

MINUTES

Exeter Economic Development Commission

July 26, 2016

Present: Madeleine Hamel, Lizabeth MacDonald-Chair, Dan Chartrand-Selectman Rep, Chris Surette, Darren Winham- Economic Development Director, Russ Dean-Town Manager, Kelly Bergeron, Dan Gutstein and John Mueller. Also present was Mike Favreau-Parks and Recreation Director.

- 1. Call to order:** The meeting was called to order at 7:10 by Lizabeth MacDonald.
- 2. Approve Minutes – March 8, 2016 and May 24, 2016:** March 8, 2016 minutes: Kelly Bergeron noted on page 5, 4th bullet item, “4th floor of the *IOKA* building” *IOKA* should be replaced with Majer Blake. Kelly Bergeron made a motion to approve the draft minutes of the March 8, 2016 meeting as amended, submitted by Grace Rogers. Seconded by Dan Gutstein. Unanimously approved. Dan Chartrand abstained. June 28, 2016 minutes: Dan Chartrand made a motion to accept the minutes as submitted by Grace Rogers. Seconded by Chris Surret. Russ Dean, John Mueller and Kelly Bergeron abstained.
- 3. Financial Report – Brian Lortie:** Brian Lortie was unable to attend the meeting. Financial report was tabled until the August meeting.
- 4. Presentation: Mike Favreau-Parks and Recreation Director:** Russ Dean introduced Mike Favreau, Parks and Recreation Director who gave a presentation to the committee on one of his CIP projects, the redevelopment of the Recreation Park on Hampton Road. This project was approved last year and the revolving fund helped pay to see if the 8.6 acres in the back are developable. The answer came back as yes it is. The current schematic was drawn up by Tighe & Bond, which Mike passed out to the committee members along with the projected cost sheet. Mike stated this has been in the works for two years which began with an online study. There was a good response showing the want for more outdoor activities and a gym type facility to use as a rain site for summer camp kids. They then went to UNH for a more in-depth study coming up with the same items as the online study did. Mike Favreau’s presentation highlights were:
 - Tighe & Bond’s schematic was developed after talking with all the different sports leagues, the Recreation Department and other stake holders in the community. What they came up with was the most effective use of the park.
 - A separate study on existing playground showed it only has a couple of year’s life left. It is eighteen years old and it is a pressure treated wooden structure. Needs to be replaced within the next few years. The leased land that the current playground is will need to be purchased. Estimated cost for the new playground would be \$250,000-\$275,000.
 - The entrance would stay the same to the Rec Park but bring the parking up along the side to the left and bring them out back of the tennis courts and swimming pool.

- New parking area would bring a closer access to the fields making it easier for parents and grandparents as well as handicap people.
- Baseball leagues are losing fields rapidly the new field would be lighted to get more use of it and based on the topography it would be an amphitheater type seating.
- The middle field would be a lighted turf field that would accommodate lacrosse and soccer.
- Two of the current fields would remain green space.
- The swimming pool would stay the same.
- Lose two of the current tennis courts. There are courts at the High School that the tennis instructed can utilize.
- Move the current Rec office from Court Street into a new facility on Hampton Rd.
- The new office would have multi-purpose rooms and would also be handicap accessible.
- A building, not necessarily a gymnasium, but it would have a rubberized floor with curtains that could come down and utilized it for batting cages for baseball. Lacrosse could utilize it as well as running special events that are currently being held at the Town Hall.
- Enlarge summer camp capacity. Currently the max that can sign up is 225 kids with a long waiting list. Summer camp fills up in a little over 2 hours.
- The Town could use the current Recreation building as something else.
- The maintenance staff which is currently working out of a two car garage on Court St. could work out of DPW Complex. Mike has spoken with Jennifer Perry on this. This would eliminate the cost of a building at the Rec Park on Hampton Road.
- Estimated cost is \$9,400,000. There are potential grants as well as other cost reductions that could be utilized.
- Potential revenue from sports league tournaments which would also bring people into the community i.e.; hotel and restaurants.
- Land Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) grant at \$200,000. They are looking for “splashy projects” to show what they are doing with the money. LWCF funding is coming up for a vote in congress in a couple of years. They want to be able to show what they are doing with the money. This project is just what they are looking for.
- Lighting and artificial turf grants are also available.
- Lots of positive feedback from the residents.
- Fencing around the tennis courts are 1975 vintage and needs replacing.
- One of the studies showed the reason people with kids are moving to Exeter is 1) school system 2) parks and recreation activities 3) library. This type of project brings people into the community. Good economic development.

Russ Dean stated with a 15 year amortization there would be an increase of \$150 for an average family home (\$275,000 value) per year in taxes. Russ stated they are also looking into exploring the issue of naming rights. This would bring in some additional revenue to offset some of the cost associated with the project. Mike stated Claremont brought in \$3,000,000 with a 25 year naming rights with one of their projects. Russ stated the need for space for tournaments is there with all different types of sports. Some of these tournaments are up to a week, no longer a couple of days. This is definitely a draw to the community for people to stay here and spend money in restaurants.

A Q&A followed the presentation.

Q: Are the two infields going to stay?

A: Yes.

Q: Will you still have the ice cream shop/concession stand at the pool?

A: Yes.

Q: Are we losing a baseball field?

A: Field #2 can be moved.

Q: How many more parking spaces will you get?

A: 75 to 80 additional parking spaces.

Q: If you are not building a maintenance building or snack shack can you get additional parking spaces?

A: Possibly

Q: If you are buying the land for the new playground can you buy a little more for additional parking?

A: Possibility

Q: Are you utilizing the small building in the front to the best ability?

A: That is owned by the hospital.

Q: Can you put a bathroom where the second little playground is?

A: No, there is no Water/Sewer back there. Unless you use a precast cement type toilet.

Q: This would give you more capacity for the summer camp program?

A: Yes, because of the gymnasium type building.

Q: Is there a plan in place that addresses all the needs of the current activities while under construction?

A: Yes, the project will have to be phased in. They will try to do as much in the spring.

Q: How will the lights on the fields effect the new development that is going in?

A: New lighting is less invasive. New lights are positioned down with very little spillage up.

Q: Is there a buffer between the park and the new development?

A: Only what we leave. When they built the development they clear cut right up to the line.

Q: With all the tournaments that would take place why would we forgo the snack shack by the back fields? Could we build a skeleton type facility and lease it out? Or bring in a food truck?

A: Currently the leagues are not interested in having a snack shack but we are open to discuss different possibilities.

Q: Can you utilize the current snack shack in the fall for these tournaments?

A: No, because the building is winterized. It would be best closer to the fields.

Q: Do the Parks and Recreation programs currently make money?

A: The programs pay for themselves using a Revolving Fund. No tax dollars support recreation programs.

Q: Has a focused effort been made to look at tournaments for making money?

A: Yes, teams that play in these tournaments pay hundreds of dollars per team. It is a good source of revenue.

Q: Is there an option for getting property by the playground that is owned either by the hospital or nursing home?

A: Possibility, they both own a portion around the playground. If we could buy some of the land we could also expand more parking spaces.

Q: Is there access to the back fields through Wayside Drive?

A: Not the public. There is an agreement to be used for a maintenance entrance only.

Q: Could the tennis courts be flooded in the winter and use as ice skating?

A: That would have to be researched. Maybe it could be another source of revenue.

Q: What is your next step from here?

A: Working with stake holders, CIP process with Planning Board, Budget Recommendation Committee and Board of Selectmen. Dan Chartrand stated he will be pushing for CIP projects because of low interest environment.

Q: Assuming the EDC supports this project what can we do to engage and help you move this forward?

A: Be supportive, talk it up to people. Talk to people on all the different boards.

Mike thanked the committee for the opportunity to speak about the project.

- 5. Discussion: EEDC Major Goals 2016-17/Participation in Master Plan Process:** Russ Dean stated coming out of the BOS meeting there were a couple of items to focus on going forward on the master plan. One question was are there things the EDC has on their mind that should be part of that goal set?

Dan Chartrand stated at the previous night's BOS meeting they had their goal setting session. They unified four major goals. One of the goals was to do whatever they can do as a Select Board to support further economic development in the Town. They will roll through the four goals over the next four meetings but they started with the economic development. He stated he believes it is unanimous with the BOS to want to continue support of the EDC and the TIF District as well as supporting Darren Winham's work. The BOS is united in expanding the commercial real estate tax base of the Town. They continue to support the Economic Development Strategic Plan (EDSP).

Russ Dean stated there were some bullet points under that goal:

- Participate in the EDSP
- Intensive zoning review
- Planning process update coming out of the MRI report published last year

6. Economic Development Project updates (Darren Winham): Darren Winham updated the committee on the following:

- **Epping Road** – Tom Monahan has signed a Purchase & Sales Agreement for Kevin King's property. The TIF takes water/sewer up Route 27 to and through Route 101. Mr. Monahan stated he needs a lot of support from the Town to develop his parcels. There are a lot of challenges to put businesses up there. Darren feels there is some sort of solution for that property. What Darren suggested, along with Mr. Monahan's support, is to run a public meeting specifically to that property. Spell out the regulations that exist, what the challenges are, what types of businesses they have talked to and have said no because of these reasons. They have set the meeting in September.

11 Commerce Way is adding 12,000 sq. ft. to their property.

22 Industrial Drive their adding on spec 30,000 sq. ft. It will be 6-5,000 sq.ft. units There will be loading docks. The use is going to be industrial. The owner of that property is looking for 5 to 10 year leases.

8 Commerce Way – A company called C3I (Critical Communications, Controls and Instruments) will be moving into Mr. Shafmaster's property. They make instruments for flight decks. Purchase and sales is in place. 25-30 employees. They will donate a day of labor to reroute the entrance way for the trails.

The TIF advisory board has agreed to allow a 3rd party to invest in the infrastructure and then get reimbursed through the TIF. Russ Dean stated it is a development agreement.

- **Train Station/Winter Street/Lincoln Street:** No update at this time.
- **Downtown District:** At one of the EDSP meetings on the downtown a notion came out of it to utilize the Town Hall. One idea was to use the Town Hall as a

Community Arts Center bringing in a subcontractor professional to run things. It would give a reason for people to linger in the Town after 6 o'clock at night. They could put on shows or have movies. We do not have a parking problem after 6 o'clock at night and we would be able to accommodate something like that.

Also, there are several buildings in the downtown that are vacant right now if the Town was to have such a venue we could see a lot more vibrancy in the businesses downtown. Darren stated he is working with Todd at the Chamber on this idea.

- Portsmouth Avenue – No update at this time.
- Holland Way/Hampton Road – No update at this time.
- Kingston Road – No update at this time.

7. Upcoming Events/Events Recap: Russ Dean stated for the upcoming events he wanted to make sure the EDC stays plugged into the master plan. EDC will be part of the process.

8. Economic Development Projects at other Board Meetings:

- Housing Committee:
 - No update
- Planning Board:
 - No update
- Zoning Board of Adjustment:
 - No update
- Conservation Commission:
 - No update
- Historic District Commission/Heritage Commission:
 - No update
- Select Board:
 - No update

Adjournment: Meeting was adjourned at 8:40 p.m. The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, August 30, 2016 at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Grace Rogers