

Essex Economic Development Commission (EDC)
Special Meeting Minutes August 31st, 2023
Hybrid at 81 Main Street, Essex Junction and Zoom
Meeting recording available at <https://youtu.be/9jd00GAOe4Q>
Approved 9/21/23

Attendees

Commission Members:

Present: Rebecca Robinson (Chair), Ken Signorello (Clerk), Ta Tanisha Redditta, Melissa Stewart (remote)

Absent: Nick Fukuda,

Staff: Jean O'Sullivan

Business Presenters: Myti: Brooke Isabelle (Shopkeeper Care Specialist) and Cyrus Patten (Social Impact Manager)

Public: Patty Davis, Jean McBride (Essex Reporter), Dan Parkins (Community Wealth Development), Mary Post, State Senator Irene Wrenner,

Meeting called to order by Robinson 8:05 AM

Updates to the Agenda:

Add Approval of Minutes 7/20/21 - Signorello

Amended Agenda Approval Moved - Signorello, Seconded Redditta Passed (4-0)

Public Comment:

Patty Davis: Recommended added meetings to the Front Porch Forum Event Calendar. Concerned that the public is not able to know what is going on.

Dan Parkins: Encouraged retention of Town Plan action items in Commission packet. 2a, 2b, 2d, Willing to be involved in 2.1, 2.4

Presentation by MYTI:

Patten stated that the convenience of online shopping has had a negative impact on local economies. With large ecommerce shopping like Amazon the amount of purchase dollars that stays in the local community is between 1 and 7% depending on where the delivery driver resides. Shopping locally 60-73% of purchase amounts stays in the local community.

Isabelle explained that Myti allows shoppers to shop multiple stores and their purchases are delivered in one package. Myti picks up orders and delivers them.

Patton explained that in addition to an economic impact Myti will have an environmental impact because they are using electric vehicles for their pickup/delivery. Also much less packaging is needed. Shoppers do not pay a fee, merchants pay a percentage.

Robinson asked about the geographic area. Patton: Chittenden County and currently trying to help with flood relief in Washington county.

Patton: merchant identity is preserved, merchant websites and locations are shown. Orders are batched even from multiple stores.

Isabelle: Myti is also targeting merchants that may not have a brick and mortar presence.

Davis said she opposes a fulfillment center. Patton agrees and believes that with a local model sales taxes, delivery employment as well as the purchase will be kept local.

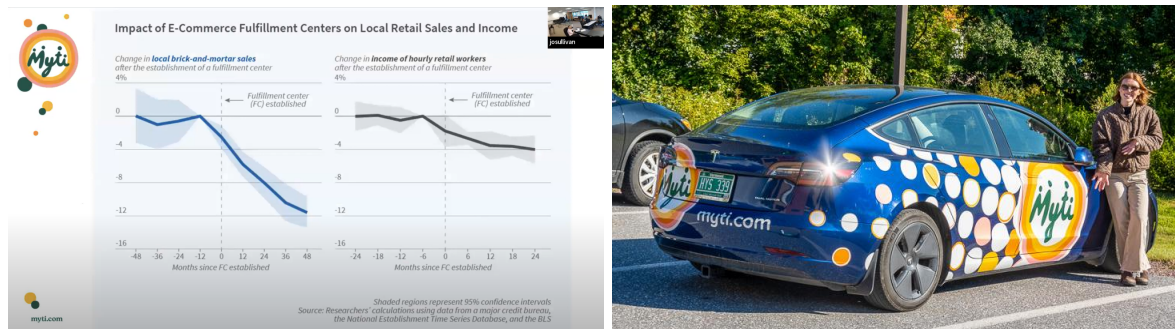
Parkins asked about viability. Patton explained that with Myti the data they collect will not be monetized by Myti. Instead they will inform their partners about demand indicated by data trends..

Signorello mentioned that there are many small agricultural producers and even though some products are perishable, batching orders instead of products might allow fulfillment of perishable food products.

Davis suggested that Myti might encourage new larger businesses.

Robinson summarized that for local businesses, brick and mortar or online, can work with Myti to increase their market.

Patton: no need to have a web site or brick and mortar presence to set up on Myti.



Action: Robinson moved to move the Work Plan agenda item to the next meeting. Seconded by Redditta Passed (4/0)

Town Plan: Robinson displayed a version of the Town Plan content that was being worked on. Signorello noted that it was not the version that was in the packet which he had edited. Robinson agreed to integrate existing edits and comments into a version to be reviewed at a future meeting.

Davis commented that the lack of close access to the interstate and continued industrial development is hurting the quality of life and the environment due to increased truck traffic.

Approval of minutes from 8/3/23: Robinson requested striking one sentence. Acceptance of amended minutes moved by Robinson, Seconded Signorello passed (4,0)

Approval of minutes from 7/20/23: Moved by Stewart, seconded by Robinson Passed (4,0)

Next meeting will be on 9/7/23. Signorello said a member needed to volunteer to work with Jean to identify a business to visit/invite for the 9/21 meeting. O'Sullivan expressed concern that the methodology for selecting a theme/business to include in future meetings was not efficient. Signorello explained that the idea was for one commission member to work with staff each month and that the outreach should be volunteer driven and staff supported so as not to burden staff. Robinson volunteered to do the next one and suggested planning out the schedule for the next few months.

Motion to adjourn by Robinson, Seconded Redditta. Passed (4,0)

Robinson Adjourned the Meeting at 9:06

Draft Minutes Submitted by Clerk Ken Signorello, August 31, 2023, Approved 9/21/23