

1. Call meeting to Order

Members present were: Kathy Corson, Len Benjamin, Brandon Stauber, Madeleine Hamel, Building Inspector Doug Eastman, Selectman Dan Chartrand, Town Planner Sylvia von Aulock and Chairman, Barry Sandberg. The Chair announced there were 5 voting members present and a quorum of 7 members is needed to formally call the meeting to order. Also in attendance: Selectman Don Clement

Consensus from members present was to remain and talk about agenda and the priority items as listed on a document prepared by Mr. Sandberg and sent electronically on July 4th. It was affirmed discussion could take place but no official votes taken.

Prior to entering into any discussion and citing the informality of this meeting, the Chair wished to reference the June meeting. Stating as his personal philosophy, he feels the Commission is mandated to do important work for the town and will try to bring as many voices to the table in keeping with the constraints of the designated agenda time. If there are any concerns on or about the workings of the EEDC he is open to hearing them. For himself, he feels there is a strong agenda before the group for 2013-2014. He is mindful there will be differences, but hopeful the members will move ahead being respectful and civil as the group works to build a consensus in meeting the needs of the Town.

• **Discussion on Prepared handout**

Mr. Sandberg read from the handout he prepared detailing the ranked priorities as determined at April Visioning session and the work accomplished on those tasks and what has transpired since that time. Emphasis was placed on reaching out to members to work with the Executive Committee in leadership roles on some of the tasks to facilitate fulfilling the priorities. Also, continue to bring interested individuals to the group notably as the present officers are entering into the 3rd year of their position and there will be the need to format a slate of officers in 2014.

Opening the floor to discussion, Ms. von Aulock commented on the acquisition of Baggage building (at the Train station) as a project that might fit into the priority #2, Ensuring Exeter's Growth. After attending a recent Transportation Committee meeting she feels the process is at a standstill. What appeared to be a straight forward process/project in acquiring ownership of the building is being layered with studies, reports; all making it complicated and costly. Suggested maybe the EEDC and Transportation Committee might want to fund the next step, an appraisal of the building, and then take it from there.

Mr. Sandberg commented there was talk in previous meeting on this project but felt it was being addressed by another Town committee. He will add to his notes; certainly fits in to the task of Ensuring Exeter's Growth. Further discussion on who owns the building and do we need DOT's approval determined the Town has the grant to purchase the building but no longer feasible with the 2009 figures when first proposed. She outlined a two phase proposal for the Town/Committees to get the project back into motion.

Mr. Stauber made the suggestion of having on or two representatives of the EEDC attend a Transportation Committee meeting and report back to this group with a consolidated plan that could be adopted. Mr. Chartrand favored this suggestion and also requested the project designated the “Baggage building” be changed; has negative connotations. Suggested in the future it be referenced as the Visitor Center as that is its ultimate function at the Train station.

With the arrival of David Hampson at 8:45 am, the Chair announced with a quorum of members now in attendance the meeting could formally convene. The agenda items will be condensed with some reports postponed until the August 13th meeting.

2. Approval of Minutes

Mr. Chartrand moved to accept the minutes of the June 11, 2013 meeting as presented; seconded by Mr. Stauber. Motion passed with Mr. Benjamin abstaining. With a quorum, the 6 votes in favor and 1 abstention did permit the acceptance of the minutes.

3. Other Business

Mr. Stauber suggested suspending the agenda and return to the discussion on the Visitor Center and then return to the Committee reports and updates. With affirmation from the Chair, Mr. Stauber again proposed putting together an ad hoc group comprised of community members, EEDC member(s) and perhaps a Chamber representative. Ms. von Aulock confirmed she is Chair of the Transportation Committee and presently they are deciding when to meet and evaluate the current status of the project. She can get back to the group with updates. Mr. Sandberg agreed to reach out to members not present and contact with Mr. Schidlovsky at the Chamber. The Chair added it did need to move forward and could fit into the EEDC’s plan of action.

4. Review:

• **April 2 Visioning Session priorities**

Mr. Sandberg read from his correspondence sent on July 4 summarizing the consensus of 5 priorities defined as a result of the April Visioning session. Commenting on the email, Mr. Stauber felt priority #1 (Development and Support Fundamentals) and priority #3 (Providing for a Sustainable EEDC) are activities that the Executive Committee could undertake; consolidate under mandate of Executive Committee to pursue. As for the Development chapter of the Master Plan (under Development and Support Fundamentals), the chapters and sub-chapters could be assigned to other groups.

Mr. Sandberg agreed it sounded reasonable and will be in contact with the other members of the Executive Committee and report back at the August meeting.

Mr. Chartrand felt the items outlined in priority # 2 (Ensuring Exeter’s Growth) with the possibility of the Epping Road corridor, are being addressed by the TIF work group. Mr. Stauber felt other issues i.e. zoning changes, enterprise zones, 79-E also fit into this category; wondered if focus should be TIF and then as that moves along, other issues be picked up. Ms. Hamel felt the TIF was a “tool” for economic development and could be included in priority #5 (Developing and Maintaining Tools for the EEDC); feels should be able to investigate other opportunities for property development i.e. Holland Way, Epping Road.

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Mr. Hampson felt priority #5 was a broad umbrella encompassing all four categories and deserves its own category. Discussion continued on other issues facing the Commission/Town and who and when should be addressed.

Selectman Clement commented they are all excellent ideas and then spoke of an All Boards meeting being set up by the BOS for early fall where he felt many of these issues will be addressed as Town land use boards, departments convene to talk of what Exeter will look like in 20 years, where do we go from here.

In conversation on the TIF and its present area of focus, Mr. Chartrand commented the downtown area was just a starting area and certainly not limited to any one area. Conversation returned to the previously approved Development Committee that morphed into the present TIF working group charged to prepare a study report for the BOS; felt it could be activated now to start to look and discuss some of the other issues associated with Ensuring Exeter's Growth (priority 2).

Mr. Chartrand stated after the TIF working group presents their report to the BOS it then becomes the responsibility of the Selectmen how to proceed. At that time it might possibly free up some members (of the TIF group) who wish to continue their work on growth issues to join in on a Development working group. [

Ms. von Aulock suggested preparing a list of land-use related issues to present at the proposed All Boards meeting; from there may gain participation from multiple boards wishing to meet and discuss the various issues.

As discussion of priorities 1 and 2 wound down, Ms. Hamel wished to verify priority #2 (Ensuring Exeter's Growth) did not restrict the EEDC from other locations but just outlined the priorities at this time. Mr. Sandberg agreed other locations were listed/discussed at Visioning session but did not score high enough to be included in the priorities for the next 6 -12 months.

Ms. Hamel was acknowledged as the prime mover in priority #4 (Relationship-building) with other EEDC members joining in the activities. Business meetings have been made and working group member, Mr. Hampson felt good progress has been made and there is a need to continue; commented on a need to expand the business visitations. Ms. Hamel made suggestions of other ways of building relationships; felt it was time to start to bring in the financial and educational community and to re-activate a working relationship with the Chamber of Commerce.

Along with that, Mr. Hampson suggested the Commission host a Morning Mixer or Business After Hours function with the Chamber. Hosting such a function would require funds from the Commission budget but presents an opportunity to talk of the EEDC and what it is doing. Ms. Corson voiced her support for such an event; remarked attendance was stronger at the Business After Hours events.

Mr. Stauber spoke to the one on one visitations being done presently but cited more groups are reaching out and interfacing with other business organizations. Felt it ought to look at having a

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signature event to raise the profile of the Town. (Cited professional networking events held in Manchester and Rochester,)

With the Town Hall repairs just beginning and not expected to be complete for up to 3 months, Mr. Stauber commented it is unsure if the 375th Anniversary forum in the planning process will be held.

Addressing priority #5 (Developing and Maintaining Tools for the EEDC), Mr. Sandberg relayed Jason Proulx will be the leader in working on software and expanding the database. Mr. Stauber is willing to assist with software system and continue working on the Business section of the web site.

Ms. Hamel, speaking to the tools created and expanded this past year, would like-ultimately- to have companies on the web site have the ability to update their own information to a staff person i.e. an intern without having to go out and canvas the companies. But initially company profiles need to be added: but haven't had the personnel to do so. Also, it was added the profiles not be advertising, but "Why I Chose Exeter".

Mr. Stauber commented the funds were authorized to purchase this functionality last summer but is not yet enabled on website. Ms. von Aulock added that is a major deficiency; no staff is dedicated to maintaining web site and that goes back to priority # 3 Staffing. Ms. Hamel continued with the need to manage the information garnered in the business visitations. Mr. Sandberg acknowledged need for staff as the Commission moves to another level of activity.

- **General announcements**

Mr. Stauber spoke of a Woman to Woman international leadership conference of young woman, mostly from war –torn countries, coming to MA to experience and learn about American democracy and the role of women in government. Hopes to bring to Exeter and meet with NH's all women delegation; would be for a day sometime in August.

- **Items for August 13, 2013 meeting**

The Chair acknowledged the good discussion had on items to continue and expand in the next coming months and those items to be looked at in the next 6-18 months. Will prepare an outline and distribute to members prior to meeting for review of issues for gaps, needs and how to move ahead. Mr. Chartrand will advise if there will be a TIF report; Mr. Dean perhaps will report more on 79-E.

Before adjournment Mr. Sandberg asked members to read the report from Ms. Hamel and the Business Retention and Expansion Subcommittee entitled Business Community Outreach Project Mailout 2 Summary electronically mailed to members the night before July meeting.

Mr. Stauber motioned to adjourn; seconded by Mr. Benjamin. Meeting adjourned at 9:35 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Ginny Raub
Recording Secretary