

DRAFT MINUTES

Exeter Economic Development Commission

February 16, 2016

Present: Madeleine Hamel, Lizabeth Mac Donald-Vice Chair, Dan Gutstein, Brian Lortie, Chris Surrette, John Mueller, David Hampson, Darren Winham- Economic Development Director and Russell Dean-Town Manager.

1. Call to order: The meeting was called to order at 8:37 by Lizabeth MacDonald. The minutes were passed out and reviewed by the board members. There was a motion by Brian Lortie to accept the minutes of February 16, 2016 as written, seconded by Chris Surrette. The motion to accept the minutes was unanimous with Lizabeth MacDonald and Brian Lortie abstaining.

2. Project updates/announcements/Q&A (Darren Winham):

- The Gourmet Gift Baskets project is moving forward, fast track on the Monahan property, getting into Exeter. Darren complimented Erik Hawkins of Seacoast News on the article in Friday, February 11, 2016 Exeter News Letter saying it was well written and informative. Darren went on saying the project is moving forward with site work and the road is going in. The road will go past F W Webb.
 - John Mueller asked why they ended up choosing Exeter as their final decision over their other option. Darren replied multiple reasons; they wanted to be close by for their workforce, love the logistics of that location, the surroundings of the building, they liked the way the Town worked with them and mostly how the developer, Mr. Monahan, worked with them. Mr. Monahan's preference is to build a building and lease it.
- Dialog continues with Mr. Kaneb owner of the former Loaf and Ladle. Mr. Kaneb has a couple interested restaurant businesses to go in there that he would lease to. Mr. Kaneb signed a confidentiality agreement and cannot state who the businesses are at this point but he said they would be a great fit.
- The project on the corner of Holland Way and High Street was approved by the Governor's Council and should close by month end. There is a business looking at that site as well as another sight in Exeter. Exeter wins either way they decide. If they decide on the second sight that leaves the Holland Way sight open to a second building. Darren stated from an economic development status it is a home run.
- There is another business on Water Street in the downtown area that is looking to change logistics of their property and allowing more space to go in there and potentially a restaurant that would overlook the bay, which Exeter currently doesn't have one that is looking north.
- At the public meeting the topic of the cell tower at the Transfer Station, or relocating of it, was discussed. It will be on the ballot this year.
 - Russ Dean mentioned the cell phone tower is one of the items on the ballot this year. After talking to the prospective carrier it was determined to

change the location of the cell phone tower to a different location at the landfill. The landfill is broken into two sections. It was a more favorable change of the location from the approved location of last year's warrant. The warrant on the ballot is to change the location and make a long term lease with the carrier. Russ mentioned cell phone reception is currently pretty poor in that part of Town. The other piece is the Safety Department and Public Works are engaged with the prospective cell tower builder to have some equipment put up on the tower. Hopefully this will come to fruition later this year.

- A party from Chicago is looking into buying one of Exeter's businesses and doing an expansion. Although it is great news for this business it is also confidential at this point.
- Another confidential issue is the IOKA. Darren is working with a new party and a private party that has been in contact with the owner of the IOKA. They are pushing ahead with that and hoping to get more traction. Darren stated it looks pretty positive.
- The gentleman who has the Purchase and Sale on Rogan's Bakery has four different potential options on that site. In Darren's opinion they are all very good.
- He has had some great meetings with John Shafmaster and the professionals he's hired to look at development on his site. He has the potential for mixed use/senior housing on a portion of his 62 +/- acres on Epping Road. There is movement on that and some movement on some commercial on the front part of his land.
- The same is true for Mr. King and Mr. Baker on Epping Road. One option that Darren spoke with Mr. Baker about was part of the push back from some folks in Town is concern that the development of the front and back won't happen at the same time.
- Darren informed the committee he is working on the development of an Economic Strategic Plan. There is a public meeting on Wednesday, February 24, 2016 at 7:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. in the Nowak Room. It will be on the strength weakness analysis information. He will be taking input from everyone and is hoping the public will attend.
 - Madeleine Hamel asked Darren if there would be an opportunity for the EDC to review the bones of his presentation before it goes to the public. Darren said although it isn't really a presentation but a list of what he deems a swat analysis, he will certainly email it to the EDC members for their review and input. Russ concurred it is a great idea to get it out to the group and would work with Darren on that. Russ encouraged the committee members to attend the meeting.

3. New Business:

Report from All Boards Meeting: (John Mueller and Madeleine Hamel)

- Madeleine, John and Russ Dean attended the meeting. Madeleine updated the committee stating they met with Julie Gilman, Selectwoman and representatives of all the broad selection of the Town's boards and commissions. They reviewed where they were from their last meeting on the All Boards that got together, the accomplishments and changes which were

significant that occurred in the community and Town government. Also the fact that the Town has a new Economic Developer (Darren Winham) on board since their last meeting. In addition there will be a new Planner working for the Town. Russ had gone through all the things that have been worked on in the past year. From there they went into the MRI report that was focusing on processes and communication within the Town. Julie had brought a set of overlays and some of the highlights and key points of the report were:

- A review of the flow chart and a review of the process of how an applicant and a project walks through the Town's process from the beginning to the end.
- A major review of the Town's Master Plan. Each of the Boards and Commission to review their chapters of the Master Plan.
- Interfacing communication among all of the Town's boards. In particularly Planning and Regulatory boards because it is regarding land use. The involved boards are: Planning Board, Zoning Board of Adjustments, The Historic District of Commission in conjunction with the advisory boards; the Heritage Commission, Conservation Commission and Development Commission.
- Having a point person to help walk through the process on a project and be able to say at any point in time where the project is at in the process.
- Make sure the applications are applicant friendly.
- The EEDC to have the opportunity to meet with the other boards to be clear on what their purpose and objectives are as well as their goals and priorities, in order for it to be taken into consideration in the EEDC's work.
- The EEDC to review the Planning Boards process chart and give input on it. To review the current Master Plan Chapter and Economic Development and the Master Plan as a whole. Become aware of completed goals and recommendations for new goals. Take the opportunity to meet with each board and commission, to interface with them and to complete the work on the Economic Development strategic plan as an integral part of the Master Plan so it is not a duplication.
- They talked about two aspects: 1) identify ways to get the word out to the community that more volunteer participants are needed on the Town boards 2) encourage opportunity for training new volunteers with the different boards speaking with each other to help with the cross training.
- Interface more fully with the school districts.
- In the Master Plan there should be information on the developable land throughout the Town and identify which areas are being targeted.
 - Russ interjected stating the data piece of the updating, Cliff Sinott, Rockingham Planning Commission, is working on that piece with them and the mapping of Chapter One of the Master Plan on what is developable. Russ stated that is a good conversation for EEDC to hear and he will put it on the docket again. Once the new planner begins (Monday, February 22, 2016) and is brought up to speed Cliff will be brought in to talk

about the piece they have updated. Russ stated the next section, the Visioning Section, will be important to talk about areas of limited growth vs. what can accommodate more growth.

John Mueller added the meeting started with comments on the MRI report. It was brought out with the opening position there are problems and challenges in Exeter. In the end it was concluded the name of the board should be Land Use Boards not All Boards because the issue that was being talked about was focusing on land use. Julie Gilman highlighted communication and coordination amongst the boards and the opportunity of training for all board members so that they can be more effective. The group agreed to reconvene this June 15, 2016.

Russ Dean complimented Madeleine and John's report of the meeting. He added once the Town has the new Town Planner on board he will work on these issues and the Town will be in much better shape. Russ said they want to bring in some product ability into the process. He said once an applicant brings a project forward the Town wants to be able to say the time frame for this type of project is "X" amount of time depending on the types of permits needed.

Russ mentioned there is a \$50,000.00 warrant article on the ballot to help support the updating of the Master Plan.

Lizabeth MacDonald asked if there were any actions items off the task list that the EEDC should be doing between now and their next meeting in June. Russ Dean stated one thing is to determine what type of training budget that is needed for board members and the use of interns going forward.

Discussion on Subcommittees and Econ Dev Master Plan Chapter:

Lizabeth MacDonald stated that in the past having active sub committee's projects moved forward more quickly and came to completion. A discussion took place on having a subcommittee long term and utilizing them. Darren Winham recommended having a Master Plan chapter subcommittee. Russ agreed and suggested a subcommittee of three along with Darren be formed. Lizabeth suggested it be called the "Master Plan Subcommittee". Madeleine Hamel and John Mueller volunteered. Lizabeth suggested since all members of the committee were not present the topic will be brought up again at the next EEDC meeting. Lizabeth will also circulate an email to the full EEDC to see if there is anyone else interested. Russ Dean suggested that once the subcommittee is formed that someone from the subcommittee reach out to the Chair of the Planning Board and let her know of the conversation the EEDC has had.

Russ stated Rockingham Planning is doing data updating to Chapters 1 and 2 on land use and housing but not doing updates on Visioning.

Madeleine Hamel asked how the Planning Board process chart review would happen, which was on the task list. Darren stated that was a good point and they would need to get some form of direction from the Planning Board on what they expect. Madeleine

suggested a representative from the EEDC participate in the review. Russ agreed and if there was someone who could serve as a point of contact with the work group and flagging things in the process from the Economic Development development prospective would be helpful. Madeleine stated she would like to see the EEDC devote it as an agenda item to discuss so the board would have the input to bring to the larger group. John Mueller suggests possibly using a software program that would create a clear time line. He is not sure of the cost or what is out there for options but it would be worth researching. Chris Surette agreed it would be a powerful tool. John stated he would be willing to check into it. Russ stated it would be a good tool since the Planning Board has a 65 day window that they need to function under. The Planning Board has to act on a plan within 65 days once it's submitted and deemed complete. One of the questions that comes up is the Towns technical review process and our permitting process through regulations are in sync with the 65 day window.

Lizabeth MacDonald stated maybe the committee should change its mind set and think of it as a business competing with other municipalities in order to entice these businesses to choose Exeter instead of going to other communities. We need to do things in a timely basis. Darren Winham agreed stating according to the MRI report we do have issues but they are starting to get addressed. Darren suggested the committee wait until the new Planner comes in, since he has a lot of experience, and see what he is going to do with it. Russ suggested members of the EEDC go around to different communities and inquire of their process. Russ suggested maybe calling them a "Process Committee". Lizabeth stated she will include in the email to the committee about the "Master Plan Sub Committee" a recap of the discussion and broaden the opportunities to the other members.

Economic Development Projects at other Board Meetings:

- Planning Board:
 - Darren Winham stated in the Planning Board the GGC project flew through the process and went very well. 80 Epping Road will be back in front of the Planning Board by the end of February.
- Zoning Board of Adjustment:
 - No report
- Conservation Commission:
 - No Report
- Historic District Commission:
 - No report
- Heritage Commission:
 - No report
- Select Board:
 - Russ updated the committee on Town projects. Upcoming 2016 projects: Downtown sidewalks, Spring Bridge, Lincoln Street water line, Dam removal (August/September window). It will be a very busy spring and summer.

4. Other Business:

Lizabeth MacDonald asked the committee members to think about the email from Jason Proulx in regards to a better meeting time. It can be discussed at the March meeting.

Russ Dean stated he will bring the new Planner to the March meeting to introduce him to the committee members.

Brian Lortie inquired if there are any monies needed for training. Russ Dean stated the committee should come up with a training budget. Brian reported there is \$7,100.00 in the account and he would like to put \$5,000.00 of it into an interest bearing CD at Peoples Bank leaving approximately \$2,100.00 for training. That was aggregable to the committee. Brian also asked for reimbursement of \$27.00 which was the renewal fee for the nonprofit with the Secretary of State. There was a motion by Lizabeth MacDonald to allow Brian to reimburse himself \$27.00 from the account, seconded by Dan Gutstein. Vote was unanimous.

John Mueller spoke to the committee about the PowerPoint presentation he had sent out to the committee members that was prepared by the Economic Development to the Exeter Chamber of Commerce. John highlighted some of the slides of importance.

- Population growth, there was a slide in growth since the 70's and 80's; the economic recovery in Southern New Hampshire is lagging.
- Employment aspects, the different categories of employers that have shown growth (an adjustment for inflation did not reflect on the slide)
- The impact of the aging population

5. Adjournment: Meeting was adjourned at 9:45 a.m. Motioned by David Hampson and seconded by Chris Surette. Next meeting March 8, 2016.

Respectfully submitted by Grace Rogers