

**Devens Enterprise Commission (DEC)
Public Hearing and Regular Meeting
Minutes April 6, 2023**

Members Present: Duncan Chapman, Dix Davis, James DeZutter, Melissa Fetterhoff, Robert Gardner, Christopher Lilly, William Marshall, Martin Poutry, Deb Rivera, Paul Routhier, Deb Seeley
Staff: Peter Lowitt, Neil Angus, Beth Suedmeyer, Dawn Babcock
Guests: Peter Rucinski (Grant Road Resident), Carl Sciple (Harvard Resident)
Members Absent: Jim Pinard

(7:30 AM) Chairman William Marshall called the meeting to order and did a roll call.

Mr. Marshall read that the Devens Enterprise Commission (DEC) Regular Meeting and Public Hearing is being held virtually in accordance with the Act (Senate Bill #2475) relative to extending certain COVID-19 measures adopted during the state of emergency. Interested individuals can listen in and participate by phone and/or on-line. Persons with disabilities or requiring interpretation wishing to listen or participate should contact 978.772.8831 x3334. In accordance with the State's Open Meeting Law, Mr. Angus informed all attendees that the Devens Enterprise Commission is recording this meeting.

During Roll Call, Mr. DeZutter took the opportunity to introduce Carl Sciple as his replacement Commissioner, representing Harvard, as soon as the Governor's Office appoints him, and he is sworn in.

(7:36 AM) Chairman Marshall noted, we will need to nominate Ms. Rivera as a Regional Representative for this meeting. The nomination was approved unanimously by a roll call vote.

(7:37 AM) Mr. Marshall reviewed the Agenda of this evening's meeting.

(7:38 AM) Review Minutes:

- **February 28th Minutes** were discussed. Mr. Marshall asked if anyone had any edits or concerns, none were noted. Mr. Marshall then asked for a motion to accept the minutes as written and the motion was made by Mr. Lilly and seconded by Mr. Gardner. The Motion to approve the February 28th minutes was **approved by a roll call vote. Mr. Chapman and Mr. Davis abstained from voting as they were not present for the February 28th meeting.**

Public Hearings:

None to review for this meeting.

New Business:

(7:40 AM) Discussion of Meeting Options Going Forward: Mr. Marshall noted that the Governor's office has approved remote meetings through March 2025. Mr. Marshall also noted that this topic was raised at an earlier meeting and would like to continue the discussion today. He would like to see about moving to a hybrid meeting going forward, and this way we could continue to have meetings via Zoom January – March for those who travel to FLA for the winter. Mr. Marshall asked for input from the Commissioners about the move to hybrid, he also asked the DEC staff if there were any concerns as this change would increase the work of staff. Mr. Angus believes that hybrid would be the best approach as it could be the best of both options as it will allow Commissioners and residents who can't make it to the office to still attend via zoom. Mr. Gardner, Mr. Davis, and Mr. Lilly all agreed that Hybrid would be the best option to move to. Mr. Angus did ask that the move to Hybrid wait until the June 8th meeting as we have a Public Hearing for 11 Grant Road scheduled for the April 25th meeting and the notifications have already been sent out noting a Zoom Meeting. Mr. Angus noted that the hearing may be continued to the May meetings. Mr. Marshall then asked for any questions or concerns about starting the Hybrid meetings on June 8th. None were noted so the meetings will be Hybrid starting Thursday June 8th at 7:30 AM.

(7:53 AM) EPA/SmartWay Program Affiliate Partner: Mr. Angus noted that as part of the DEC climate action plan, one item we are focusing on reduced greenhouse gases. The US EPA has a SmartWay plan that is to help with transportation efficiencies and in line with the Devens Eco-Efficiency efficiency measures and the transportation demand management initiatives of the Final Environmental Impact Report for Devens. DEC has coordinated with Abbey Swain who is the regional coordinator for the SmartWay Program in New England, and with the approval of Chairman Marshall, the DEC has joined their program as an Affiliate Partner, which means we commit to sharing the resources of the program with the Businesses

in Devens. We have already engaged with Little Leaf Farms and they are actually looking to electric some/all of their fleet and excited to work with us on this program. This partnership also deals with Rail Freight, so we have reached out to CSX as well. The DEC will be hosting a Devens Sustainable Freight Forum on May 12th for the Businesses here in Devens as well as businesses in some of the neighboring towns. Mr. Marshall asked if there were any questions, none were asked, so he then asked for a **motion to approve the joining of the EPA SmartWay Program. The motion was made by Mr. Poutry and seconded by Mr. Davis. The motion was approved unanimously by a roll call vote.**

Mr. Chapman noted that the state has passed the MBTA housing guidelines for communities within MA so anybody in a town that has a MBTA station or adjacent towns will need to provide zoning for multi-family housing by the end of 2025. With Devens being 3 different towns Mr. Chapman was wondering if anyone had read the legislation and what impact if any could this have on Devens. Mr. Chapman was also wondering if this could help with the housing at Vicksburg Square. Mr. Lowitt did note that he has spoken with the program coordinator for the department of housing. Devens doesn't have the burden to meet that guideline but, we could work with the surrounding communities to assist them reach a solution. The issue of this would be the final resolution of Devens Jurisdiction. Mr. Angus noted that if we did take this on we would need a super town meeting for all three towns to lift the housing cap. Mr. Chapman noted that the towns do not have to actually start building but they do need to identify a location. Mr. Gardner asked if rezoning Vicksburg Square could cover this? Mr. Lowitt responded yes, and he has raised this but the housing cap would need to be addressed. Mr. Marshall noted that Vicksburg Square has been a challenge for Devens but we would need a super town meeting to get the housing cap lifted. Mr. Marshall asked that either Mr. Lowitt or Mr. Angus send a letter to the towns offering Vicksburg Square to address the MBTA Guidelines and see where that takes us.

(8:09 AM) Read File: Mr. Angus reviewed the documents that have been put in the read file:

- MassEcon's Economic Impact Award – April 6th SMB and Watson Marlow being recognized.
- Harvard Press March 17th – Ayer symposium explores that town's vision for future use of historical land at Devens.
 - Mr. Marshall recognized Mr. Angus as a speaker at the event as well as the three Ayer Commissioners (Mr. Gardner, Mr. Poutry & Mr. Pinard) for sitting on a panel. Mr. Marshall also noted that there was a "meet the residents" event which had two residents from Auman Street and one from Grant Road.
 - Mr. Poutry noted that he attended the event on Saturday as well and felt that day was just as well received as Friday.
 - Ms. Seeley asked if the event was recorded, and Mr. Angus responded that it had been recorded and that he would send the links to the recordings out to the commissioners.
- US EPA SmartWay Transport Partnership Press Release
- Ayer/Devens Main Street Pocket Forest – Planting Day April 29th

Ms. Suedmeyer wanted to ensure the commissioners all knew that on Friday, April 21st Devens will be hosting an Earth Day event, in collaboration with Ayer and UF Fish and Wildlife Service, as they did last year with the closing of MacPherson Road to vehicles and opening it to pedestrian traffic.

(8:17 AM) Old Business: Mr. Marshall asked if there was any old business and Mr. Lowitt did update the commissioners on the appointments of the commissioners from the Governor's Office. Michelle Collette and Jim Sciple's nominations have been submitted to the Governor's Office and we are just waiting for their nominations to be accepted. Mr. Lowitt also noted that we are still waiting to hear back from them on the reappointment of the other commissioners. Mr. Marshall noted that this year there is going to be a lot of transition with Mr. Davis and Mr. DeZutter stepping down as Commissioners and Mr. Lowitt retiring from the Commission in July.

(8:19 AM) Public Comment: Mr. Marshall asked if there are any questions from the public. There were no questions or comments.

(8:20 AM) Mr. Marshall then noted the upcoming meetings. April 25th 6:45 PM Public Hearing, which has one Public Hearing scheduled, and May 4th 7:30 AM regular morning meeting.

(8:21 AM) Mr. Marshall asked for a motion to adjourn the Meeting. The motion was made by Mr. Gardner and seconded by Mr. Poutry. Adjournment was concluded unanimously by a Roll Call vote.

List of Exhibits

1. April 6, 2023 Agenda
2. February 28, 2023, Minutes
3. Read File - April 6, 2023