



Economic Development Advisory Group

Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, February 12<sup>th</sup> 2020

Location: Ashland Town Hall, SB Room

101 Main Street, Ashland, MA 01721

Opened meeting at 1:10pm

Attendance: Alan Macintosh, Dennis Ahern, Garrett Quinn (Absent: Julia Chase, Pam Bathen)

Business Incentive Program Review of Applications:

1. Review of Mazi Kitchen and Bar business incentive application. Applicant applied for the sign and façade and amenities financing incentive. Applicant requested \$30,000 for equipment purchases and \$5,000 for sign and façade improvements. The applicant has made a personal investment of over \$1,000,000 on renovations of the space at 320 Pond Street. The monies requested through the business incentive program will be used for painting the exterior of the building, purchase of kitchen equipment to include a pizza oven, gas char broiler, convection oven and dishwasher. Applicant met all requirements required in the rules and regulations, however did not qualify for the additional \$10,000 in rental assistance as they own the building. Group agreed that the additional funding (up to \$20,000) could be put towards the equipment as it is stated that it can be an and/or option. G. Quinn made motion to recommend application, D. Ahern seconded. Vote was unanimous.
2. Review of Diversity Early Learning Center application for rental reimbursement financing and sign and façade improvement incentive. Applicant requested \$10,000 for rental assistance and \$3,435 for sign and façade improvements. This business owner has invested over \$20,000 of their personal funds to build a new child care facility in Downtown Ashland in the Federated Church. The monies requested through the business incentive program will be used for the cost of a new fence in the front of the Federated Church for the children to stay safe and reimbursement for rent over the course of the year. Applicant met all requirements required in the rules and regulations. D. Ahern made motion to recommend application, G. Quinn seconded. Vote was unanimous.
3. Review of the YMCA application for amenities financing for rental assistance and equipment totaling \$20,000. Because the application states that the program is for



“for-profit” businesses the group decided to not vote on the application as it did not meet that requirement. Discussion regarding this followed, see notes below.

Other Items that may arise: Group discussed possible changes to the program application:

- The question of non-profit organizations came up for discussion after the YMCA application. They felt that the application is a good use of funding as they would like to support the organization and the future it brings with it to Ashland. Group advised Beth Reynolds to discuss with legal counsel if a change to the application could be made and would address later.
- Group discussed adding in a working definition of expansion for existing businesses to qualify for amenities financing. Group felt that the current application left room for interpretation. Recommending that we add into the application:
  - (For Current Ashland Businesses) Define expansion as:
    - Increase in physical location by 1,000 square feet
    - Adding 2 additional employees with expansion of physical location
    - Personal Investment of over \$50,000.
  - Group advised Beth Reynolds to consult with Legal Counsel and then submit revised application to Select Board for review.

Meeting adjourned at 2:15pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Beth Reynolds

Economic Development Director

Town of Ashland