

Exeter Economic Development Commission

July 14, 2015

1. Call to Order

In the absence of Chairman Jason Proulx, Vice Chairwoman Beth MacDonald convened the meeting at 8:36 AM in the Nowak Room of the of the Exeter Town Office building. Members present were: Planning Board representative Kelly Bergeron, John Mueller, Chris Surette, Selectboard representative Dan Chartrand and Madeleine Hamel. Also in attendance: Economic Development Director Darren Winham, Selectman Don Clement and Building Inspector Doug Eastman.

The Vice Chair stated because there was not a quorum of members present, no action requiring a vote of the Commission would occur.

2. Approval of Minutes

No action taken

3. Updates (old business)

1. COAST Route 7 (Plan a date to ride the bus)

Noting the number of members present, the suggestion for setting a date for a ride would best be done online; Ms. MacDonald will be responsible for setting a date based on the responses received.

Mr. Mueller suggested on the day of the ride to place additional markers at each bus stop—perhaps balloons—to alert the public of their action and highlight the multiple locations of the bus stops.

2. EDC ordinance (not for profit)

Mr. Chartrand noted following the presentation of Mr. Arlon Chaffee at the June meeting on the activities of the Newmarket Economic Corporation, there was talk amongst the Executive Committee but no action was taken. For him, he doesn't see any project out there that would benefit from forming a 501c3. At this time the Commission is organized under a State RSA not for profit regulation. As to the Selectboard waiting for a statement on how the Commission wishes to operate, Mr. Chartrand does not feel it is a high priority on their agenda.

Addressing the question of liability (of the Commission) under the present operating procedure, Ms. MacDonald felt as the group was properly formed with the State and annual reports are being filed with the State there should not be an issue.

3. EEDC participation in Planning Process Review.

o Elect a member of EEDC to be involved in process

No action was taken on selecting a member for the Planning Review. Mr. Chartrand confirmed the consulting firm of MRI (Municipal Resources Inc.) has been retained and the process is underway. Ms. Bergeron added she and respective chairpersons of the Town Land Use committees/boards, including Mr. Proulx, will be interviewed along with staff in Planning Department. From there the fact finding might expand to discussion with past and present project developers for opinions on how the planning process was for them; an important component to Mr. Winham.

With the review in the initial stages, it was agreed there is time to appoint an EEDC member to the Planning Process Review

4. EEDC participation/attendance at other Town meetings

Ms. MacDonald referenced a statement by Mr. Eric Chinburg at the Chamber of Commerce Economic forum in Newmarket last month on the importance of having citizens present at various board meetings expressing their support for a project; helps to spur economic development.

A similar discussion was held at the June EEDC meeting but Mr. Surrette expressed his willingness to attend meetings to voice support if it was a project the EEDC felt was viable.

Mr. Chartrand again expressed his desire to have new faces at least at the BOS meetings to offer vocal support for economic ventures; to offset the naysayers.

He cited a recent Board meeting when ConvenientMD and their sponsorship for Parks and Rec programs was discussed; some pro voices would have been helpful that evening.

Mr. Mueller inquired if there was an automatic mailing of meeting agendas for the different Boards/committees. Ms. Bergeron responded the Planning Board just started sending out their agendas to Committee Chairmen, including Mr. Proulx. The chairs may then forward using their membership mailing list. PB will also begin notifying Chairmen of pending site walks for those wishing to join and see the property/project.

Mr. Chartrand stated the BOS meets every two weeks and their agenda is posted the preceding Friday afternoon on the Town website. He also offered if he saw something he felt would be of interest to the membership he would notify members of the upcoming agenda item. He also agreed to be a contact for the downtown HERON group.

Ms. MacDonald stated the Chamber has an Economic Development Committee and though the membership is not limited to Exeter, she would get on their agenda and alert and ask for their support when appropriate,

Ms. Hamel spoke of reaching out to businesses and commercial property owners on economic development projects and asked Mr. Winham if he would be doing such. Mr. Winham answered saying he wishes to keep his office and the EEDC separate voices. He is willing however when a project comes up he feels would benefit from pro voices, he will write a summary of the project and what he feels are the benefits of said project and distribute to EEDC membership; they may distribute however they wish.

4. Project updates/announcements

Mr. Winham spoke of the possibility of the Dam not being removed this year and that being a part of the plans of the owner of the former Loaf and Ladle to gear up when that occurs.

Mr. Clement could not confirm any decision at this time but did say the permitting process was proceeding slower than anticipated but with a River Study Committee set for July 21, he expected an update from the Town Engineer on the status of the project.

Mr. Winham felt from an economic development position, it (no dam removal this year) should not matter; the leasing/operation could go forward in spite of the construction being put off until 2016.

Mr. Eastman agreed; the dam not being removed (this year) has no bearing on that property being developed. It was also noted, another property owner is waiting on the dam removal before determining what he will do.

Mr. Winham spoke positively on the Town moving ahead; does not want to stop the momentum. Additional updates were noted to ongoing projects. He has a scheduled meeting with prospective developers wishing to locate in the downtown and he feels he has an ideal property for their consideration.

A piece of property on the corner of Holland Way and Hampton Road was determined to be the property of the State. With the cooperation and support of the BOS, the State (DOT) has agreed the sale of this parcel of land for construction of a larger facility for a local company wishing to remain within town; just as important economically to retain local businesses as new endeavors. However, if this transaction does not go forward it will be available for future development.

The proposed walk of the back portion of the Shafmaster and the King properties on the Epping Road has been moved up to Saturday, September 12. This will give the public an opportunity to see the challenges of the properties and help determine what can be done (on those properties). With the Town's acquisition of a drone, that may be available to follow along the walk and give those unable to attend an opportunity to view the properties. More details at a future meeting.

Vice Chair Beth MacDonald excused herself at 9:00 AM and Clerk Madeleine Hamel chaired the remainder of the meeting.

5. New Business

5.1. Parking in Downtown

Ms. Hamel noted the last parking study was done in 2002 and added there was discussion on this subject at the last meeting.

Mr. Winham continued noting parking was an expressed concern as potential developers viewed the IOKA and former Loaf and Ladle. It was generally agreed there are parking issues at certain times of the day in the downtown. With that feedback, he will be submitting a proposal for a comprehensive 3 stage parking study for inclusion in this year's Capital Improvement Projects (CIP). Initially it will allow an outside group to evaluate the town's parking situation as it exists; without the biases and opinions of doing the study in-town. Then based on the findings, will propose an action plan that may include, but not limited to, a public parking structure, private/public structure and paid parking in the downtown or do nothing if that is the determination.

Mr. Chartrand spoke of his support of this parking study and will advocate for it during the budget process and as the BOS shape the warrant. Replying to Ms. Hamel's question as to how can EEDC help, Mr. Chartrand suggested showing support at the public hearing on the CIP articles at the budget hearings is paramount.

6. Other Business

Mr. Mueller distributed a prepared flyer outlining T.E.A.M. first fund raising event at the Epoch restaurant on July 17, 2015 to secure funds for marketing materials and related event planning functions. Mr. Mueller inquired if the EEDC could provide financial support to the group as they continue to grow? Mr. Winham referenced the non-profit status of the group and noted the group does not have a source of revenue funds. He personally would like to see a line item in the

Minutes approved at August 11, 2015 meeting

Budget request for such funding.' He thinks they are doing an excellent job in highlighting Exeter with their monthly Friday evening art/music events.

Mr. Surrette expressed his dismay in learning so late the number of members indicating they would not be present at this meeting; was there a better way to determine attendance in advance to plan for agenda action. Ms. Hamel asked about appointing alternates that would be able to vote in the absence of voting members. Discussion focused on sending email reminders 5-7 days in advance of meeting to get an indication of members ability to attend; if not a quorum postpone the meeting.. Mr. Chartrand agreed to see there would be a quorum at the August meeting.

**7. Next meeting
August 11, 2015**

With not a quorum present, the meeting was ended at 9: 35 AM

Respectfully submitted,

Ginny Raub
Recording Secretary