

EDSC MINUTES 8/24

PRESENT:

Moe Lucey, Co-Chair (running meeting)
Rich Parenteau, Co-Chair
Eliza Bachelder
Alicia Dostilio
Byron Kern

Absent:

Ian Acker

Also present:

Kit Maloney, Select Board
Julia Cabral, candidate for EDSC

Call to order: 6:30

Pledge of Allegiance

Approval of minutes from 5/25 and 7/27 (unanimous)

New Business:

Update on Candidate sub-committee

-update from Alicia Dostilio on interviews with Grace and Julia: both candidates came to us excited and with great experience and strengths. The subcommittee felt both candidates were excellent. Julia requested that she be considered for the alternate position and Grace for the regular member position.

-Moe outlined that the subcommittee submitted our questions for review and got the OK from Diane that there were no potential legal issues and that we'd like to bring those questions to the committee.

-Moe asked that Kit suggest a process for bringing our recommendation to the Select Board; Kit suggested that we submit a written summary via email outlining our recommendations to her as Select Board liaison so she can bring it to the Select Board; SB chair can also be included.

-Eliza made a motion to recommend to the Select Board Grace Rote and Julia Cabral for the regular member and alternate positions. Alicia seconded. Unanimous vote in favor.

-Moe handed out the interview questions that the subcommittee formulated for feedback from the rest of the EDSC. Byron suggested updating question 2 for clarification, we will send to Diane for approval. EDSC will keep these questions available for potential use in future subcommittee interviews.

Other Business:

Ideas to support local business

-Alicia suggested inviting the North Yarmouth Business Association to attend a meeting. Byron and Rich aren't sure the association still exists. We plan to reach out to several prior members.

-Moe suggested formulating a list of businesses that might be in town.

-Eliza suggested a survey to local businesses to learn more about how EDSC can support them, and a "business of the month" to give shout-outs to local businesses each month.

-Moe suggested this ties in with presence at events like the upcoming Village Block Party.

-Rich pointed out that the Comp Plan has a list of businesses from 2018 and we can update that. And it would be nice to highlight new businesses. Byron added that it would be great to highlight the ones that don't have an obvious brick and mortar presence.

-Moe asked whether any other committee might have engaged with any of this and the group couldn't think of any other committee work on this topic. She also notes that we will need to conserve bandwidth for our potential two charges coming from the Select Board soon.

-Alicia pointed us to the town website's link to North Yarmouth Business Association page.

-Byron suggested helping revive the NYBA might be the best way to use our time on this. Moe added that it would be great to also find out some of the reasons the NYBA lost momentum and how we can help get them going again.

Village Block Party

-Do we want a presence? Byron will be in attendance; Eliza's family will stop by. Eliza suggested if we wanted to have an official EDSC presence we should discuss with the town staff that are organizing and we agreed it's probably too late to try and pull together an official presence. Alicia noted that she was pleased to see this happening at Sharp's Field as community gatherings were part of Mr Sharp's intention in asking the town to reserve that field as open space.

-Henryfest - Byron described the event as lively with music, food trucks, etc.

-Moe suggested if we want to be involved in future events, we get a list going of things we'd like to be a part of.

-Barn Dance at WHCC: there is a history of barn dances at Wescustogo Hall in the old location, and she remembers those events fondly.

-Byron suggested once we have a list of local businesses we can help act as a liaison with those businesses when these events come up to facilitate their participation if desired.

Discussion of Prior Committee Charge:

-Moe asked Kit about the process for being "done" with a charge; Kit answered with some options for what we might like to communicate to the Select Board.

-The committee was in agreement that we feel we are done with the Comp Plan charge.

-Alicia wondered about the infrastructure charge Kevin Robinson was involved with. Rich expressed that this was a charge that came from Kevin that has not gone forward without Kevin's interest and knowledge in this area. Byron said that the water supply was an issue Kevin was looking into a great deal and that Yarmouth Water District set up the new pump that assured adequate water supply, which contributed to that charge being less at the forefront.

Potential New Committee Charges

-Sidewalk Plan

-GPCOG Climate Action Plan - Moe introduced the beginnings of this process and the focus on climate resilience especially with regard to flooding.

-Moe suggested that we may need to utilize subcommittees with such a heavy load of potential charges coming up.

-Byron expressed concern about the lack of clear direction regarding the EDSC in the charter; the description of the committee is a bit vague especially regarding “sustainability” as that can be read as sustainability of the economic development and/or environmental sustainability. This may be a good opportunity for the committee to clarify for ourselves what these things mean.

-Moe asked how we each interpret the definition of sustainability in the name of the committee. Byron, Rich, and Moe all expressed that they read it as sustainability with regard to economic development. Byron noted that much of what we are assigned seems to be because we are the “best fit” for the assignment and not necessarily because it’s what we are supposed to be working on. Eliza views the “sustainability” part as a both/and rather than an either/or. Alicia agrees and sees it as a “how to sustain our natural resources while growing.” Byron pointed out that these seem like two big things for a committee that meets once a month to tackle, and that that’s why most towns have separate economic development and environmental sustainability committees, and that this may be a good moment to ask the Select Board to clarify our responsibilities.

-Kit clarified the difference in language - “charter” vs “charge” and read the EDSC description.

-Moe suggested that before the next meeting we might all like to jot down some thoughts on how we feel about our current EDSC description/responsibilities.

-Byron pointed out that we are on a tight timeline if we want to let the Select Board know about what we’re thinking about this before we get two potential new charges on the 5th.

-We can’t do this via email, so Alicia suggested we ask that the Select Board be specific as to how our new charges relate to the charter’s EDSC description. Rich suggested that if we have a subcommittee for sidewalks, a subcommittee for the climate resiliency work, etc, then that work can be done between meetings, and that we should communicate to the select board what we’d like to work on. The group agreed that we need to wait for charges to assign subcommittees but that we will most likely need to rely on subcommittees for all the work that will need to be done.

Moe asked for any more thoughts on this and Byron asked whether anyone is planning to attend the Sept 5th Select Board meeting. Moe noted the sidewalk planning group will be presenting at the meeting. Rich suggested we all commit to either attending or watching the meeting. Byron asked that someone let those that can’t attend know a time stamp for those who will be streaming it; Eliza agreed to do this.

Public Comment

-Kit Maloney clarified some next steps regarding communication with the Select Board. She asked whether we didn’t discuss much about the potential sidewalk charge because we feel it’s a “done deal” or whether it’s not a major area of interest and asked us to discuss more about what we’d like to do. Alicia said her sense was that we’d be asked to gather feedback from the community regarding potential sidewalk plans and that this felt like a natural evolution from part of the Comp Plan review charge. Byron noted that that goal was linked with mixed-use, village center

development goals and that walkability supports the link between residential and commercial. He recalled Mike Mallory's questions at a previous meeting about whether sidewalks are planned for the right spots. Rich pointed out that there are phases to sidewalk projects and that we could help figure out which phases to prioritize in the timeline. Moe wonders whether our role is to gather feedback from the community or doing more "project manager" stuff; the committee seems to feel community feedback is the goal.

-Kit noted that it's great of Byron to suggest that we highlight the less visible businesses but that the EDSC is well placed to also be discussing these more visible businesses and how they contribute to our community. Moe agreed that we can play a role in communicating the impacts of business tax dollars. Rich pointed out that business development being "good for the community" could be subjective the way "rural character" has been.

-Moe noted that our role going forward was a good thing for Byron to have brought up and that this conversation is valuable and timely. Byron noted that clarifying this stuff is an important step going forward.

-Moe thanked Julia for her attendance this evening.

Vote to adjourn. 7:50 pm we are adjourned.