

**Town of Auburn  
EDC Meeting Minutes  
February 2, 2021- 7:00PM  
Virtual Meeting**

*Present*

Michael Carnevale, Chair  
Chris McCoy  
Lindsay Baker

*Not Present*

Jonathan Sparling  
Mary K. Lauria-Joyal

The February 2<sup>nd</sup> Economic Development Committee Meeting was called to Order at 7:00pm

**Economic Development Coordinator Report**

○ COVID-19 Update

The Economic Development Coordinator (EDC) updated the committee about the numerous COVID-19 grants and loans that have been available throughout the end of 2020 and early 2021. The EDC routinely updates the Economic Development Committee, Business Roundtable and Auburn Chamber of Commerce about newly released COVID-19 programs and business aid.

Additionally, the EDC informed the Committee that the Auburn Chamber of Commerce made calls to all members to reach out about membership payment options and to see if any businesses need assistance or COVID-19 resources. The Town of Auburn is working diligently to keep up with the constantly changing business requirements and newly released business resources.

○ Presentation & Potential Vote: Library/ Goddard Park project

The Economic Development Coordinator (EDC) presented a PowerPoint about the proposed library/Goddard Park/ bridge project. The presentation included a summary of the proposed project, relevant plans that support this redevelopment effort, estimated project cost and grant funding and next steps. The Committee expressed their strong support for the project.

The Library/Goddard Park/ Pedestrian Bridge project supports the overall vision for Drury Square and will help develop a sense of place and to enhance the economic value of the area as a place to shop, live, and visit. Goddard Park and the Auburn Public Library are anchors in Drury Square

which provide opportunities for civic engagement, outdoor programs, recreation and educational activities. The proposed project is consistent with recent planning and economic initiatives for the area. Currently, the Auburn Street reconstruction project is underway and the Central Mass Regional Planning Commission is working with Town Administration to create a public preference survey for the park which will be used to craft a redevelopment proposal/report for Goddard Park to supplement the redevelopment efforts. The Arthur M. & Martha R. Pappas foundation recently approved the Town's grant request for \$505,000 for this proposed project. This generous contribution provides an opportunity to implement suggestions from recently approved plans (Master Plan, Economic Development Plan, Planning Vision and Design Guidelines for Drury Square, etc...). Creating a physical connection from the Library to Goddard Park will help create a walkable district and encourage more use of the park. This proposed project will truly allow the Town to have a central focal point in Drury Square that residents, businesses and visitors will be encouraged to utilize for recreation, education or community events.

Lindsay Baker voted to support the proposed Library/ Goddard Park/ Pedestrian Bridge Project, seconded by Chris McCoy. The Board voted 3-0 in favor.

- 50 Washington Street, Chapter 61 Land

On December 29, 2020 the Economic Development Committee was notified that the Town received a Notice of Intent under M.G.L. Chapter 61 to sell land at 50 Washington Street. There were no immediate comments at that time.

50 Washington Street is a 30.50 acre parcel of land owned by the SYLVIA C POST FAMILY LTD PARTNERSHIP (according to our Assessor's card); according to the Notice of Intent it is owned by James G. Cutting and Laurel A. Post. The Purchase and Sales agreement is for \$450,000 to the buyer, 190 Washington Auburn, LLC, Logan R. Huffman, manager. Mr. Huffman is also the owner of Eastland Partners which is developing the Reserves at Blaker Street. Additionally, Mr. Huffman purchased at auction a 56 acre parcel at 190 Washington Street, which abuts 50 Washington Street. The Notice of Intent states that the proposed use of the land is commercial.

Michael Carnevale asked if the Town had any additional details regarding the proposed use. The EDC stated that at this time the Town does not have any further details. Town Administration will be working with the Board

of Selectmen and Eastland Partners throughout the process and more details will hopefully be made available soon.

Lindsay Baker stated that it will be nice to see that portion of Route 20 developed and used for commercial purposes.

There were no additional comments or concerns.

After due consideration the Economic Development Committee voted 3-0 to not recommend the Town exercise its right of first refusal (Motion made by Chris McCoy, seconded by Lindsay Baker).

- Mary D. Stone and Julia Bancroft Update

- The EDC gave an update to the Committee regarding Mary D. Stone and Julia Bancroft. Construction at Mary D. Stone is still underway and they are making great progress. Pennrose Properties is closing on Julia Bancroft in early February. Leasing activity at Mary D. Stone should begin in the Spring/Summer 2021.

- Grant Update: DLTA, Local Rapid Recovery Grant, Wayfinding Grant

Town Administration applied for a Local Rapid Recovery Grant for COVID-19 business relief. If awarded, the Town will be paired with a consultant for technical assistance. Additionally, the Town applied for District Local Technical Assistance (DLTA) resource aid through Central Mass Regional Planning Commission (CMRPC). The DLTA funds would be used for the public outreach portion of the Goddard Park Redesign project. CMRPC and the Town have been working on a conceptual redesign of Goddard Park and we are ready to begin the public outreach portion. The Physical Development Committee for CMRPC will be meeting to review all DLTA projects on February 4<sup>th</sup>. Lastly, the Wayfinding grant is complete and the Town will be working towards implementation.

- New Business Update

Central One Federal Credit Union call center located at 20-30 Elmwood Street is fully operational and all of their employees moved into the office in early January.

Webster Five is moving forward with construction at the new headquarters located at 35 Millbury Street.

Lindsay Baker asked when Bar One & Sushi- 850 Southbridge Street plans on opening. The EDC said that they are still renovating and should hopefully be open soon.

- **Next meeting date:** April 2021 (TBD)
- **Minutes:** No minutes for approval.
- **Adjournment:** Chris McCoy made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Lindsay Baker. All in favor.