



Economic Vitality Committee Minutes – July 19, 2023

Meeting called to order at 4:30pm

In attendance: Cato Anderson, Remon Karian, Mike Lawson, Jen McGonigle, Dawn Rennert, Jennifer Schunemann, Jan Turnquist, Steve Verrill

Absent: Beth Williams, Marie Foley, Mark Martines

Guests: Mimi Graney, Elizabeth Hughes, Linda Miller, Erin Stevens

The Minutes of June 14, 2023 meeting were reviewed and passed unanimously, with Mr Karian abstaining

In the absence of Beth Williams, Ms Graney presented updates from the Town:

- Last week, Concord hosted reps from the Mass Cultural Council and State Representatives Cataldo and Gentile for conversations about the ways arts and culture can be supported at the State level. About 40 people attended the program, which included a tour of West Concord and lunch
- With disruption to local businesses caused by road construction, West Concord has instituted the Local Love shopping initiative with weekly drawings, similar to the Summer Passport program. The program has been met with positive feedback from both businesses and consumers
- Ms Graney and her team are working on creative solutions to the forthcoming State requirement of charging for merchandise bags at businesses – a receipt must be generated and sales tax must be collected/remitted to the State for the sale of bags. This requirement may challenge our many farm stands, and is of particular concern for the upcoming Ag Day in September
- “Free 2 Hour Parking” stickers have been affixed to meters. Ms Graney is looking into meeting the request for 3 ‘short term’ parking spots in Concord Center, which will benefit take-out food and other quick errands
- Sidewalk Sales will be held in both West Concord and Concord Center on Saturday, August 5; Ag Day is scheduled in Concord Center for Saturday, September 9
- A Committee member asked where these ‘special event’ dates were listed, and the consensus was that Living Concord has a full calendar

Ms Hughes presented a detailed overview of the MBTA Overlay District, the ‘by right’ multi-family zoning plan that must be in place by December 31, 2024. Ms Miller and Ms Stevens added to the conversation:

- For Concord, this is 1094 units, at a density of 15 units per acre; 50% of which must be within one-half mile of one of the commuter rail stations. Note, there is no mandate for building the units, only for the zoning to allow it
- Hybrid public meeting in June drew 140. Additional public meetings are scheduled for July, August, and September. In addition, Ms Hughes and Ms Stevens are holding open one-hour community engagement events to gather input. They are also meeting with representatives from our community cohorts (i.e. Lexington and Andover) to share ideas and best practices
- Ms Stevens shared maps showing the ½-mile radius, as well as highlighting excluded (state owned, or in a flood plain) areas. These maps and additional information are available on the Town website: <https://concordma.gov/3292/MBTA-Communities>
- Brief discussion by members of EVC agreed that this is an exciting opportunity to re-think our commercial space and to consider purpose-building an inviting area that will further the goals of this committee

Public comment was solicited, none given.

Meeting adjourned at 5:24pm

Minutes taken and submitted by Dawn Rennert