



**ECDC COMMITTEE  
VIRTUAL MEETING**

**Minutes of Tuesday, March 9, 2021  
6:30 PM**

Committee Members participating were Chair Lynne Bermudez, and members Zillie Bhujju, Sarah Guido, Janet Kmetz, Rosie Discipio, Alex Qirjazi, Kim Philpot and Kevin Harutunian (Town Administrator). Also present were Topsfield Historic Commission member Kindra Clineff, Planning Board Chair Martha Morrison and Cultural Council Chair Kathleen Hunt.

**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 Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, § 18, and the Governor's March 15, 2020 Order imposing strict limitation on the number of people that may gather in one place, this meeting of the Topsfield Select Board will be conducted via remote participation to the greatest extent possible. Specific information and the general guidelines for remote participation by members of the public and/or parties with a right and/or requirement to attend this meeting can be found on the Topsfield website at [www.topsfield-ma.gov](http://www.topsfield-ma.gov) For this meeting, 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 below.) 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."

## **CALL TO ORDER**

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

## **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Janet Kmetz made a motion to approve the minutes of the ECDC meeting held Tuesday, February 9, 2021. Zillie Bhujju seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously by a roll call vote as follows:

Zillie Bhujju – Aye

Rosalee Discipio – Aye

Sarah Guido – Aye

Kevin Harutunian – Aye

Janet Kmetz - Aye

Kim Philpot - Aye

Alex Qirjazi – Aye

Lynne Bermudez – Aye

## **WEBSITE DEVELOPMENT DISCUSSION**

Discussion was held on moving forward with development of a website which could be a single source to easily access information about Topsfield including what is available to do if you visit Topsfield.

Sarah Guido, Chair of the Topsfield Community Partnership (TCP) shared that the TCP is willing to lead this effort and host the information relative to the first category (What to do when you visit Topsfield) on the TCP website. Initial categories identified by TCP include Culture and Arts, Dining, Shopping, and Parks and Trails.

In a few months the Town expects to have the resources to redo their ECDC web page to be more user friendly and focused on economic development within the town. The Town Administrator mentioned that he would welcome any volunteers who wish to help the Town with this effort. The town ECDC webpage will include information such as the document developed by Martha Morrison on how to do business in Topsfield.

Once the town site is updated, the TCP website and the Town website will be “linked” so that data is only stored once, but each site will point to data on the other. Discussion was held on how best to drive traffic to the TCP site including tagging (for search purposes) and linking site pages on Google, Twitter and Instagram.

Martha Morrison, Kim Philpot, Kindra Clineff and Rosalee DiScipio all volunteered to participate with TCP on this effort in the development of content and design of the website. Initial efforts will involve identifying sources of information so as not to recreate/duplicate what has already been done.

### **DOWNTOWN INITIATIVES UPDATE**

Town Administrator Kevin Harutunian provided the committee with an update on revitalization activities. These the status of the Old Highway Garage (including a survey of the lot for subdivision, the Community Discussion held on 2/25 and the Public Hearing to be held on 3/30); upcoming installation of the 19 Solar Lights; activation of the EV Charging Stations; a meeting with the Historic Commission to discuss downtown revitalization and in particular activities in the Historic District; the status of the Economic Development Planner position (removed from the FY22 budget); and the status of the VHB Downtown Streetscape design.

Discussion was held on ways to continue to communicate with residents concerning possible development of the Old Highway Garage and the two warrant articles, concerning same, that will be on the warrant at Town Meeting. Ideas included newspaper articles, information on the Town website and Facebook, discussing the articles at the Moderator's Forum and the League of Women Voters candidate debate night. Another recommended was that a succinct statement of the Town's activities and intentions concerning the Old Highway Garage be developed for use with all these communication vehicles and for use by ECDC members to email to friends and colleagues,

### **WAYFINDING SIGNAGE DISCUSSION**

Discussion was held on a proposal Janet Kmetz obtained from the design firm Omloop to provide design services to plan and design an exterior signage and identify/branding program for Topsfield. Omloop was recommended to Janet by Essex Heritage. The proposal includes designing a logo, color palette, the design of signs to direct people into town and to key locations in town, and possibly maps or brochures showing destinations in downtown. Grant monies would be used to fund this effort.

The Town Administrator is meeting with Omloop next week and will provide the ECDC with an update.

### **ADJOURN**

At 7:58 PM, Zillie Bhujju made a motion to adjourn. Janet Kmetz seconded the motion and it passed unanimously with a roll call vote as follows:

Zillie Bhujū – Aye  
Rosalee Discipio – Aye  
Sarah Guido – Aye  
Kevin Harutunian – Aye  
Janet Kmetz - Aye  
Kim Philpot - Aye  
Alex Qirjazi – Aye  
Lynne Bermudez – Aye

Respectfully submitted,  
Lynne Bermudez – Chair

## **DOCUMENTS**

1. Agenda
2. Draft ECDC minutes of 2/9/2021
3. Town of Topsfield Signage & Wayfinding Program
4. Saugus Map – Omloop
5. Saugus Brochure - Omloop

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.