



**ECDC COMMITTEE  
VIRTUAL MEETING**

**Minutes of Monday, October 25, 2021  
6:30 PM**

Committee Members participating were Chair Lynne Bermudez, and members Zillie Bhujju, Janet Kmetz, Alex Qirjazi, Tom Capano, Rosalee DiScipio, and Kevin Harutunian (Town Administrator). Also present was Select Board member Dick Gandt.

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Bermudez called the meeting to order at 6:37 PM.

**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**

Zillie Bhujju made a motion to approve the minutes of the ECDC meeting held Monday, September 20, 2021. Janet Kmetz seconded the motion and it passed unanimously by a roll call vote as follows:

Zillie Bhujju – Aye

Tom Capano– Aye  
Kevin Harutunian – Aye  
Janet Kmetz - Aye  
Alex Qirjazi – Aye  
Lynne Bermudez – Aye  
Rosalee DiScipio - Aye

### **COMMITTEE MEMBER UPDATE**

Chair Bermudez provided an update that committee member Kim Philpot is moving to ME and therefore will be resigning from the ECDC. The Chair thanked her for all her work in the town, and specifically for her recent work with the ECDC.

### **DOWNTOWN INITIATIVES UPDATE**

Town Administrator Kevin Harutunian provided the committee with an update on revitalization activities and discussion was held. Topics included:

- The town will be sending of a letter of intent to MAPC, in 1-2 weeks, requesting technical assistance to create a Request for Proposal (RFP) for the Old Highway Garage. The town will solicit input from the town before completing the RFP and is looking to release the RFP to the marketplace in late 1Q, early 2Q of 2022.
- The final report for the design/location of wayfinding signs will be completed in the next few weeks. At that point discussions will begin for funding sources to build the signs. Kevin Harutunian mentioned the town will consider both capital funding and applying for wayfinding grants. Janet Kmetz suggested the town also reach out to DOT for funding assistance for signs to be located on Rt 1.
- The town is awaiting notification if it has been awarded a 6-figure grant to begin development of a Master Plan. The Plan would be spearheaded by the Planning Board and will involve town departments and residents. Development of a Master Plan can take between 12-18 months.
- The solar bench has been received and a date is being determined for its installation.

Chair Bermudez shared that a grant application is being submitted to the Cultural Council requesting funds to de-lead and paint the side wall of Country Farms to improve the aesthetics of Main St. and potentially prepare the wall for the painting of a mural.

Zillie Bhujju shared that she and her husband will be opening a Zumi's coffee shop at 42 Main St., in the location previously occupied by the Bakeshop. This will be their second shop and their decision was influenced by the town's focus on revitalization, as well as the results of the Downtown Revitalization parking study which highlighted the availability of parking on and around Main St.

### **COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DISCUSSION**

Discussion was held on the creation of a Business Showcase to be held in the Spring of 2022. The showcase would highlight the strengths/culture, current retail and agricultural businesses and recreational opportunities within Topsfield. The town will invite developers, retail and restaurant establishments, and brokers, among others, to attend the showcase and the town will provide lunch and a tour of the town. Available retail vacancies will be discussed, as well as traffic through town and traffic on major adjacent roads (95, 97, Rt 1). A video will be produced along with a leave behind brochure.

Alex Qirjazi, Janet Kmetz and Rosalee DiScipio offered to help the Town Administrator with this effort. The showcase will be timed to be held after the release of the RFP.

### **ADJOURN**

At 7:38 PM, Janet Kmetz made a motion to adjourn. Alex Qirjazi seconded the motion and it passed unanimously with a roll call vote as follows:

Zillie Bhujju – Aye  
Tom Capano – Aye  
Kevin Harutunian – Aye  
Janet Kmetz - Aye  
Alex Qirjazi - Aye  
Lynne Bermudez – Aye  
Rosalee DiScipio - Aye

Respectfully submitted,  
Lynne Bermudez – Chair

### **DOCUMENTS**

1. Agenda
2. Draft ECDC minutes of 9/20/2021

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.