

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

MEETING MINUTES

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 21, 2026 at 6:30 PM

Town Hall, 1009 Main Street, First Floor Meeting Room, Tewksbury MA

Committee Attendance: James Mackey, Eric Ryder, Ryan Lloyd, John Lombardo (arrived at 6:37), Tim Swett, Perry Delisle, Scott Ciccone, and Jomarie Buckley (arrived at 6:39)

Other Attendance: None

Meeting called to order at 6:33 PM, motion to open meeting by Eric and seconded by James, unanimous vote

Public Comment: None

OLD BUSINESS:

09/17/2025 one correction to minutes (vice-chair instead of co-chair for John Lombardo) and then approved as amended. Eric voted to approve as amended and Scott seconded. Unanimous vote yes.

Feedback on questions sent to community Economic Development planner: Tim shared list from October 2025 of open leases and sales from Costar that Alex Lowder shared with him. Alex noted that the most inquiries she received are from contractor yards, personal service establishments and small-scale warehouses. Alex noted that last survey was in 2009. There were 330 responses to the Open Space and recreation survey in October 2025.

Future Constituent and Business Survey:

Discussion on creating a survey for the town and again what the scope of the committee is. It was suggested to do the resident survey at the next Town Meeting and the committee will limit the questions to 3-5 questions and a comment section. Eric noted that we should focus the questions as we can anticipate residents asking about Stadium Market Basket Plaza. James noted we need to educate residents as to what things like “Cold storage” are.

It was discussed what residents believe the town needs (“what’s missing” question) as well as asking residents what they go out of town for with regards to businesses and services. John suggested we brainstorm questions between now and the next meeting. Tim noted Alex had communicated that the last survey she was aware of was in 2009 but Eric and James stated they believe there may have been surveys since then. and on suggestion that had been presented previously was closing down portions of main street to make things more “walkable” on Sundays. Tim asked that everyone think of questions and he will follow up with Alex Lowder as to any questions she might have. Perry noted he would also like to have us consider a more general business outreach survey to see how to the town can support them and what needs they might have. John inquired if we had any type of business workshop and we noted the local Chambers of Commerce generally run those. Jomarie suggested that maybe we do the business surveys through both of the local Chambers of Commerce. The goal would be to determine what would is the inhibitor to growth and investment as a business in town. James noted the town used to have breakfasts partnered with the Chamber and the attendance was not great which was why they stopped doing them. Eric noted it would be helpful to know from Alex if there are any small business grants available in FY 2027 that we could give info to the local businesses. Eric also noted that some businesses have reached out to see if the common could be used as a venue for different activities. We discussed a restaurant bingo or restaurant week fundraiser. James noted that Brian Scholfield was going to create a restaurant bingo. The Chamber had done a taste of Tewksbury previously which is another idea to expand into possibly an outdoor venue. The committee members will send any resident questions and business questions for the survey to compile to discuss at the next meeting.

Eric noted that 1325 Main Street has been sold (the lot next to St. Williams) and is going to be mixed use. Some residential with commercial in the back. The final plans haven’t been completed yet.

NEW BUSINESS:

Feedback from Dunstable EDC regarding partnership and discussion from July 2025: Tim noted that Alex and him had met with members of the Dunstable EDC and attended one of their committee meetings back in July, 2025. Their EDC also acts as a Planning Board. Tim reached out to one of their members in October to get an update and they were working on updating their zoning bylaws and digitizing many forms and processes. They are looking to use CPA money to build some docks. They will reach out should they have additional questions.

Upcoming business openings or special town economic events:

1325 Main Street lot- again, mixed use with residential and commercial.

Tim noted the for sale/for lease at Maverick's and James noted that was just to clean up the title.

Last Winter Market was last week at the Senior Center.

Economic development-related items raised in recent public meetings (for situational awareness), including examples such as:

Astle St. Housing Development: James noted that this doesn't fit into the perceived scope of our committee and inquired why this committee would be discussing it and Tim noted how the project could potentially impact businesses and traffic in the area and the projects that are spanning other Board and Committees that potentially could have an economic impact to determine what the status of the project is. James noted once the committee's mission is more clearly defined, the discussions can be narrowed to the purpose of the committee. Perry noted that part of our scope should be looking at new growth and the statistic of new growth as a measure of success. The question becomes if new growth for our purposes is strictly commercial or would also include residential. James noted because this is a residential project, it is not something the committee should be discussing further until our scope is more defined.

Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) Project: Tim reached out to the state team to get an update as to the status of the project and was told that all the info was at the public meeting. Jomarie again noted that the scope of the committee should be defined as this is a great example of a project that may create tax revenue for the town but the concerns outside of the tax revenue are hotly debated. Eric agreed that the scope of the committee is important if we are to discuss this further. James also noted that even the draft mission statement would not allow the committee to discuss further as the committee has no permitting or other authority. John noted that the impact of a project like this on smaller businesses is something that the committee should be considering. James noted the larger consideration not just for this project but overall is what our role is in projects prior to their various board approvals and allowing the various town boards to use their processes to

evaluate. Perry noted that he thinks it is important for the committee to retain a limited scope for the time being and can consider expanding the committee's role later.

Trahan School reuse project proposals: Tim noted he included this because the proposed idea may also impact businesses. Perry and James discussed the role of Alex Lowder and the two local Chambers of Commerce and if this committee's role is to support those roles.

Walmart/Motel 6 area- Town Manager-initiated economic development task force topic: Eric noted that the town manager has been working with the police chief and Alex to work on safety concerns in the area and James noted that it may have been a misnomer to have called it an economic development sub-committee. Eric stated that Stadium Plaza has reached out to many businesses for that plaza and nothing has come to fruition yet. The road work there currently is just to repair parts of the 495 overpass.

Topics for Future Agendas:

- Finalize mission of committee
- Finalize resident survey
- Finalize business survey
- Invite Alex to future meeting to discuss how the data in the surveys can be utilized and the mission of the committee

Schedule of Next Session: Wednesday 2/25/2026 at 6:30 PM

Adjournment: Motion to adjourn made at 7:48 by James and seconded by Eric. Unanimous approval.