner asked if any Board members wanted to suggest warrant articles to be reviewed by EDAB.

Mr. Lewis highlighted the article that would amend the T-5 zoning district and suggested it might have an effect on the adjacent commercial areas.

The Board discussed the four articles pre-selected by staff and the co-chairs. The Board agreed that the resolution on the MBTA Communities should be heard by EDAB. Board members felt that the human trafficking article should be heard only if the hotels in town raise concerns with the article. The Board

agreed that the energy code article should be heard by EDAB provided that additional information be provided by the Town's Sustainability Division and that an opinion from the Chamber of Commerce be received. The Board decided to hear the article on cannabis licenses because cannabis retailers may have a spillover effect on surrounding businesses and because of the policy related to equity applicants. The Board was also interested in the interplay between this article and the town-wide vote aimed at capping the number of licenses at four. The Board chose not to hear the article on refuse penalties and requested a rationale on why the T-5 zoning article is being proposed by the Planning Department.

The Board briefly discussed how it should approach reviewing the upcoming warrant articles and how to shape the discussions.

Boylston Street Corridor Study Committee Board Update

Tom Nally provided the Board with an update on the work of the Boylston Street Corridor Study Committee. Mr. Nally discussed the reasons why he thinks the Committee was unsuccessful in proposing new zoning for the Corridor. He noted the difficulty of the sites, the reluctance of some current property owners to consider redevelopment, an overly broad Committee charge, and the opposition of surrounding neighbors as being some of the key obstacles. He also felt that the Committee should not have met during the day because it reduced the public's engagement with the process; meetings should have been held at night and in person when possible.

Presentation and Discussion on Strategic Work Plan for the Economic Development and Long-Term Planning Division

Ms. Mooney briefly introduced the topic and provided the Board with a presentation on the Division's Draft Strategic Work Plan. She asked that EDAB provide feedback on whether the plan is going in the right direction and whether staff had missed any major items. She covered the main focus areas for the division, including Strategic Messaging and Communications, Encouraging Commercial Development, Promoting Business Success, Arts and Culture Planning, and Long-Term Planning.

Mr. Choi asked if the work with CivicMoxie included a fiscal capacity analysis to see if the Town could handle the goals of the Division. Ms. Mooney indicated that no fiscal capacity analysis was conducted but highlighted some ways in which ED/LT staffing is sufficient or will be sufficient in the future to support the initiatives in the plan.

Mr. Raine asked to what extent the Division had explored the scope of work for rezoning significant commercial properties along Harvard Street. Ms. Mooney noted a number of upcoming Town decisions that could affect the timing and scope of those rezonings and therefore indicated that the scopes of work are still undefined.

Ms. Newman asked whether the FY 2026-2028 year task described as exploration of further opportunities for upzoning for significant commercial properties along Harvard Street should be moved to earlier in the work plan, given that such studies would logically follow up on completion of the Harvard Street corridor study and would be relevant whether or not adjusted Harvard Street baseline zoning is adopted as a method of MBTA Communities Act compliance.

Mr. Lewis suggested that the Division could use the work produced by Opticos Design on form-based-zoning in the short term to advance more density along Harvard Street independent of the MBTA Communities Act compliance plan.

Mr. Saner asked that references to institutional master planning specifically name Boston University and also asked that the exploration of reusing Town parking lots be further considered.

Staff and Board Updates

Linkage Fee Program

Victor Panak provided the Board with an update on the activities of the Linkage Fee Working Group.

Hybrid Meetings Trainings and Procedures

Ms. Mooney noted that virtual meetings may no longer be allowed after March 31 and that the Board should be prepared to hold meetings in-person with a quorum of the Board in Town Hall.

EDAB Members Presentation to Advisory Council Public Health

Marilyn Newman updated the Board on the ongoing efforts of the Department of Public Health on adopting regulations for life-science lab uses.

Review and approve draft 1/9/2023 meeting minutes

Mr. Saner moved to approve the minutes. Mr. Raine seconded the motion. The Board voted 10-0 to approve the minutes.

The meeting was adjourned.