



Town of North Kingstown, Rhode Island

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MINUTES

WICKFORD ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY BOARD MEETING

TUESDAY, October 3, 2017

Attendance: Curtis Givan, Sarah Folger, Björn Wellenius, George Brennan, Palmer Beebe, Martha Pughe
Kevin Maloney (TC), Liz Dolan (EDA), Shaun Lacey (Planning Dept)
Public: Amy Sonder, Dave Wren, Rickey Thompson, Linda Piedra

1. **Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 5:35pm.
2. **Approval of Minutes:** The minutes from 9/5 were approved as presented.
3. **EDAB Updates:** Wellenius described the EDAB report to the Town Council on town owned properties. It went well and was favorably received by TC. He went on to mention TC Maloney's 'goals' on TC's 9/25 agenda. Maloney mentioned that the solar committee had met. There was discussion about using the 95 acre old town dump for a solar farm.

4. **Request for WEDAB Opinion of Proposed Demolition Ordinance**

The Planning Commission has requested WEDAB's opinion of the Planning Department's draft Ordinance.

Beebe started by describing the draft ordinance and outlining some history. Lacey further described the ordinance as a response to concern over possible development on newly sewered areas. TC requested options. The Demolition Ordinance creates a delay period and notification period for the entire Federally delineated Historic District which exceeds the local Historic District by four times. According to the draft any exterior feature will be subject to demolition review and the Building Official will determine whether the permit will be issued or a delay and notification process will be necessary. Wellenius wondered about the scope of the ordinance versus the true area of concern which is Brown and Phillips Streets where sewered. He also noted that WEDAB has been mentioned as a party to the process by which the ordinance was drafted but in fact WEDAB had no knowledge of its creation or content. Folger noted that the ordinance process is a substantial amount of work for something that is only temporary and not likely to be complete before the Design Guideline process is complete. Brennan questioned the historic relevance of properties within the zone and wondered how the Building Inspector would determine which structures or appurtenances would require a demolition delay. Dolan informed that the building official stated he would deem anything reusable that was not a public safety hazard. Pughe warned that the proposed ordinance was getting awfully close to infringing on property rights. Pughe expressed concern that the notification and negotiation process would drag the permitting process out too long. Pughe also suggested that instead of wasting time on this ordinance full attention should be paid to design guidelines. Maloney noted that the ordinance is a

temporary stopgap but has exceeded the original intent. Wellenius questioned the necessity of such broad reaching ordinance to protect Brown Street. Maloney stated that Comp Plan has been approved by the Planning Department. Wren wondered how the design guideline process might protect historic buildings on Brown Street. He cautioned that design guidelines need to be inclusive enough historically preserve Brown Street. Wellenius wondered how WEDAB should conclude and what is being asked of them. Beebe suggested that WEDAB should vote to approve or reject the ordinance as proposed and second appoint an author to forward an opinion. Wellenius motioned that WEDAB recommend the ordinance be withdrawn and therefore rejected as presented. Folger seconded. The motion carried 5-1 with Brennan dissenting. It was then agreed that Beebe explain the rejection in writing with the assistance of Brennan. This would be forwarded to TC by way of the Planning Department.

5. **Preservation of Brown Street – Design Guidelines Progress:** Beebe reported that the Steering Committee has been chosen and they will meet October 12 to begin the process.
6. **Wickford Junction**
NK/RIDOT/NK Chamber Fall Function: Dolan described the Function at the Junction on October 18.
7. **Wickford Sewer Update – Progress:** Beebe reported sewers are proceeding well. The system may be active in December but certainly by spring.
8. **Other Public Comments:** none
9. **Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 7:10pm.