

TOWN OF PETERBOROUGH
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY AND GREATER DOWNTOWN TIF
ADVISORY BOARD
MARCH 17, 2008

MINUTES

The Peterborough's Economic Development Authority (EDA) held its regular monthly meeting, in conjunction with the Greater Downtown TIF Advisory Board, at 8:00 a.m. on Tuesday, March 17, 2009 in the Parish Hall of the Unitarian Church on Main Street.

Members present: Chair Craig Hicks, Hope Taylor, Susan Phillips-Hungerford, Ken Simonetta, and Main Street Bridge Task Force members Chubb Whitten, Pamela Gleeson, Richard Estes, Joanna Eldridge-Morrissey, Jack Burnett, Rick Monahon, George Duncan and Duffy Monahon.

Public: Bob Hanson and an unidentified gentleman.

Merchants: Laura Mahoney, the Need for Speed Garage

Also present: Laura Norton, Administrative Assistant, Office of Community Development. Rodney Bartlett, Director, DPW, and Joseph McKeever, Tim Higginson and Brian Clogston of the Louis Berger Group

Call to Order:

Chair Hicks called the meeting to order at 8:10 a.m. and asked Mr. Bartlett to give a brief update of what had transpired since the last meeting.

Mr. Bartlett began by noting the Main Street Bridge project is in fact eligible for consideration under the Stimulus Package Recovery Act. "DOT will have 11 million dollars for bridge programs in New Hampshire" he said. He went to note "it is a first come, first serve situation where projects ready for construction get the dollars first." Mr. Bartlett then described the efforts of the town and the design team "to accelerate the Main Street Bridge process by a year" with construction beginning in the fall of 2010. Mr. Bartlett went on to explain "the Recovery Act may fund projects ahead of us but that is not necessarily bad." He added of the 130 million dollars coming to New Hampshire "116 million has been earmarked for state projects."

Mr. Bartlett noted the Task Force groups have met and would report to the group today. He introduced the Louis Berger engineering team and stated "let's go straight to the Transportation Task Force report."

Mr. Hicks rolled out a large map with an overlay and asked the group to gather around. "This is an initial snapshot of some of our ideas" he said. He reviewed the management of through as well as destination traffic to the Downtown (green line for through traffic, red line for the Downtown). The group presented "2 good routes" including the use of Route 101 and Old Street Road to the new Connector Road to Route 202 as well as the use of Summer Street and Hunt Road. Mr. Hicks noted "having traffic *not* going Downtown *stay away* from Downtown makes sense." Several other routes, possibilities and options were pointed out by Task Force members as well as the

audience. Mr. Hicks then noted “we really need the feedback of the merchants and the community.”

A brief discussion regarding the construction season(s) followed with Mr. Hicks noting the general feedback of local merchants was “let’s shut it (the bridge) down and get it done in one season” with a brief discussion following. A member of the audience asked “what about emergency responses?” with a discussion of emergency as well as tractor trailer unit traffic following.

Mr. Bartlett also spoke about the acceleration of the project. Ms. Eldredge-Morrissey noted that from a communications standpoint “the sooner we (the Communications Task Force) know, the sooner we can get the information out there.” She added “we won’t know what people think until we can present it to them.” Ms. Gleeson agreed adding “the sooner we start communicating the better, even if it is only the possibilities right now.”

Someone from the group asked “is there anyone here representing the merchants?” with no response.

Ms. Phillips-Hungerford asked about Old Street Road and a previous court order to limit the number of trips by a tractor trailer unit on the road several years ago (specifically for collection of water from the wells at the Stone Barn). Additional discussion followed regarding the potential for traffic calming measures at the detour sites that included the use of a roundabout and installation of traffic lights for access and control during construction. Mr. Bartlett reminded the group “the bulk of the traffic concerns are Monday through Friday” and that the construction site may be open to traffic at night or on weekends. He added “so the demand on detour routes will be less when people are home.” He also noted that he expected to see the Downtown merchants adapt by scheduling earlier morning or late night deliveries.

Ms. Monahan asked “is the Library totally tuned in to this?” with Mr. Bartlett replying “yes.” The stimulus package discussion continued with Mr. Bartlett noting other projects may be funded out of the stimulus ahead of Peterborough’s “but the Recovery Act funds will make it easier for us to get more funds.” He went on explain the usual formula of 80/20 (state/town) funding noting “our funds for the Main Street Bridge project are already in place. Any requests for additional funds would be over and above those monies.” He noted other towns have projects ahead of us but added “using stimulus funds for those will free up state funds previously committed to those projects.” Mr. Bartlett also noted how other factors including the bidding process, having all the necessary and appropriate paperwork in place, and the construction administration process come into play.

Ms. Mahoney arrived at 8:35 a.m.

More discussion about the detours followed with an audience member noting “the Old Street Road/Route 101 intersection is already a nightmare.” They went on to discuss signage and traffic calming methods. Mr. Burnett offered the Chamber of Commerce’s newsletter as a source of information “once we have something to print.”

A suggestion was also made to keep the meetings at the Town House as Ms. Mahoney noted she did not know where this morning's meeting was being held. All present agreed having the meetings at the Town House would be easiest.

In conclusion to the Traffic Task Force report the group talked about the potential for a roundabout at the construction site with Mr. Hicks noting "a critical concern is the impact of construction to the Library." Ms. Monahan was quick to interject "it is not just the bridge but the whole area." Mr. Clogston assured the group they would look at all the potential impacts to the buildings and connections.

Mr. Hicks noted the communication Task Force was next. Pamela Gleeson spoke about the meetings that had taken place and noted the communication group would "create a blog as a way to reach out to as many people as possible with real time updated information." She spent some time reviewing a Facebook connection as well as a Twitter Account. Mr. Whitten asked if the Town website would have a section dedicated to information for the project. When the answer was yes, another audience member asked "who's function is it to manage that? Is it a function of engineering or of communications?" A brief discussion followed and it was determined it would be managed by the Town's IT Director. Mr. Bartlett noted "Fash (Farashahi, IT Director) will get the information on to the town's site, how that is linked to other sites will have to be talked about. I clearly see the need to have a more real time, live situation as we get closer to the construction." He then added "integration of all this is the key, that is important."

Mr. Simonetta asked if the use of a blog may have abuse potential "of people with their own agendas trying to make their point?" "Kind of like an uncontrolled town meeting" interjected another.

Ms. Gleeson explained how the blog would be monitored by the Communications Task Force. Mr. Monahan suggested the Task Force agree on a name for the blog and after some discussion they narrowed it to a couple of options to be further discussed. It was noted having key words such as "Downtown" and "Main Street Bridge" were necessary.

For the Events Task Force Ms. Gleeson noted again the information would be distributed via a blog. She added "we would have a merchants section where they could talk about what is going on Downtown." She added the Task Force would meet and strategize.

The meeting adjourned at 9:10 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura Norton
Administrative Assistant