

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

October 25, 2016

MINUTES

Present: James Kelly, George Sterling, Jason Garland, Martha Schaefer, Chubb Whitten, Adam Hamilton, and Cy Gregg

Also Present: Peter Throop, Director and Laura Norton, Administrative Assistant, Office of Community Development.

Chair Sterling called the meeting to order at 7:30 with introductions of the members and staff. "We have a quorum but not a full Board" he said and appointed Ms. Schaefer to sit.

Minutes:

A motion was made/seconded (Hamilton/Schaefer) to approve the Minutes of September 20, 2016 as written with all in favor.

New Village District Presentation:

Carol Ogilvie introduced herself as a Co-Chair of this Committee. She distributed a hand-out of a presentation given at two different public hearings and touched on what the project consisted of, why it was thought necessary and how they were going about it. "In a nutshell it consists of changes to the zoning ordinance in dealing with increasing housing opportunities in town" she said. She went on to explain that years ago the Master Plan has expressed an interest in preserving the Rural District and taking care of the natural resources of that District. She told the audience that with the build out of the Family and General Residence Districts "there is really no other place to go." Having reviewed the housing stock and what people want for housing "a three-acre lot in the Rural District is about all you can do." Citing seniors wishing to age in place and downsize, new families and those looking to rent for flexibility she noted a housing mismatch of the current housing supply and how it is poorly aligned with the evolving preferences among different age groups.

Ms. Ogilvie noted similarly the West Peterborough District adopted in 2004, with no lot sizes and minimal dimensional requirements "was a dramatic change from custom zoning." She briefly reviewed the Master Plan's Vision Statement of developing an understanding of how changes in the demographic makeup influences our housing needs and develop strategies *including* changes to the regulatory structure to meet those needs. She noted potential areas "are areas where these is town water and sewer or a connection to town water and sewer can be made. That is a critical criteria" adding "in essence it is a floating zone but water and sewer are a must."

Ms. Ogilvie told the audience the subcommittee meets every two to three weeks, have sponsored two public hearings with additional public hearings scheduled for November 10th at 6:30 p.m. at Bass Hall at the Monadnock Center for History & Culture and November 17th at 1:30 p.m. at the Board of Selectmen's Meeting Room in the Town House.

From the audience Barbara Miller asked about the feedback with Ms. Ogilvie replying "very positive." Ivy Vann introduced herself as a Co-Chair as well and mentioned the portable booth she sets up for public outreach and distributing the visual preference survey. "The survey is great but it also gives us a chance to talk to people" she said. She also noted the New Village Project has its own Facebook page. Ms. Miller concluded "it is good to see this is on the radar and there is awareness, this is a Peterborough issue and it is good public relations."

Chair Sterling asked how the New Village Project related to the Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND) Overlay District. Ms. Ogilvie brief explained the difficulty of getting into an established neighborhood under current zoning ordinances. "Most lots are already in place and most are nonconforming" she said, TND allows you to subdivide in an established neighborhood if you meet the criteria." Ms. Ogilvie noted "the New Village Project would allow us to go somewhere else and create a new neighborhood with various housing types, shared spaces and limited retail." Ms. Vann added "all developed areas have some homes and you can use this to fill them in if you have town water and sewer." Mr. Garland interjected he had moved back to the area for the small village feel "I think this is an awesome idea" he said. Chair Sterling asked about tiny houses (some as small as 250 to 300 square feet). Ms. Ogilvie told him there were no town restrictions for tiny houses. She went on to add "their appeal is that they are on wheels, they are mobile and I don't know how to address that." Ms. Vann replied "they are on wheels to circumvent local zoning, which is why they are on wheels." She also noted people really seem to like the tiny houses (in the visual preference survey) "they are covered in green (people like) dots all the time."

Welcome Team Update:

As she distributed *Meet & Greet Event* invitations to the members and audience Karen Hatcher told the members "we are in full swing" adding "we have more than 39 businesses on board with five volunteers and 22 visits scheduled." She noted the public notice announcing the Meet & Greet was due to be published in today's paper, 51 people have responded, 40 of them are new residents. With a big smile she said "and they are excited to come, we have hit a nerve." Agreeing Ms. Dietsch added "I was speaking to someone who recently moved here and they said they thought they'd moved to Mayberry." "Wonderful" replied Ms. Hatcher concluding "the businesses have been very generous and the basket itself is a wonderful gift." Mr. Whitten encouraged getting more current residents to attend with Ms. Hatcher

interjecting “thank you for that segue” and looking around the room added “you are *all* invited to attend.”

Chamber of Commerce’s Sean Ryan gave the members some financial facts released for DRED about what newcomers spend in when moving to a new location (reported \$8650.00 discretionary spending in the first 90 days). “For local shop owners to get involved is great exposure. That is a big thing.”

EDA Strategic Plan Discussion and Quarterly Progress Report:

Mr. Throop began with a change in the agenda noting “we are hearing questions in the community about the use of the funds allocated at Town Meeting for an EDA Coordinator and we realized we have not done a good job of communicating, but we have gotten *a lot* accomplished.” He went on to present a Power Point of the evolution and support of the EDA support resources. “It is in two parts” he said adding me (status of the EDA support) and then Jeanne (Dietsch, on efforts and accomplishments).

Mr. Throop distributed a draft press release about the EDA building a strong foundation for economic development noting he would like to get it to the newspaper today. “I would like to get an endorsement for it before we are done here today” he said. He went on to present a presentation which included some background information (Town Vision Forum, re-invigoration of the EDA and support for an EDA Coordinator); advice they’d received from economic development experts including NH Division of Economic Development, Monadnock Economic Development, the UNH Cooperative Extension, Community and Economic Development Program and the UNH Economic Development Academy; understanding economic development framework, strategies and tools (business retention/expansion, business attraction, innovational and entrepreneurial environments, workforce development, quality of place with place-based development and business technical assistance); suggestions for Peterborough (focus on retention and expansion of current businesses and workforce development (noting Peterborough’s unemployment rate was 2.6%), build on community strengths and assets, apply framework to identify/prioritize projects, use EDA funds to hire specialists with proper skills to assist with *specific* projects and realizing hiring a coordinator may not provide the best return for the investment).

Mr. Hamilton asked for an example of hiring a specialist for a specific project with Mr. Throop noted hiring a generalist for their marketing expertise, “they know marketing in and out” but pointed out they may not be so familiar with retention and expansion or workforce development.

Mr. Throop spoke briefly about the Vision Chapter of the Master Plan adopted in 2015 as well as the updates to the Economic Vitality Chapter in 2016 which

resulted in the formation of a diverse planning committee to review the vision goals, design an interview approach to conduct a business needs assessment and develop the baseline data describing Peterborough's local economy. He told the members "James has done two interviews already" adding "and if any of you are interested in doing some interviews we will get you orientated." He went on to note not all businesses could be interviewed and spoke briefly about the possibility of initiating a business visitation program to expand the town's retention efforts.

Mr. Throop spoke briefly about the future. He noted continuing implementation of projects identified in the EDA Strategic Plan, supporting current development (GAR Hall, All Town Convenience Store and GFA Federal Credit Union building site) as well as the hiring an intern that will assist in EDA initiatives *without* cost to the EDA. He told the members the funds allocated through a Special Article do not expire and that no allocated funds had been spent thus far.

Mr. Throop concluded his presentation by reviewing the next steps of orienting the economic development framework completing the Master Plan data collection and analysis, refining goals, projects, priorities and sequence, assessing the best approach for each project (including the skills and resources necessary and available) and hiring project-specific contractors to implement as needed.

He told the members "this is our proposed approach to answer questions about why we have not yet used funds. We have worked very hard to take a thoughtful approach to this." Mr. Throop concluded by telling the members he would like to invite a consultant who presented at the UNH Economic Development Academy to speak to the EDA. "We are looking at December 1st as a possible date, if people are interested" he said. Several members noted their interest but reminded Mr. Throop December 1st was the same date as DRED's Annual Meeting. Mr. Ryan thanked Mr. Throop for the clarification noting "if we don't get the correct information out there, people's minds wander and stories are made up." Ms. Hatcher agreed adding "a communication strategy is important and we need to improve it between all groups." Ms. Miller interjected "it is a dilemma, it is like the roundabout, we get complaints about it all the time but DOT owns it we have nothing to do with it." Ms. Miller went on to note she had referred a business owner in town to SCORE and that service provider had not heard a word back. Mr. Ryan advised her to refer people to the Chamber who in turn would refer them to the Small Business Administration (SBA). "The Chamber is set up to connect businesses to the right sources" he said.

Ms. Dietsch began her presentation by offering the link to the Strategic Plan for additional information:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1VbhUBzu34yM8TFpHsUo2dKS9CFeM2dFuPKaWAGU0nts/edit>

Ms. Dietsch also noted the Tri-State Ecovation Hub, a sustainability cluster centered in Brattleboro and potentially stretching to Southwest New Hampshire (Monadnock Region) and into Northwest Massachusetts.

Ms. Dietsch read the EDA's Mission Statement to strengthen the economic vitality of the town while retaining and enhancing the physical, cultural, social recreational and environmental character of the town. She reviewed the long-term vision of the town (global player in compatible traded industry clusters, a vibrant and integrated local economy and attraction, development and retainment of highly skilled, talented and innovative workforce. She reviewed the three-year goals, the three-year plan to achieve those goals as well as milestones and drivers that the EDA had approved.

Ms. Dietsch went on to note an improved and strengthened relationship with the New Hampshire Department of Resources and Economic Development (DRED), the Broadband and Home Professional Study which showed the importance of a broadband infrastructure for large, small, home businesses and telecommuters.

Ms. Dietsch noted the three-fold pamphlet on why people move to Peterborough. "We have a website now where we can promote our plan" she said adding "and we have Nashua Community college hopefully coming to town and State Representative Peter Leishman and his legislative efforts (on permitting municipalities to bond for broadband)."

Ms. Dietsch went on to review the tracking of occupancy and vacancies, the consistent communication between the EDA and the Master Plan Steering Committee. She noted the creation of a Peterborough Welcome Team. "A fantastic way to meet our goal for stickiness" she said. She then introduced Eddie Gomez who told the members he was the Director of Drum Videographers (a start-up under the People's VC umbrella). He and Steve Lipofsky had collaborated to create a video of why people have moved to Peterborough. He played the video for the members and audience. When done he noted "the video is about 60% complete, it is not finished yet."

Mr. Whitten interjected "may I offer some constructive feedback?" When Mr. Gomez replied "sure" Mr. Whitten complimented the video but noted "we have to celebrate the businesses that are here, we need to get them into the program." Mr. Whitten went on to say he had noted a lot of startup in the video (which is great) "but we need employers that we have in there, those stories need to be front and center." Mr. Whitten complimented Mr. Gomez on grasping the quality of life Peterborough "but you also need to grasp the quality of jobs. Quality of life is key but everyone is pitching live, work, play we need to provide stickiness by celebrating the businesses that are here."

Running out of time Chair Sterling asked if there was other pressing business. Mr. Throop asked for an approval of the press release they had discussed earlier. A motion was made/seconded (Hamilton/Garland) to approve the press release with all in favor.

Next Meeting:

The members agreed to reschedule their November meeting for November 29th at 7:30 a.m.

From the audience Dennis Calcutt noted he would like to request some of the Committee's time at a future meeting for an update on the Hydro Dam.

Nashua Community College Update:

Mr. Whitten gave the members a brief update on the New Hampshire Community College Systems' further assessment and employment data reaching beyond the town of Peterborough. He told the members Kristyn Von Ostern was back on Board and that they had letters of support from Peterborough's Planning Board, Board of Selectmen, the EDA and Town Administrator Rodney Bartlett. He told the members he would also like a letter of support from the Conservation Commission and if applicable, any energy groups the town may have.

Referring to Mr. Bartlett's mitigation of parties in the Global Montello (All Town Convenience Store) stall, he concluded with a smile "We just need Rodney to put on his cape again."

Mr. Ryan distributed a handout reviewing the Chamber's Guide Book distribution and travel barometer statistics to the members before they adjourned at 8:55 a.m.

Next Meeting:

November 29, 2016

Respectfully submitted,

Laura Norton
Administrative Assistant