

## DRAFT MINUTES

### Exeter Economic Development Commission Business Retention & Expansion Subcommittee

September 6, 2012

The Subcommittee meeting was called to order by Madeleine Hamel at 8:30 am at the Town Office in the Wheelwright Room. Members present were Madeleine Hamel, Julie Gilman, Kathy Corson, and interns Tom Lamb and Betsy Bilharz.

The Subcommittee voted to approve the minutes of the August 23, 2012 meeting as drafted by Ms. Hamel.

#### **A. Database analysis update**

Town interns, Betsy Bilharz and Tom Lamb, provided a printed sixteen page draft copy of the Exeter Business Database Analysis for our review and discussion. We focused on the sort and analysis of industries by zoning and areas defined within certain zones. That included within Zone C-1 Downtown, Lincoln Street; Zone C-2 Epping Road, and Portsmouth Ave.; and zones C-3; I; NP Hampton Rd., Kingston Rd.; PP;CT; CT-1; and WC. As was requested at our last meeting, Ms. Bilharz and Mr. Lamb explained the source of our current industry definitions which were compiled by Jason Brown, former intern, using the Chamber of Commerce and state classification systems. These are standard industry classifications which can be broad and sometimes include very different types of companies within one such as "industry & agriculture". These definitions are summarized on the first page of the analysis to assist readers. The subcommittee decided and again requested the interns to add a town zoning map(s) and brief zoning code descriptions to clarify where each zone is located throughout Exeter, and help correlate industries definitions with those permitted within each.

The subcommittee requested the following additional research and analysis:

- Review businesses on Portsmouth Ave. from corner at High St. to Walgreens in preparation for a review of zoning and potential change from residential
- On properties part of database, list ER Zone located properties/facilities only and vacancies
- Look into and add if possible "mixed use" zone classification for downtown and Portsmouth Ave. because it provides affordable housing in combination with business uses, something Exeter is a leader for in the area
- Seek employment data for the education industry in Exeter

The Subcommittee will provide a report to the full EEDC at their next meeting. Ms. Bilharz Will distribute sample pages of the analysis and explain it.

#### **B. Business Community Outreach Project**

Since prospective speakers for the mini ER Zone forum were not going to be available in the short term, the Subcommittee decided to meet individually with property owners and businesses in the area. We will mail out an introductory letter on the EEDC as before and set up meetings. Ms. Hamel will revise the letter as needed and ask Mr. Dean if he wants to join in the meetings again. The Subcommittee referenced the ER Zone database list and selected some property owners and companies for this round of meetings.

#### **C. Other Announcements**

Ms. Corson requested input from the Subcommittee for the EEDC Branding & Marketing Subcommittee regarding the EEDC Page of the Town Website which is under development.

They plan to include some rotating success stories on local businesses in Exeter with a picture of the company and link to their websites. If we could contribute any suggestions of firms within the categories of 1) community/education; 2) locally owned shops; 3) institutions; and 4) national/international businesses it would be helpful.

The need for more members was brought up again. Ms. Gilman and Ms. Corson suggested having a table at the voting station during the upcoming elections. Also, Ms. Corson announced an upcoming business expo by area Chambers of Commerce to be held at UNH and suggested that the EEDC should have a table there to market Exeter. She will put that on the upcoming EEDC agenda for the full commission to consider.

Mr. Lamb discussed an opportunity to merge our database into an electronic business directory format available through Aha, the firm designing the Town's new website. He suggested that as a part of a 'Welcome to Exeter' package given to new businesses, they could be invited to add a listing. This way we could capture data on new companies. Also, the online format would be more user friendly than our present database on Excel. He will bring the option to the full EEDC meeting for consideration.

We set our next meeting date for Thursday, September 20<sup>th</sup>, 2012, at 8:45 am. With no further discussion, the meeting adjourned at 10:15 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Madeleine S. Hamel  
Chair