

Town of Pepperell Economic Development Advisory Committee

1 Main Street, Pepperell, Massachusetts 01463-1644

Minutes – March 23, 2023

Committee Members Present:

Stephen Themelis, Chair

Joan Ladik, Clerk

Lynn Archambault

Tereze Stokes

Absent:

Nicole Murphy

Lindsay Allard

Guests:

Mark Matthews, Select Board Chair

Jennifer Gingras, Pepperell Town Planner

Theresa LeBlanc, President Pepperell Garden Club

Deb Fountain, Invasive and Native Plant Advisory Committee

Diane Cronin, Historic Commission

The meeting was called to order at 6:01 PM. Pledge of Allegiance took place. Meeting was recorded.

1. A motion to accept minutes from January 16 and February 19, 2023 was made by Ms. Archambault, seconded by Ms. Ladik. All in favor.
2. Chair Steve Themelis welcomed new committee member Tereze Stokes and asked her to introduce herself and give a background summary.
3. Select Board Chair Mark Matthews updated the committee about the Adopt an Island program status. The Town Planner and her assistant will take the lead recognizing interested applicants through ViewPoint Cloud, referring them to Chair Steve Themelis, and the Committee to accept applications, on a first come first served basis. Ms. Gingras has created a webpage on ViewPoint Cloud which identifies the application and regulations for the Adopt an Island and allows applicants to create an account. The DPW will support the program, however, the EDAC Committee will be the lead ensuring the spots are maintained, and letting the applicants know if there are problems.

The discussion turned to the application and regulations for editing and comments. Deb Fountain made some edits which will be included in the next draft document for the Committee to review. The application will have a new title – General Regulations, which applicants will sign electronically on ViewPoint Cloud. Attached to these minutes is the new draft Application and Regulations.

Applicants will refer to the Planting Guide that the INPAC Committee has put together to ensure that Native plantings are used. Perennials are the preferred plants, mulch and raised beds was also discussed, depending upon the location of each island. A discussion of chemicals, fertilizers and pesticides arose, and apparently, none of the former can be used on Town Property so that needs to be noted in the Regulations.

A number of locations were discussed as possibilities however, we may need to obtain approval from the various state offices before we can allow planting to be done. Ms. Gingras noted she had contacts she can speak with to make sure we can plant in certain locations.

How can we advertise this program was a question asked by Ms. Archambault. The Town has a website where we can post a notice on the News Flash about the program, Ms. Stokes mentioned a PSA announcement. We also needed to create a date for accepting applications and May 1st seemed to be accepted by the Committee. Applicants will pay \$25.00 for the sign with their name through the application on ViewPoint Cloud.

A discussion on safety also arose; making sure people planting wear appropriate clothing so they can be seen while working, and that the plantings themselves do not cause a problem vision on the roadways.

Ms. Ladik will update the Application and Regulations and send the updated document off to Ms. Gingras to add to the Viewpoint Cloud website.

4. The discussion moved to the Wayfinding Kiosks and the work being done by the Committee.

Nicole Murphy is working on the first map that will be included in the kiosk on Railroad Square and we should be seeing that by April 14. Once we have the map all set, we will need to meet with the businesses to get buy in for the 4x4 advertisements to be located on the perimeter of the map in the kiosk. All three kiosks will be relocated soon due to construction at RR Square, and the Rotary. The locations will afford better sites for people to read information. It was suggested that a flyer be printed and handed out to each business inviting them to a meeting the first or second week of May between 2-4pm so they know what is going on in their specific area of town. Going door to door will be the best route to hand out the invitations. Ms. Gingras will move this forward, but it will be sponsored by the EDAC Committee.

Ms. Ladik mentioned the ratty flag banner hanging on Main Street, and how to remove it and update it. Chair Themelis asked how to donate flags and what the cost would be. Ms. Ladik will check on the cost and who gets the donation.

In discussion of RR Square and the Main Street Corridor, at the last meeting, Ms. Gingras asked for suggestions on placement, and number, of benches and planters to be ordered for this area. Thanks to Ms. Allard and Ms. Ladik, Ms. Gingras was able to add that information to an AARP grant for \$35,000. She should hear back sometime in May.

Ms. Gingras noted that any funding from the Business sponsorship for the kiosks and adopt an island would be placed into an account specifically to fund streetscapes repairs and maintenance.

Ms. LeBlanc, President of the Garden Club updated the Committee on the status of the sub-committee for the adopt an island. She said 4 members will put together a list of native plants for the applicants to choose from and hopefully have that list by the April 20th EDAC meeting.

5. North Central Mass Chamber of Commerce

Ms. Gingras gave a brief update on the membership to the North Central Mass Chamber. They have reached out to her and sent a website link of their event calendar. Ms. Gingras recommended attending an event or two, if possible, to network and get our name out there.

6. New Business

Diane Cronin, Historic Committee announced that a new 250th Anniversary ad hoc Committee of Pepperell has been formed. She encouraged EDAC members to join as this committee will provide a huge economic development opportunity. She discussed their strategy of promoting assets in Town, and are creating a “250 things to do in Pepperell” list, creating a Scavenger Hunt, a tag line. Ms. Ladik suggested the committee bring the school aged children in to the mix since they do study local history in their curriculum.

7. Next meeting date:

April 20, 2023

Chair Steve Themelis called for a motion to adjourn. A motion was made by Ms. Ladik, seconded by Ms. Stokes to adjourn at 7:44PM. All in favor.