Topsfield Town Seal in Color

ECDC COMMITTEE

VIRTUAL MEETING

Minutes of Monday, January 30, 2023

6:30 PM

Committee Members participating were Chair Lynne Bermudez and members Tom Capano, Sarah Guido, Alex Qirjazi, Rosalee Discipio, Tracey Granlund, and Town Administrator Kevin Harutunian. Member Zillie Bhuju was not present. Dick Gandt and BCTV were also in attendance.

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Bermudez called the meeting to order at 6:31PM.

**GOVERNOR’S ORDER**

Chair Bermudez announced that, due to the COVID-19 State of Emergency announced by Governor Baker, this meeting would be conducted as a Virtual Meeting via ZOOM and as such, participation was remote. She then read the following:

“Pursuant to Chapter 20 of the Acts of 2021, this meeting will be conducted via remote means. Members of the public who wish to watch or listen to the meeting may do so in the following manner: Video conference (see log-in information on the agenda on the website.) No in-person attendance of members of the public will be permitted, but every effort will be made to ensure that the public can adequately access the proceedings in real time, via technological means. In the event that we are unable to do so, despite best efforts, we will post on the Topsfield website an audio or video recording, transcript, or other comprehensive record of proceedings as soon as possible after the meeting.”

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Kevin Harutunian made a motion to approve the minutes of the ECDC meeting held Monday, November 14, 2022. Alex Qirjazi seconded the motion and it passed with a roll call vote as follows:

Lynne Bermudez Aye

Tom Capano Aye

Rosalee Discipio Aye

Tracey Granlund Aye

Sarah Guido Aye

Kevin Harutunian Aye

Alex Qirjazi Aye

**FY2022 ANNUAL REPORT**

Chair Bermudez asked if members had any requested changes to the draft FY2022 ECDC Annual Report that had been mailed to members. As no changes were noted, Alex Qirjazi made a motion to approve the Annual Report as presented. Tom Capano seconded the motion and it passed unanimously with a roll call vote as follows:

Lynne Bermudez Aye

Tom Capano Aye

Rosalee Discipio Aye

Tracey Granlund Aye

Sarah Guido Aye

Kevin Harutunian Aye

Alex Qirjazi Aye

**MBTA MULTI-FAMILY DISTRICT UPDATE**

Chair Bermudez provided the committee with an update on the state’s requirement for towns having MBTA service, or towns adjacent to a town with MBTA service, to develop a new District that allows, by right, a property owner in that District to develop multi-family housing without a Special Permit. The Chair explained the three state deadlines for the new District (initial Town registration, an Interim Compliance Plan, and full compliance which includes a full compliance plan and acceptance of the new District at the town’s Annual Town Meeting). If any of the deadlines are not met,the state can deny the town funds from one of three funding sources, which could impact grants and housing authority funds. Topsfield has met the first two deadlines and is working on the full compliance plan. A grant application was submitted by the Planning Board to MAPC for funds for technical assistance with GIS mapping and completion of the intricate spreadsheets required by the state. The Planning Board will be working with the Master Plan Steering Committee to conduct outreach to residents for input on the new District.

**FY2024 ATM ZONING ARTICLES UPDATE**

Town Administrator Harutunian reviewed the zoning article amendments which will be presented for a vote at the Annual Town Meeting and discussion was held. Amendments include:

Amend Article VII, 7.03 -Temporary Accessory Apartment Special Permit By-Law, Section 3.25 to clarify the process whereby building permits and occupancy permits are issued for temporary Accessory Apartments.

Amend Article I Definitions to add the following:

* Pub Brewery – a plant or premises where malt beverages are authorized to be produced and sold and where alcoholic beverages or wine or malt beverages are authorized to be sold for consumption on the premises.
* Beverage Manufacturing – An establishment engaged in the manufacturing of beverages.
* Tavern – An establishment where alcoholic beverages may be sold with or without food.

Amend Article III, Sections 3.02 and 3.04 Table of Use Regulations to:

* Remove the requirement for a Special Permit for For-Profit Schools in the business districts.
* Remove the requirement for a Special Permit for restaurants in the Business Village District.
* Allow for multi-family housing outside of mixed use with a Special Permit in the business districts.
* Add the uses of Pub Brewery, Beverage Manufacturing and Tavern in the business districts.

Amend Article II Section 2.03 to include lot 41-102 (256 Boston St.) in the Business Highway District, rezoning it from residential to commercial.

**DOWNTOWN INITIATIVES UPDATE**

Town Administrator Kevin Harutunian provided the committee with an update on revitalization activities. Topics included the following:

* A contract was signed with a sign fabricator to construct and install eight wayfinding signs, two signs for Pye Brook Park and Klock Park and a kiosk to place near the Rail Trail. All signs will be in by the spring.
* Discussions are progressing with the owner of the Village Shopping Center for the town to lease a portion of the entrance of the parking lot to create a park. The lease must be approved at the Annual Town Meeting in May for construction to begin.
* A second rendition of the RFP for the Old Highway Garage will be released after the Annual Town Meeting. Discussions are underway with the property owner across from the garage for the town to obtain an option to purchase his property. If the zoning changes mentioned above are approved at the meeting and the option to purchase is obtained, the Garage should have more responses from developers with more space and more available uses.
* Block parties (3-4) are being planned at the Old Highway Garage with an event planner to stimulate interest in the property and provide fun events for residents.
* The Master Plan Steering Committee continues to hold its meetings the fourth Wednesday of every month and resident attendance is increasing. All residents are welcome.
* Topsfield was recognized, at the recent Vendor Showcase at the MMA in Boston, for its innovative, village-style solar lights placed throughout the downtown.

**ADJOURN**

At 7:19 PM, Kevin Harutunian made a motion to adjourn. Tom Capano seconded the motion and it passed unanimously with a roll call vote as follows:

Lynne Bermudez Aye

Tom Capano Aye

Rosalee Discipio Aye

Tracey Granlund Aye

Sarah Guido Aye

Kevin Harutunian Aye

Alex Qirjazi Aye

Respectfully submitted,

Lynne Bermudez - Chair

**DOCUMENTS**

1. Agenda
2. FY2022 Annual Report – Draft
3. Draft ECDC minutes of 11/14/2022

Pursuant to the 'Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, §18-25, the approval of these minutes by the Board constitutes a certification of the date, time and place of the meeting, the members present and absent, and the actions taken at the meeting. Any other description of statements made by any person, or the summary of the discussion of any matter, is included for the purpose of context only, and no certification, express or implied, is made by the Board as to the completeness or accuracy of such statements.