

**JOINT MEETING OF  
THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY  
AND  
THE GREATER DOWNTOWN TAX INCREMENT FINANCE DISTRICT  
ADVISORY BOARD**

**March 16, 2010**

**MINUTES**

**EDA and GDTIF Members Present:** Hope Taylor, Rick Monahon, Jeffrey Crocker, Barbara Miller, and Susan Phillips-Hungerford.

**Also Present:** Laura Norton, Administrative Assistant, Office of Community Development; Rodney Bartlett, Director of Public Works; Hoyle, Tanner & Associates (HTA) representatives Matt Low, Chris Mulleavey and Todd Clark.

**From the Public and Business Community:**

Laura Mahoney, Richard Estes, Duffy Monahon, Pamela Gleeson, Deb Kaiser, Dick Freeman, Bill (Jane's in Stitches), Rick Monahon, Pamela Gleeson, Susan Phillips-Hungerford and others not identified.

There was no quorum for the 7:30 a.m. EDA Meeting. Mr. Bartlett noted the purpose of this portion of the meeting today was to further discuss parking in the downtown area. He reminded the members and audience about the motion made at the last meeting (Robinson/Williams) to take more time to discuss the expenditure of funds for a parking study with all in favor, "so now we are back to the Greater Downtown TIF Advisory Board and others for input."

Mr. Bartlett informally reviewed the parking discussion of last month noting the problem with new businesses, new stores, and new commercial retail possibilities in the center of town is that they all want their own parking in front of their stores. "The only option is to go up" he said. He reviewed the consideration of the municipal lot across from Roy's Market last month.

Ms. Taylor asked about the status of the Armory which is now town owned. Mr. Bartlett noted the Armory is (will) be managed by the Recreation Department. Ms. Miller noted that funds received from grant monies were enough to order appliances for the kitchen and convert one restroom to be ADA compliant. She noted the focus of the programming at the Armory would most likely be on a "pay as you play" basis but also noted it would also provide activities for young children and senior citizens.

The Greater Downtown TIF Meeting called to order at 8:00 a.m.

Mr. Bartlett reported the results of a meeting on the condition of the Main Street Bridge with NH DOT last week. He noted review of everything from access to the downtown during construction

to the decision between a traffic oval or traffic lights. He noted the need for an existing condition study and how a conceptual would be built from that. He reviewed the uniqueness of the Jack Arch Bridge built in 1938 and how the radius on each abutment are different, “perhaps to accommodate the wall at the Library” he said.

Mr. Bartlett went on to talk about a meeting with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) scheduled for April 1, 2010. He briefly noted that each state has a preservation program that is tailored to its own needs and organizational structure and that the Office is rooted in the New Hampshire Division of Historical Resources. He also explained that the original estimate was for a bridge rehabilitation so increased costs could well be a factor. Mr. Bartlett noted the opportunities for federal monies “but whatever we get our share is 20% of the total cost so we have to consider how we pay for what we design”

Laura Mahoney asked about the “stone look design” that had been discussed at the last meeting and whether or not the opportunity to auction or sell off the original stone might be a option to help pay for the project. She asked “can they (SHPO) *make* us rebuild the bridge as it is?” Mr. Bartlett replied by explaining that when federal funds are involved the input from the State Historic Office “needs to be heard and listened to.” He reiterated the replacement option would most likely change the shape of the bridge a bit “but we will know more after April 1<sup>st</sup>” adding “then we will be slowly heading into the area of other amenities and aspects of the project that will become important.” He specifically noted the issues of a temporary bridge and phasing of the project, and the increased traffic capacity and safety at the intersection.

Dick Freeman noted the logic of treating the projects of the Transcript Dam, the Main Street Bridge and the Route 202 retaining wall as an overall project that should be studied at the same time. Mr. Bartlett agreed, noting the Main Street Bridge was an 80/20 arrangement (80% paid by State DOT and 20% paid by the town), the Route 202 retaining wall was an 80/20 arrangement (80% paid by Federal Highway and 20% paid by NH DOT). “They are being managed together” he said adding “and we are now studying the Transcript Dam needs, it is a good time to do it because essentially it is the same construction techniques to work on the Dam, we are looking at it as a single effort.”

Matt Low of HTA spoke briefly about the project noting the “the bridge from an engineering perspective should be replaced but we still have to justify the replacement with the State Historic Preservation Office. They will be very interested in whether or not the bridge can be rehabilitated.” Ms. Mahoney asked “how much time does that involve? A year?” Mr. Low replied that he did not know “there are variables” he said noting the Cultural Resources of NH DOT was ultimately under the jurisdiction of the Federal Preservation Act.

Mr. Mulleavey asked if he should hang the plan Mr. Bartlett said he did not think that was necessary “we are all fairly clear where we have been” he said. He briefly reviewed the issues of the bridge integrity and the rehabilitation versus replacement question. “The next steps should focus on what is in front of us” he said. Ms. Taylor said she thought the rehabilitation versus replacement issue had been settled in favor of a replacement. “I thought we were done with that” she said. Mr. Bartlett then noted “part of the process is to go through that discussion with the State Historic Protection Office. The bridge has historical significance, it is a requirement of the

process and we fully expected from day one to go through that process.” Mr. Low spoke briefly on possible mitigation efforts related to the removal of a historic resource.

A brief discussion about the abutters to the project and how they may be affected followed. Mr. Bartlett advocated getting through the April 1<sup>st</sup> meeting “and getting the ramifications of the existing conditions” was first on the agenda. Ms. Phillips-Hungerford expressed her concern for the residents of Granite and Concord Streets She noted she had a client who owned at One Pine and was concerned about the impact of the project on their property as well as the large brick houses on the corner “which are almost originally the only thing like it in the state.”

Ms. Monahon noted consultant Liz Hengen would be on board with the Heritage Commission to go over areas not covered by the HTA consultants. She noted that they would most likely get going after the April 1<sup>st</sup> meeting. Mr. Low agreed noting that the meeting “would most likely instruct us on what we might have to investigate.” Ms. Monahon also noted the early morning meetings were not a good time for many people and suggested an evening meeting. Mr. Bartlett replied “HTA is on the agenda for the Board of Selectmen’s meeting on March 30<sup>th</sup> and will be presenting an update at that time.”

A very brief discussion about the level of service at several intersections and the targeted project area followed. Ms. Phillips-Hungerford suggested a study be done on the population and the increased number of cars. “In the 1960’s a family of four had one car; that is not the case today” she said. Ms. Taylor suggested a study on the impact of through traffic on Peterborough.

Mr. Bartlett summarized by reiterating the importance of the April 1<sup>st</sup> meeting. He noted that taking that step now would “give everyone a better idea of where we are headed” and added “then identifying the stakeholders is a natural next step.” Mr. Monahon interjected “this is an organic process of negotiation. It is just one more level of input that may be frustrating but it is a process we have to go through.”

The brief discussion that followed included the time frame for the next meeting and what to anticipate from the April 1<sup>st</sup> meeting. Ms. Taylor asked “will we be forced to build what they recommend?” As Mr. Low was replying “I don’t think *forced* is the word” Ms. Mahoney interjected “*coerced?*” and Mr. Estes “*subsidized?*” Mr. Mulleavey responded by noting “the Town owns the bridge, input from the State Historic Preservation Office will happen.” He went on to note the issues with the bridge and its current 15-ton weight limit will factor into the discussion of rehabilitation versus replacement, adding “otherwise the bridge will always be posted and the fire trucks will always have to go around.”

Mr. Low noted the minutes of the April 1<sup>st</sup> meeting will published for review and reiterated “no decision will be made there. We will have to consider the direction of potential decision and so the homework.”

A brief discussion of the status of the retaining wall project followed with more discussion on the importance of the stakeholders and abutters being informed and kept up to date. Mr. Bartlett concluded by noting “the next level of questions need to wait on how we end up on the bridge.”

Mr. Low thanked the audience noting “you are very proactive and the public input has been amazing. You should pat yourselves on the back.” He concluded by reassuring the audience “this is a healthy, organic process and we know we are not there yet.”

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura Norton  
Administrative Assistant