

## FINAL MINUTES

### EDC MEETING MINUTES

April 19, 2011

#### 1. Call Meeting to Order

Chairman Barry Sandberg convened the meeting at 8:22 am in the Nowak Room of the Town Office Building. Other members present were: Vice Chair Caroline Amport, Committee Secretary Beth MacDonald, Town Manager Russ Dean, Building Inspector Doug Eastman, Town Planner Sylvia von Aulock, Christine Davis, Karel Kunz, Selectmen's Rep. Julie Gilman, Madeleine Hamel, and Chamber Representative Mike Schidlovsky.

Mike Schidlovsky asked to introduce Allison Field, who is Chairperson the Chamber of Commerce Economic Development Committee as well as the Regional Vice President of Provident Bank. Ms. Field and Mr. Schidlovsky feel that the Chamber and the Town's Economic Development groups will complement each other and Ms. Field is happy to be working with the Town EDC group. Mr. Sandberg and the rest of the EDC welcomed Ms. Field.

#### 2. Approval of minutes

**Ms. McDonald moved to approve the minutes of the April 5, 2011 meeting. Ms. Amport seconded. Vote: Unanimous.**

#### 3. Finance Report

None.

#### 4. Exeter Town/Committee Reports

Ms. Gilman reported that the Heritage Commission is applying for a grant for a mapping consultant and that the first phase of this project would be to get a good overall picture of the town and then decide what is next. They are also working on a survey of the Winter Street Cemetery to see if it qualifies for National Historic Preservation. Ms. Gilman also noted that Exeter is a Certified Local Government, which gives Exeter priority over other towns that do not have this designation when it comes to grant funding. Ms. Gilman also reported that the Transportation Committee has begun a survey regarding the proposed local bus route to see where residents would like the stops to be.

#### 4. Discussion/Action Items

##### a. New Business

##### i. Preparations for EDC Visioning Meeting/Master Plan presentation

Town Planner Sylvia von Aulock presented the Commission with a handout regarding the Master Plan of Exeter and the visioning sessions that helped to shape the plan. The Master Plan consists of nine (9) chapters which were worked on three (3) at a time. The chapters that were approved first were chapter 1 (Existing /Future Land Use), Chapter 4 (Utilities and Public Services), Chapter 5 (Community Facilities) and Chapter 6 (Parks and Recreation) and these chapters are also in need of updating first. Ms. von Aulock said that each chapter had a visioning session and that the process that was used was to educate the people at the session about the subject, then listen to input, then voting on decisions. This process won an award from the New Hampshire Planning Association.

Ms. Hamel said that some of the suggestions in the summary appear to be economic in nature, but wondered why there was no Economic Development Chapter in the plan. Ms. von Aulock said that the Master Plan is a changing document, so chapters can be added over time, and in fact, an Economic Development chapter should be added. Ms. Amport asked who participated in the Master Plan visioning

## FINAL MINUTES

sessions and Ms. von Aulock said it was a combination of board and committee members as well as residents. Ms. Amport noted that there are areas of the Master Plan where growth is discouraged and Ms. von Aulock said that attitudes toward growth have changed substantially since that portion of the document was completed.

Mr. Kunz asked how the leadership of the town has used the Master Plan so far. Ms. von Aulock said that they have not used it at all because it was not available to them before now. Ms. Amport asked what Ms. von Aulock thinks is missing in the Master Plan and Ms. von Aulock said that an energy chapter, the economic development chapter that was discussed earlier, and a health development chapter that addresses livability and walkability of the town. The town has addressed sidewalk issues on many occasions and they have received a low priority each time.

Ms. Gilman said that the town has an Energy Committee that has worked to make town buildings more energy efficient in the past year and they are also working on a power purchase agreement that will be going out to bid for the Waste Water Treatment Plant with Solar Array, which is part of the Municipal Energy Assistance Program.

Ms. Field said that she attended a recent Census presentation that reported that Exeter has experienced no growth over the past 10 years. Furthermore, the demographic have changed to include a high population of 'Over 55 housing'. Exeter is now the 4<sup>th</sup> 'oldest' state in the country. It appears that Exeter needs to balance their demographics for future growth. Ms. Amport agreed that the town needs to attract young professional families.

Mr. Sandberg asked if another design charette could be done for the Epping Road area, and Ms von Aulock said that it could be done again. Mr. Dean suggested a possible business forum for the area that would include current businesses as well as land owners. Ms. Field said that the Chamber could help to put that together. Ms. Davis asked what may be encouraging or discouraging businesses in town when it comes to them making the decision to do business in Exeter. Ms. Field offered that the economy has been very difficult and that zoning and perceived property values have been challenges. Mr. Schidlovsky said that the Chamber could begin to ask the questions of what attracts and repels businesses when deciding whether to come to Exeter or not.

### **b. Old Business**

#### **West/Ex Project update**

Don Briselden could not attend due to an injury, but he sent an update via email:

- Exeter Public Works folks and I met and are working on the train station project timeline and land ownership particulars. It is a work in progress and we may have specifics for the next meeting.
- The Station Committee and the Chamber of Commerce hosted the bi-monthly meeting of NNEPRA (Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority--the quasi government organization that funds and oversees the Downeaster) operations committee at the Hampton Inn last Thursday. 35 attended. The meeting agenda routinely consists of Amtrak & Downeaster performance specifics and station particulars. The meeting provided an opportunity to bring everyone up to date regarding the station project and the station area development initiative West-Ex. The Downeaster growth continues (6% increase the past month) and on-time performance is

## FINAL MINUTES

improving. Many trains are now running full, so best to reserve on line and not wait until the last minute to get a ticket.

- The town has submitted a CEDS (Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy) grant (Department of Commerce \$\$) intent application for expanding the parking lot at the station. This is the first step in the process and if approved will only get us on the regional priority list at this time.

### 6. EDC Subcommittee Reports

#### a. Executive- None

#### b. Finance- Report due in May.

#### c. Governance and Regulations-

Mr. Kunz and Ms. Gilman have reviewed the Hawkers and Peddlers Town Ordinance. Mr. Kunz began the discussion by saying that he felt that the economic aspect of the EDC has been lost because this group is being referred to as the 'Exeter Development Commission'. He thinks that that focus should be put back on the word 'economic'. Mr. Sandberg agreed and will arrange to have the Commission's name updated on the website.

Mr. Kunz and Ms. Gilman compared the Exeter Town Ordinance Section 802 (Hawkers and Peddlers) to other towns in the area and found the ordinance to be adequate and that some minor changes should be made such as the size limits of the vendor vehicles, cost, locations and types of vending in certain locations. Mr. Kunz spoke about the purpose of the ordinance, which is economic opportunity, and that the current hot dog vendor and ice cream trucks were the primary vendors in town. Ms. McDonald wanted the record to reflect that she cannot be involved in any voting or discussion regarding the hot dog vendor because her firm represents him.

Ms. Gilman suggested that the EDC make recommendations to the Board of Selectmen regarding changes to Town Ordinance 802. Ms. Amport asked what is accomplished by inviting mobile businesses to town. Mr. Kunz said that the discussions should continue at subsequent EDC meetings to develop recommendations for the Board of Selectmen.

#### d. Public Programs-

Subcommittee will meet on Wednesday, April 20 at 3:00pm in the Wheelwright Room to discuss the TIF program..

#### e. Marketing and Communications- None

#### f. Business Retention & Recruitment- None

### 7. Meeting Schedule Review

The next meeting will be in two weeks, Tuesday, May 3, 2011 at 8:15am.

### 8. Announcements-

Ms. Field reported that the next "Business After Dark" event will be on April 28 from 5-7pm at the Provident Bank on Portsmouth Ave.

Ms. Gilman said that the HDC and Heritage Commission will be having a joint meeting on May 21

## FINAL MINUTES

regarding Form Based Code, which is similar to a TIF concept.

Mr. Kunz said that he will be sending members of the Commission an article on a TIF project in Ipswich, MA.

### **9. Adjournment**

**Ms. Gilman moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:33. Mr. Kunz seconded. Vote: Unanimous.**

Respectfully submitted,

Kelly Geis  
Recording Secretary