

TOWN OF BARRINGTON
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
Thursday, May 25, 2023, AT 7:00 P.M.
School Committee Meeting Room –
283 County Rd., BARRINGTON, RI 02806

Minutes

Call to Order

At 7:05pm

In Attendance:

Matt Amaral

Brian Rua

Bryan

Dan

Adam

Eric

Kevin

Kas

Debra

Braxton

First order of business was to approve the April 20, 2023, Minutes.

Bryan Hoffman made motion to approve minutes

Seconded by Adam M

Approved by unanimous consent

Announcements

Mental Health event, no one attended so we cannot provide feedback

Logo/Seal discussion – the town is moving forward with the design phase. We should take a look at the implementation costs and advise on that in a subsequent meeting.

Street Fair coming up June 11th 10am-3pm (Wood Street)

Memorial Day event begins at 9am this Monday at Memorial Day

Discuss and Act on the BLT Ordinance No. 2010-8; 7-15-2013 by Ord. No. 2013-7 required alcohol training and certification for owners, management, and sellers.

Matt recused himself at the outset of the conversation

Brian Rua presented his red line suggestions. Major changes:

- Keeps the training
- Not annual
- Virtual option
- Remove section 2 entirely
- Exempted Class F or F1 (temporary) licenses entirely

Brian answered clarifying questions on his red line.

Dan brought up the test at the end of the training and should that be eliminated

Dan notes that he still doesn't understand why Barrington needs its own standard

Brian agrees his preference is to remove it entirely

Braxton: Yes, it's been 13 years let's review this ordinance. It's prohibitive and prevents increasing the tax base.

Brian and Dan are going to meet to finalize some red lines for approval by the Commission

A discussion was then held on whether or not to send to the Bay Team our suggestions in advance of the meeting.

Kevin made the point that they could have their say with everyone else at the Town Council meeting. Dan agreed.

Kas has a different take. He is against the training. Because Denise came we should bring our redlines to Denise before sending it to the Town Council. In the interests of courtesy and transparency.

Commission agreed to present to Denise and Town Council at the same time.

On the agenda at the June 5th Town Council meeting 7pm

The Commission then moved on to the next agenda item **discuss Town Sign ordinance for June meeting.**

Braxton let us know that it was brought up that the EDC had reviewed and approved of the signs back in 2016.

These signs were bookends that were part of a way-finding project.

Matt notes that this was reviewed, without the bookends, in 2014/2015, and then sat idle until the funds became available recently via a grant. Why was this never brought up for another review prior to implementation after sitting idle for more than 5 years?

Debra walked the Commission through the history and noted that the signs don't bother her and would cost \$60k to remove

Dan notes that maybe we come up with process to make sure things are reviewed again before implementation if they've sat ideal for so long.

Kas notes the idea of a sunset provision is extreme cases like this one. But it appears the process was followed here, even if it wasn't a good process. Do people dislike those signs enough to find the \$60k somewhere.

Debra brings up the idea of sign book guidelines as a cheat sheet for business.

Debra said she'd like the A-frame language gone.

Kevin notes that when we last discussed this we uncovered there was no enforcement capability

Dan asks why do we need to reinvent the wheel. There are tons of trade organizations that have examples we can just take and use.

Dan notes that large corporations have only a few variations of signage, we should just do what everyone else does.

Eric says the key section is the one on prohibitive signs, maybe we just need to illustrate that to be clear

Matt is interested to how Warren and Bristol's sign ordinance and seeing how that differs from ours

Kas says if we have rules that we don't plan to enforce, we shouldn't have rules. We should reserve the authority to make sure things don't get out of control.

Matt thanks everyone for their comments. Matt will formulate a couple paragraphs to send to the Council.

White Board Discussion – EDC Vision

Kas outlines the basic premise is that he is concerned that organizations like ours can become reactive. He wants us to think about what we would like to get done.

Matt agrees, it would be a great help to agenda planning

Commission came up with a few suggestions:

- Parking/Walkability of the Downtown
- Mapping and reviewing potential development maps to bring revitalization to West Barrington
- Inspire more Town Council and Community support of local community events and businesses
- Having Bill Ash come and speak: RI Commerce
- Envisioning more as a destination
 - What does destination mean?
- Revitalizing / Reestablishing RISD relationship
- Investigating other communities to identify what kinds of businesses we want to bring to town
 - Proactive business selection
- To promote EDC ambassadorship
 - Walkarounds, meetings in town
- Taking a deeper dive into the comprehensive Economic Development Plan
- Organizing a business forum
- Review regulations to help Streamline regulations
- Internal EDC scheduling

Business Updates

- Starbucks construction has commenced. Matt will get a copy of the plans for the drive thru for our next meeting
- Oxford Tavern is open for takeout and fully open June 1
- Venda Italian Restaurant seems stalled
- Daily Scoop is selling the business and the building
- Still waiting on any Chipotle update
- Verizon is moving to the old Starbucks
- Hoffman Chiropractic is moving

Meeting Adjourned at 9:05pm

8. Next meeting: June 15, 2023, at 7:00 p.m. (location TBD).

9. Adjourn

Agenda posted May 23, 2023 at the Barrington Town Hall, Barrington Public Library, and the Secretary of State's website.