

TOWN OF PETERBOROUGH
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

APRIL 20, 2010

MINUTES

Members Present: Hope Taylor, Jack Burnett, Jeffrey Crocker and Craig Hicks, Chair.

Staff Present: Carol Ogilvie, Director and Laura Norton Administrative Assistant, Office of Community Development.

Meeting called to order at 7:35 a.m.

The members had a brief discussion about an address from Bob Crawford, a guest speaker from SCORE ((Association of Small Business Counselors but originally Service Corps of Retired Executives). They briefly discussed what the organization offered for services to the business community. Unfortunately Mr. Crawford did not make the meeting.

Ms. Ogilvie asked the members to consider their meeting schedule. Mr. Hicks noted their main function was to supervise the funds for the TIF Districts and that activity was quite minimal recently. The members agreed to meet quarterly unless there was a specific need to call a meeting in the interim.

Chair Hicks went on to lead the discussion of the 2010 zoning ballot, specifically Amendments 3 and 4. These amendments would re-zone two parcels on Scott Mitchell Road and a state-owned parcel at the intersection of Route 202 and 136 from their current Office District status back to Rural District. Chair Hicks noted the parcel by the intersection is state owned but one of the Scott Mitchell Road parcels should be reconsidered. "Otherwise, there is another piece of land gone" he said. The members discussed the strategy of re-zoning the parcels with Mr. Burnett interjecting "this further de-business-izes Peterborough." Mr. Crocker suggested the members write a letter to the Planning Board expressing their concern of the whittling away of business opportunities on a parcel by parcel basis. He asked "were we ever consulted? Did they ask our opinion?" The members agreed a letter to the Planning Board would be an appropriate course of action. Mr. Burnett noted that the parcels zoned for business were largely on the major transportation routes through planning and that rural could be established "wherever."

The members went onto briefly review the other zoning amendments that included prohibiting internally-lit signs in the Downtown Commercial District, a Noise Pollution and Disturbance amendment for emergencies and a Demolition Delay for buildings greater than 450 square feet that are more than 50 years old.

After discussion Chair Hicks noted "we will send a letter about the two zoning amendments and leave the rest out of it." He also briefly updated the members on the church-owned land on High Street. He reported the land had been sold to a woman who planned to build a house and put the

rest of the land in conservation. “That is the last big General Residence piece of land and it is a natural resource we will never get to use” he said. He noted the potential of the parcel to have been an excellent location for work force housing, close to town services and the school. He noted “that was a major blow to increased density here.”

Chair Hicks then gave the floor to Ms. Taylor who had requested discussion about the recent ZBA ruling regarding tenants living in a boarding house on Pine Street. General discussion about the case and its outcome followed. Ms. Ogilvie noted that the problem was not so much the town ordinances as it was the state’s. “The building does not meet the state definition of a dwelling” she said adding “the property owner needs to decide how to respond to this.”

Chair Hicks asked if there was any thought to expanding the West Peterborough District with a brief discussion following. The members also discussed the concepts of zoning and the question of zoning a particular area and waiting for a user to come along as an effective means of master planning. “Does it work that way?” asked Mr. Crocker with Ms. Ogilvie reviewing the zoning process and that most often an area is zoned in advance of the anticipated uses. Ms. Ogilvie also pointed out the Village Commercial District as being very liberal with its provisions, “but nothing has happened there.” She added “zoning is not always the villain, I hear that but it is not the case. Things are just not happening.”

After another brief discussion about zoning Mr. Crocker noted “it really comes down to a micro level, where the rubber meets the road is at the neighbor versus neighbor level.” Mr. Hicks interjected “I can see that but if you look at the outcomes from what we wanted – it is not so great. The members went on to discuss the amount of time (often months) it takes to get something on the ballot.

Mr. Burnett asked for clarification about Planning Board Chairman’s statement about needing more workshops noting that workshops do not consider public input. Ms. Ogilvie explained the intension of the statement was to invite and welcome as much public input as possible. “The word workshop was not meant in the traditional sense” she said adding “the Planning Board wants very much to have a public outreach component.” She noted the Wetland Workgroup will be addressing service and social groups alike adding “they have no intention of excluding public input.”

After a very brief discussion about the potential for a special town meeting in September the meeting adjourned at 8:15 a.m.

Next Meeting:

Tuesday, August 17, 2010 at 7:30 a.m. at the Town House.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura Norton
Administrative Assistant