

Economic Development Committee

Minutes of 1/19/06 Meeting

Present:

Herman Kabakoff
Wayne Friedrichs
Ann Chang
Chris Pappas
William Lawrence
Lauren Rosenzweig
Edmund Starzec, Chair
Rheta Roeber

Roland Bartl, Staff

Minutes of 9/15/05 and 10/6/05 were APPROVED

I. Appointment with David Duane of Method Machine Tools — In a previous appointment Mr. Duane had described the need to expand the building they occupy at 976 Main Street, which is the old “Somerville Lumber” site, so they can accommodate an indoor ceiling crane. They asked the committee’s advice on how best to go about this. In discussion, the committee acknowledged that this zoning district was removed from any nearby residences, and was an area where expansion might be possible especially if the site as a whole was being underutilized. Roland was asked to develop a draft zoning article. The latest draft was distributed to members for review.

Rheta reported on her visit to the site and her tour of the facility. On this site there is a building surrounded by a lot of pavement area that was previously used for parking, and for small manufacturing this parking is not necessary. Having an indoor crane to unload their large machines for re-tooling or repair will reduce the number of trips they will need to make to their Sudbury location.

The zoning article is drafted as part of a “Site Plan Special Permit”. It meets the Economic Development Goal of maximizing already developed commercial space. In addition it results in:

- Reduced truck traffic
- Provides a low impact industrial use
- Results in no loss of green space
- Retains a business that has been town-friendly

A decision was made by the committee to recommend an FAR increase to maximum 0.5 and a height increase to maximum 45 feet.

Schedule going forward: Public Hearing Feb. 14th at the Planning Board meeting. Vote at Town Meeting 1st week in April.

Roland described the permit schedule should the Zoning Article be approved at Town Meeting. Mr. Duane thanked the committee.

II. Chris Pappas informed us that CoStar, a multiple listing service for commercial space, could help us figure out the level of vacancies of our existing space. He will bring more info to the next meeting.

III. Lauren and Ann reported on the Comprehensive Water Resources Management Plan being produced by the Health Department to meet DEP requirements. Priorities by the Citizen Advisory Committee were determined to be:

- 1) Powder Mill Plaza –solution is for them to tie in to current sewer treatment plant and this is already in progress
- 2) Spencer-Tuttle-Flint neighborhood off Prospect Street. Proposed solution is to build a pipe to tie them in to extra capacity in the current treatment plant
- 3) West Acton/Douglas and Gates school campus. Proposed solution is to build a pipe to tie them in to extra capacity as well.

Dilemma was that there is not enough capacity to also sewer West Acton Village west of the railroad tracks. They will have to wait till alternative solutions can be found.

III. Reviewed 2 site plans—Powers Gallery in the old Robbins historical house on Great Road, and conversion of Action Music in South Acton into condo apartment units. The committee came to consensus on letters of support for both projects, with comments to indicate a preference of mixed use for the South Acton project.

The meeting adjourned at 9:40 PM, with some agenda items brought forward to the next scheduled meeting.

Respectfully submitted by Lauren S. Rosenzweig