

## MINUTES

Exeter Economic Development Commission

April 12, 2016

**Present:** Madeleine Hamel, Lizabeth MacDonald-Vice Chair, Dan Gutstein, Kelly Bergeron, Dan Chartrand, Darren Winham- Economic Development Director and Russell Dean-Town Manager. Also present were Doug Eastman-Town Building Inspector/Code Enforcement Director, Dave Sharples-Town Planner.

1. **Call to order:** The meeting was called to order at 8:35 by Lizabeth MacDonald.
2. **Approve Minutes – March 8, 2016:** No quorum was met. The minutes of March will be approved at May’s meeting.
3. **Financial Report – Brian Lortie:** In Brian’s absence the financial report will be tabled until May’s meeting. Russ Dean stated there were no expenses taken from the EDC fund. The Commission had committed \$3,000.00 last year for ”a form base code effort”. Russ stated the funds have been spent. Russ suggested there be a follow up with the group and get an update on the project. Russ will get together with Dave Sharples. This will be put on May’s agenda.
4. **EDSP Sessions Updates: Epping Road, Train Station/Lincoln Street:** Darren Winham gave a Power Point Presentation, which was given at the Select Board the previous night. The presentation was titled “Epping Road Economic Development Presentation, Unlocking Potential in an Underutilized Corridor”. The topics included:
  - Epping Road Corridor Map
  - Goals
  - Challenges
  - 2016 TIF Assessments
  - TIF *Estimated* Taxable Value in Process
  - TIF District Development Potential
  - Value Impact of Use and Coverage
  - Economic Development Strategic Plan
  - Master Plan Process and Projected Timeline
  - Epping Road Corridor Definition
  - Opportunities
  - Map of Developed Parcels
  - Potential Development Map
  - High Potential Parcels
  - 2015 Taxes Paid
  - How to Meet the TIF “gap”

**Train Station/Lincoln Street/Winter Street:** The public input meeting for these areas went well. It was attended by property owners, business owners, residents and people who use the area. The DownEaster is planning on expanding the number of trains from 10 per day to 12 in the near future.

Russ gave Darren kudos for his work in the Lincoln Street area. During the public meeting there was a lot of concerns about parking and with Darren’s planning and working with Mr. Andrew Rockwell, Hankerchief Factory, he was able to open up 12-15 additional

parking spaces on Lincoln Street for the duration of the project. Also, last night at the Board of Selectmen's meeting they approved a sign request by Tom Monahan, for Epping Road in the right of way. Russ stated that was something else Darren worked on and sometimes we don't see all the little things that go on with Economic Development but those were two little things that actually make a big difference.

**Winter Street:** Russ updated the committee stating the Winter Street project has broken ground. The project are the new Water/Sewer improvements.

**Downtown Area:** The downtown area meeting will be held next Wednesday, April 20, 2016 at 6:00 p.m. in the Nowak Room. Darren encouraged the board members to attend.

Madeleine Hamel mentioned that discussion took place at the Board of Selectmen's meeting the previous night in reference to the Epping Road area and interest in having sidewalks and bike paths. She asked if those were in the plans. Russ Dean answered they are not right now part of the TIF financing plan but the TIF financing plan can be amended by Town meeting.

#### 5. Economic Development Project Updates - Darren Winham:

- **Cell Tower:** Darren mentioned the residents voted to allow a cell tower to be installed at the Transfer Station. That is under negotiations and hoped to be installed within the next couple of months.
- **Epping Road:** Darren mentioned there is interest in several properties on Epping Road, the King property, and two parcels near the Barking Dog. As well as the other properties along the corridor.
- **Downtown Area:** The Loaf and Ladle property has been working on a potential business coming in and hopefully something will be announced within the next few months. Darren mentioned the parking study did not pass in the Towns vote and with inquiries in the downtown properties comes concerns about parking.
- **Osram Sylvania-Portsmouth Ave:** Darren met with some senior folks from overseas from Osram and had some discussion of their future which seems very bright.
- **Holland Way:** The sale of the property from the State and Department of Transportation did go through and Mr. Gargiulo is now the owner of the property. He is planning on going in front of the Planning/Zoning boards for a building permit on the site located on the corner of Holland Way and Hampton Road. It will now be taxable land. The property is very viable. They are actively seeking a business to come in and put a building there.
- **Lexie's Burger Joint:** Lexie's Burger Joint will be opening up on Lincoln Street by the train station. This will be their 5<sup>th</sup> restaurant and will be making the Exeter restaurant their flagship place.
- **Portsmouth Avenue:** Darren mentioned there are a couple of properties on Portsmouth Avenue that are potential areas for businesses to come in. One being the former Rogan's Bakery, something is in the works but too soon to talk about

but hope to be announced shortly. The second one being the old Getty gas station by Exeter Lumber which is a great parcel.

- **Lincoln Street:** There is interest in the Exeter Hankerchief property. Also, the moving company, Bridges Brothers, site by the end of the Train Station area.

**6. Master Plan Steering Committee:** Dave Sharples updated the committee on the timeline.

- March 2016 – Voters approved \$50,000 to update the Master Plan
- March 2016 – Planning Board issued a public invitation to folks interested in being a member of the Master Plan Steering Committee
- April/May 2016 – Planning Board appoints Steering Committee and kickoff meeting is held
- May/June 2016 – RFP is issued for consultants to work on the project
- June/July 2016 – Consultant is selected, scope of work is defined and contract is executed to update Master Plan
- July – December 2016 – Draft Master Plan is created and several public meetings are held
- January – March 2017 – Master Plan is finalized by Planning Board and disseminated to the general public

Dave ended by stating the State recommends you update your Master Plan every 10 years.

**7. Upcoming Events/Events Recap – Seacoast Business Expo April 6, 2016:** Darren Winham stated the Expo was great, he attended last year and again this year. Both Russ Dean and Dan Chartrand helped out and a lot of people came up and asked what the EDC is doing, how they operate and what the EDC focuses on. They gave their input as well. Attendance was good and positive vibes came out of it. Dan Chartrand mentioned the time and conversations he had were very positive and high quality.

Russ Dean mentioned to the committee that Parks and Recreation are working on a plan for development potential on the 8.6 acres in the back area at the Rec Park on Hampton Road. The Board of Selectmen will get that presentation on April 25, 2016 for the first time.

Russ Dean also mentioned the Board of Selectmen formed a Facilities Advisory Committee that will be looking at the Towns Facilities Plan that was completed in December 2015 and making recommendations going forward on important facility items for the future.

Avesta on Epping Road is having a grand opening ceremony that Russ was asked to say a few words at on May 6, 2016. Russ put out the invitation to the group as well.

PEA is also having a ground breaking ceremony on April 21, 2016 for the Art Center.

The American Independence Museum is also having an event in the near future that looks interesting, date and info TBA.

## **8. Economic Development Projects at other Board Meetings:**

- Planning Board:
  - Kelly Bergeron updated the committee that 80 Epping Road is complete. There also was a very well attended meeting on the Rose Farm design review of a 60 home proposal as a start. People young and old attended and spoke and voiced their concerns. The comments were very respectful and on point.
- Zoning Board of Adjustment:
  - Russ Dean stated the ZBA will be taking up, on April 19, 2016, the 2 Hampton Road commercial application/amendment verification.
- Conservation Commission:
  - Next meeting April 12, 2016.
- Historic District Commission/Heritage Commission:
  - Dave Sharples stated they have hired a consultant and will be reviewing their HDC guidelines.
- Select Board:
  - Dan Chartrand stated after seeing Darren and Dave's presentation ("Epping Road Economic Development Presentation, Unlocking Potential in an Underutilized Corridor") at the previous night's Select Board meeting he asked the 2 Select Board reps from the Conservation Commission and the Planning Board to see if they could spearhead some efforts on conversations to the two boards about finding some compromise on "wet lands" and "use" questions. Dan will follow up with the two Select Reps to see what their progress is.

- 9. Adjournment:** Meeting was adjourned at 9:43 a.m. Next meeting May 10, 2016. Lizabeth MacDonald mentioned there will be an email poll sent out to see if there is a better time or day to meet. She asked that the board members keep an eye out for that and it will be discussed at the next meeting.

Respectfully submitted by Grace Rogers