

Draft Minutes

TIF Subcommittee EDC

May 22, 2013

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 8:30 a.m. in the Nowak Room in the Exeter Town Office building. Members present were: David Hampson, Kathy Corson, Cynthia Tokos, Elizabeth MacDonald, Town Planner Sylvia VonAulock, Town Manager Russ Dean, Don Clement, Dan Chartrand, Code Officer Doug Eastman.

Items for discussion

Town Manager briefly discussed TIF revenues and allocations. Under today's scenario 30% goes to Town, about 70% to schools and county. Neither Town nor schools build budgets with additional valuation in mind translating to additional dollars.

Brief discussion on the downtown project from 2008. Sylvia VonAulock brought a nice schematic of the project which was to have happened on Front Street. The economy took the steam out of the project in late 2008 after the Town spent \$90,000 on design using CLD Engineers. It was a good project but did not make the warrant. Approximate cost was 1 to 1.2 million dollars most of which was utility relocation.

Selectman Chartrand mentioned this was not a beautification project but an investment in infrastructure. Ms. Corson mentioned that overall environment of downtown has to change in addition to TIF to spur development. A new attitude is required. Town Manager mentioned that safety and pedestrian improvements were needed in the downtown area and it is common knowledge the sidewalks, safety issues exist including misplaced crosswalks. There is currently no sidewalk budget in the general fund, it is all devoted to paving excepting 3 years ago 50,000 was made available for hazard repair. All was done including the patching on Water Street.

Sylvia described her use of prezia a new program which is better than Powerpoint. The lack of a sidewalk on Spring Street was discussed as a prime example of an area needing improvement. The Town Manager and Town Planner are meeting with DPW Director next Tuesday to get updates on the sidewalk plan and talk more in depth about the projects.

Sylvia discussed her presentation to the planning board which is scheduled for tomorrow evening, May 23rd. She will present and wishes others to attend.

Cynthia Tokos stated a positive approach was necessary to stay on focus with the task at hand instead of getting sucked into negativity.

It was suggested the TIF page needed more visibility. The Town Manager indicated Sheri could create a link to the EDC page.

The discussion turned to the 2,000 approved by the Economic Development Commission to be spent on improving the draft report. Several areas were discussed and a task list will be compiled and quotes for the work will be sought by Sylvia.

Discussion regarding public meetings. It was determined several would be needed. 2-3 meetings with the public, more with stakeholders. A list will be compiled. It was also recommended that downtown tours be offered to the public and other stakeholders to involve them in the process. Dan will catch up with the HERON group. After the walking tour the group could meet back in a central location and discuss their observations. Dan mentioned the Black Trumpet is locating to Newmarket and it would be good to understand why they did it. He thinks it is the overall improvement in Newmarket's downtown that is spurring this kind of move. The question is what qualities are attracting new business owners.

Town Manager shared Brian Lortie's comments on the pros and cons of the TIF and his suggestions, many of which are good. He asks the group to look closely at the financing side of the equation.

The idea of a survey was discussed. Survey monkey is available. The focus is infrastructure: what do people want? Sylvia and Kathy will work on this piece.

Reference was made to 2000 voters who will determine the issue. The Londonderry failed TIF was discussed and Town Manager said he would look into it – Londonderry has no downtown per se so perhaps that was a different kind of TIF.

The meeting adjourned at 9:45 a.m., all with their homework.

Respectfully submitted,

Russell Dean
Town Manager