

Meeting Minutes – Economic Development Advisory Committee
Northfield Town Hall
69 Main Street, Northfield MA

Meeting held August 16, 2023– 5:30-7:00 pm, First Floor Conference Room

Call to order- 5:30pm

Members present:

Virginia (Jinx) Hastings, Sarah Kerns, Steve Stoia, Robin van der Maat

Not present: Nohham Cachat-Schilling

Also present: Mallory Sullivan, Town representative

1. Meeting organization & process meetings will allow for individual updates, but will center on collaborative progress toward economic development for Northfield. Committee hopes to have business and economic development guests at upcoming meetings.

2. Discussion of Minutes

- Committee recognised the goal of transparency, but felt the 7 pg draft posed accessibility barriers to readers looking for a brief summary. Additionally, committee members felt that review of such a detailed summary would be unnecessarily time-consuming.
- Use of the posted agenda as an outline was proposed for posted minutes, and the committee discussed ways to increase accessibility for non-attendees, such as posting meeting recordings.

3. member updates

- **Jinx- pollinator patches project and beautification.** Discussed inexpensive planting to make Northfield beautiful and support insect ecology.
- **Steve- town businesses and mentoring-**
 - Steve shared that an outside economic development consultant had stayed in town during the last week, but had not contacted the committee.
 - Mallory stated that she and the town administrator had engaged with a FRCOG economic development consultant, and had not included or notified the Economic Development Committee.

4. Robin- update on data collection, and discussion:

Robin shared her spreadsheet of Northfield businesses. It was collected from public sources and divided into active businesses, closed businesses, and those whose activity was unclear. The committee discussed the spreadsheet items and added information based on personal knowledge. Robin stated that the two main causes of closed businesses she had found were covid closures and lack of a successor as owners retired.

5. Mallory- Discussion of the Economic development survey - continued work was done on wording and focus of the survey. The committee agreed to finalize the survey at the 30AUG meeting.