

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

February 17, 2009

Buffet Room

Intermezzo Restaurant

MINUTES

GDTIF Members Present: Chairman Cyrus Gregg, Rick Monahon, Peter Robinson, Michael Gordon and Selectmen's Liaison Barbara Miller.

EDA Member Present: Chairman Craig Hicks, Rick Monahon, Susan Phillip-Hungerford, and Jeff Crocker.

Also Present: Office of Community Development Director Carol Ogilvie, Administrative Assistant Laura Norton and Public Works Director Rodney Bartlett.

Louis Berger Group: Brian Clogston, Jason Gallant, Tim Higginson.

Merchants/General Attendance:

Pamela Gleeson, Richard Fernald, Hope Taylor, Pam Brenner, Ken Christian, Laura Mahoney, Duffy and Rick Monahon, Joe Byk, Pam Brenner, Georgia and Tony Scaringe, Jack Burnett, Pam Crook, Joanne Eldredge Morrissey, Lee Charlton, Chub Whitten, Bob and Leandra MacDonald, Jack Ellerkamp, Nancy Adams, and Scott Perkins.

“Good morning, let's get started.” said Mr. Hicks as he called the meeting to order at 8:10 a.m. He welcomed the audience to the joint Greater Downtown Tax Increment Finance (TIF) Advisory Board and Economic Development Authority Breakfast. He noted the two Boards were sponsoring the meeting to provide information on the upcoming NH DOT reconstruction project for the Main Street Bridge and retaining wall. He added “this is the second of many public meetings to come as we discuss, review and plan for the improvements to our bridge.” Mr. Hicks introduced the GDTIF and EDA members and gave a special thank you to Georgia, Tony, Gerardo and Kate of Intermezzo Restaurant for their hospitality, and then turned the meeting over the Rodney Bartlett, DPW Director.

Mr. Bartlett introduced Brian Clogston, Director, Transportation Engineering for the Louis Berger Group. Mr. Clogston in turn introduced Timothy Higginson, and Jason Gallant also present from Louis Berger as well as several other team members and their roles and qualifications.

Along with Mr. Bartlett, they reviewed the timeframe for the project. They noted a final fee and scope plan was completed in January with the development of conceptual and preliminary designs “beginning now.” Mr. Clogston told the group the final design and project bidding is scheduled to be completed by September 2010 with reconstruction beginning October 2010 through December of 2011. Mr. Clogston told the group “the work to be done and the information to be gathered is a major project for the downtown here in Peterborough” adding “we want to preserve the look and feel of the bridge that is there today.” Mr. Clogston then spent a few moments explaining the Contact Sensitive Solutions (CSS) methodology, reiterating the knowledge and expertise of his team in this field. He identified *problem identification, problem solution, solution implementation* and *operation evaluation* as the four components of CSS.

Mr. Clogston reviewed the process that included regular monthly meetings through May 2009, then scheduled as necessary. He spoke about place audit, public input, design and engineering, and construction. He noted “this is a collaborative effort with interdisciplinary teams.” He reiterated that public input “is key.”

Mr. Clogston identified three major Task Force areas for public participation. “This bridge is a critical link to the downtown and we certainly recognize that” he said. He noted the three Task Force categories that staff are suggesting were Traffic Management (how the traffic through the downtown and construction site will be managed) Communications & Information (how the merchants, residents and traveling public will be kept informed) and Event Management (the creation of a master calendar of events in the downtown so the construction schedule can be adjusted accordingly). Ms. Monahan suggested a fourth Task Force for aesthetics and historic considerations be added.

Mr. Bartlett noted the monthly meetings would be the 3rd Tuesday of the month through May 2009. He showed a schedule of the March to May venues adding “the intent is to hold the meetings in different locations to reach as much of the public as possible. (Locations included the Town House, the Library and one location to be determined).

Mr. Bartlett concluded the presentation with a slide showing the website address for the project as well as his and Ms. Ogilvie’s e-mail addresses.

Question and Answer:

Chub Whitten introduced himself as a principal of the Brookstone Business Center buildings on Route 202 North. He asked about a minimum of a one-way access on the Main Street Bridge during construction with Mr. Clogston replying “that is currently the plan.” Another member of the audience asked if the one-way traffic would be one way or alternated with Mr. Bartlett replying “it would be both ways, with a signaler” He also noted the presence of the Fire Station on Summer Street adding “certainly their access will need to be maintained.”

A brief discussion about potential detours (most likely Old Street Road and Summer Street) followed with Mr. Bartlett adding “by then the Hospital Connector Road will be in place.” He went on to say “Old Street Road and the Hospital Connector Road may become the alternate route by choice, maybe not by direction but by choice.”

Craig Hicks introduced himself and asked about traffic stacking problems for both local and through traffic. He suggested potentially using Old Street Road for through traffic and another for local traffic. "That is where your Traffic Management Task Force comes in" interjected Mr. Clogston. A brief discussion about other potential alternative routes including the average number of vehicles travelling through town and timing issues (specifically when school starts and gets out) followed. One audience member noted "the locals will find alternate routes of their own." Another member asked about alternate routes for Tractor Trailer units with Mr. Bartlett replying "there are not a lot of alternatives there."

Ms. Phillip-Hungerford spoke briefly about the Downtown 2000 committee and how they had done some research for the bridge noting "the data may be older but it is there." Mr. Hicks also asked about the curvature of the road in the area and a brief discussion about what may or may not be able to be done followed. Both Mr. Clogston and Mr. Bartlett were keenly aware of right-of-ways, as well as personal property impacts. Mr. Bartlett noted "we may be able to move away from the houses and towards the river but that also gets you closer to the river." Mr. Clogston interjected "and that is not always a good thing, we cannot make wholesale changes there." A very brief discussion about the shoreland protection regulations and potential exceptions followed. Mr. Hicks stated he felt "we should build the wall and bring the road to it" adding "we have plenty of protection for Mother Nature around here. It is about time we faced this problem."

Leandra MacDonald introduced herself and asked if a sidewalk on the east side of Pine Street was mute. Mr. Bartlett replied "nothing is mute at this point; we will be talking about all aspects of how to put the project together." He added "this includes sidewalks, straightening out the road, a roundabout. There are a number of considerations" he said.

Mr. Hicks asked for a brief status of the dam with Mr. Bartlett noting possible repairs to the dam may be done as well. "At this point we are looking into the coordination of those repairs" he said.

Ms. Ogilvie then asked if any of the audience would like to volunteer for any of the four Task Forces. She collected a list of volunteers for Traffic Management, Communications & Information, Event Management and Aesthetics and Historic Considerations. A suggestion to advertise the Task Forces was well received and Ms. Ogilvie noted she would create an advertisement for publication in Thursday's newspaper. Volunteers were as follows:

Traffic: Hope Taylor, Peter Robinson, Craig Hicks, Chub Whitten, Lee Charlton, Heritage Commission member

Communications: Pamela Gleeson, Joanne Eldredge-Morrissey

Event Management: Pamela Gleeson, Hope Taylor, Pam Crook, Georgia Scaringe

Aesthetics: Duffy Monahan, Susan Phillips-Hungerford, Michael Gordon.

A brief discussion regarding sidewalks on both sides of bridge followed with Mr. Bartlett stating “we don’t know, we are not sure yet.” He noted there were sidewalks on both side of the bridge currently “but to accommodate additional turning movement it may be desirable to take one or both sidewalks off the bridge.” There was also a brief discussion about a pedestrian bridge on the south side of the bridge.

Ms. Taylor asked if the construction would take place on the weekends, specifically Sundays with Mr. Bartlett replying “that is an example of an event planning task force concern” (determining the when the construction will have the least amount of impact on the downtown).

Mr. Bartlett then reviewed the process for noticing the meetings (the notice for this meeting was posted in all town departments, published in the newspaper, e-mailed and hand delivered to merchants). He also welcomed any suggestions for improved communications.

Mr. Hicks asked if construction time would be saved if the bridge was closed to traffic all together with Mr. Bartlett replying “yes, without traffic it moves faster.” Mr. Gallant spoke briefly about the anticipated construction schedule. “Right now we are looking a season to a season and a half. He explained a season as one spring, summer and fall. He emphasized the critical nature disassembling and reassembling the bridge stones “on top of the traffic.” He noted that with the Traffic Management Task Force they would “evaluate a complete shut down.”

A brief discussion about the time frame and possibility of having two summer seasons effected followed with Mr. Clogston stating he felt the construction would be completed by Memorial Day 2012.

Mr. Bartlett briefly reviewed the Task Force missions with Ms. Ogilvie stating she would get a meeting organized as soon as possible so at the March meeting the groups may have something to report.

One member of the audience asked about the federal stimulus program and if the project may benefit from that money source. A brief discussion followed with Mr. Bartlett explaining the “shovel ready” projects on the Governor’s Ten Year Plan would most likely take priority.

In conclusion Mr. Monahon noted that “planning is critical. When done correctly you have a project you can wrap your arms around and have respect for.” He added he felt the Louis Berger Group “will intelligently and sensibly plan this out.” Mr. Monahon then looked at Mr. Clogston and said “go and act as quickly as possible.”

The meeting adjourned at 9:05 A.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura Norton
Administrative Assistant