

**JOINT MEETING OF
THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
AND
THE GREATER DOWNTOWN TAX INCREMENT FINANCE DISTRICT
ADVISORY BOARD
September 6, 2011**

MINUTES

EDA and GDTIF Members Present: Hope Taylor, Willard Williams, Craig Hicks, Susan Phillips-Hungerford, Jack Burnett, and Rick Monahon.

Also Present: Carol Ogilvie, Director and Laura Norton, Administrative Assistant, Office of Community Development; and Fash Farashahi, GIS Specialist.

The meeting was called to order at 7:35 a.m. by EDA Chairman Hicks. In reference to a graphic on the screen the Chairman noted “this is a new expansion of the Greater Downtown TIF based on Ms. Ogilvie’s understanding of what we discussed last time” and looking over at Ms. Ogilvie added “and I think you are right.” The members also reviewed a slide with the current and predicted assessed values and total land area. In reviewing those numbers Ms. Ogilvie reiterated the limits of the TIF be no more than 8% per district (not to exceed 16% total) for assessed values, and for land area, no district more than 5% or a total of 10% for combined districts. She also noted that while originally TIF Districts could not be expanded the regulations have changed and expansion is permitted. It was also noted that the current status was 1.81% total assessed value and 10.35% total land area. In discussing the numbers it was noted that an updated (revised assessment) from the Assessing Clerk was imminent.

Ms. Philips-Hungerford in at 7:40 a.m.

The members reviewed the Downtown and Village Commercial Districts. The members reviewed their previous discussion to include the commercial uses on the north side of Route 101 and Grove Street, and at the other end of the district adding the NAPA Auto Parts store, a small private residence and the Bagel Mill. The members went on to have a brief discussion about the inclusion of the old Telephone and Telegraph building on Concord Street. Chair Hicks asked “what is the flavor?” adding “does the group want to stick it in there as well?” Ms. Philips-Hungerford spoke about the next fifteen years and noted “it might be prudent to include it.” All of the EDA members agreed it would be a good idea. Mr. Williams and Mr. Monahon agreed as members of the Greater Downtown TIF Advisory Board.

DPW Director Bartlett was asked to come in to answer some questions. Chair Hicks led a brief discussion about the potential oval or roundabout at the intersection of Main, Concord and Pine Streets and how the new road may encroach the boundary of the TIF line. Chair Hicks noted “that will be a serious conversation in the future” adding “I don’t want a line impacting where the funds can go.” Chair Hicks suggested the members think about including the townhouses to

the west as well noting “if we (the town) plan for a roundabout, the driveways on both sides would have to be realigned.” A brief discussion about the plans for the downtown intersection followed with members noting the roles of the Federal Government and the State Department of Transportation. Mr. Bartlett noted “right now the project is 100% covered (80% federal monies and 20% state monies)” adding “and that includes the realignment of the town house drives.” He reiterated the work had been pushed back to 2015-2016. Chair Hicks interjected “that is for right now, but can we trust the feds or find out when the time comes they say *oh now it is going to cost you 10%*” Mr. Bartlett replied “I think that is a fair assumption.”

Ms. Philips-Hungerford asked about potential push-back and noted it was important to explain the groups’ reasoning for all of this “why we included the things we did.” Mr. Burnett noted the Greater Downtown TIF Board makes the recommendation to the EDA. The EDA in turn makes the recommendation to the Board of Selectmen and if the proposal is greeted positively at each step it goes to public hearing and goes forward from there. Mr. Williams asked “can it be modified along the way?” with Mr. Burnett replying “yes.” Ms. Philips-Hungerford asked if it would not behoove the members to “shop around.” She suggested by that the members “go to cocktail parties and talk it up so that it is coming from the *bottom up* as opposed to *top down*.” “Go wild” replied Chair Hicks. Ms. Hungerford explained she meant visiting the service group and organizations as well as the Chamber of Commerce and businesses to educate the public on the TIF. Mr. Willard suggested getting going with the public hearing process early on with Chair Hicks replying “we are going to be done in October” and looking at Ms. Philips-Hungerford he added with a grin “then you can go do your cocktail parties.”

A brief discussion about the Main Street Bridge and retaining wall followed. Chair Hicks reiterated that when the time comes “the feds may not be able to cover all this.” Chair Hicks asked the members if they were all on board with the suggestions talked about with Mr. Monahan noting he was but added “I don’t want to see it as a vote for a roundabout.” Chair Hicks noted the parameters would be extended as discussed pending public feedback.

Chair Hicks then asked about the Monadnock Healthcare TIF District expansion. It was noted the zoning ordinance describes the district by parcel identification number. The question raised was whether or not a purchase by and change to the Hospital parcel number would automatically incorporate that lot into the Monadnock Healthcare District. Ms. Ogilvie reported that town counsel had recommended that needs to go to Town Meeting. “So the town votes the re-zone to the current Healthcare zoning district” replied Chair Hicks with Ms. Ogilvie replying “yes.”

The members briefly discussed the five properties that are now owned by the Hospital and by another entity, with Mr. Monahan interjecting “it is hard not to look at this as *there goes the neighborhood*.” The members went on to discuss Summerhill, another large expansion project in town with Mr. Monahan noting “but the three most recent purchases by the Hospital were residential so you can see what I mean by *there goes the neighborhood*.” Mr. Monahan went on to note “there is no real secret about the motivation of purchasing those parcels” adding “it is the incremental creep of that that has me concerned.”

The members then reviewed the overall picture with Mr. Burnett noting “what we are looking to do is maximize our planning potential for the future.” He reviewed the process of the TIF and added “with the fine tuning by the public we sketch in the possibilities of options for the future.”

A brief discussion of the fact the town is in a cooperative school district followed with Chair Hicks reiterating the 35%/65% formula noting “it changes how we spend our money.”

The members discussed the many projects that loomed in the future and how they would be paid for. Chair Hicks noted “look at our area and the size of our town; we have a heck of a lot of things coming at us” adding “there are gong to be huge expenses in a short period of time and I think we should be very cautious and quite frankly, selfish at this time.”

The members also discussed the potential of expanding the West Peterborough TIF District to Elm Street at the top of Main Street. Chair Hicks noted “this would capture Adam’s Playground and Union Street” adding “a new pool would be great for the West Peterborough TIF District.”

Ms. Taylor noted that expanding the TIF “will give us flexibility for the future (and) we may not use it, but we have it.” Chair Hicks noted the need for new economic development “to help us pay for the things coming up.” He mentioned the improvements done to the Oval in the town of Milford, NH adding “there is some logic to investing in yourself.”

A brief discussion about what *is* and what *is not* covered by TIF revenue followed. The members asked for and received an update on both the Union Street Bridge and Union Street reconstruction from Mr. Bartlett.

In reviewing the Downtown TIF boundaries Ms. Taylor noted “it makes sense to include Putnam Park if we are including the playground” adding “the rubber is going to meet the road one of these days, we need to have the flexibility.”

Chair Hicks then asked each member individually “if they were OK with the idea.” Mr. Burnett replied “yes but spell out what *the idea* is.” Each member proceeded to reply yes. When Chair Hicks asked Mr. Monahan and Mr. Williams (the two members of the Greater Downtown TIF Committee) about their thoughts Mr. Mohanon noted he was on board with it. Mr. Willard noted he was not a member of the EDA with Chair Hicks replying “I want your two cents worth.” Mr. Willard then replied “not really.”

Mr. Burnett suggested inviting the West Peterborough TIF District Advisory Board to the meetings for joint discussions.

The members reiterated and reviewed the expansion boundaries of the TIF Districts. With regards to the future Ms. Philips-Hungerford asked “is anyone looking at the big picture? Who is forecasting?” A brief discussion of the efforts of the Office of Community Development and the CIP process followed.

The meeting adjourned at 8:40 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura Norton
Administrative Assistant