

CITY OF NEWTON, MASSACHUSETTS

Economic Development Commission (EDC)

MEETING MINUTES

March 12, 2024

The regular meeting of the Commission was held at 7 p.m. on Tuesday, March 13, 2023, at City Hall in Room 204. Remote participation was available via Zoom.

Attendance: Jack Leader (Chair), Jim Griglun, (Vice Chair), Jane Obbagy (Secretary), Lisa Adams, Marcela Merino, Chuck Tanowitz, Barney Heath (staff), and John Sisson (staff). Guests Lauren Berman of All Over Newton and EDC appointee Hedy Jarras.

Remote attendance: Deborah Jackson, Matt Segneri, and EDC appointee Ramzi Elfekih.

Florent Mali?

Approval of minutes: Minutes of the February 13 meeting were approved.

City Updates

Mr. Sisson provided an overview of City Ordinances that may create unnecessary regulatory hurdles for small business owners.

Major real estate development projects

Village Center Zoning updates

Washington Street Pilot: business outreach

Outdoor dining season 2024

DEI Consultant status

Industrial Zoning: next steps

Crosswalk signals and Newton's employment clusters

EDC Project Subgroups:

- Ms. Adams shared ideas from the subgroup's discussion about updating Newton's economic development strategy. Mr. Leader said the group may want to focus more on micro-issues than macro-trends in the update.
- Mr. Florent presented several ideas from the subgroup's January 24 discussion of how to create a database of local businesses that could be leveraged by the City and the business community and engender better communication.

- Mr. Plottel said the rDNA permitting subgroup had not met recently. He explained the effort faces some challenges, such as providing input on defined regulatory permitting and making suggestions about process redesign.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:39 p.m.

Next meeting: 7 p.m. on Tuesday, March 12, 2024.

Submitted by John Sisson, Economic Development Director.