

FINAL MINUTES

Exeter Economic Development Commission

January 24, 2017

Present: Lizabeth MacDonald-Chair, Dan Chartrand-Selectman Rep, Darren Winham- Economic Development Director, Ian Smith, and John Mueller.

1. **Call to order:** The meeting was called to order at 7:06 by Lizabeth MacDonald. Currently they do not have a quorum.

2. **Approve Minutes** – November 22, 2016 and December 20, 2016 will be held off on due to lack of quorum.

3. Deliberative Session: **Saturday, February 4, 2017 – 9:00AM., Exeter High School, 1 Blue Hawk Drive, Exeter: Notice on this public meeting.**

4. Economic Development Related Warrant Articles

a. Article 4: Zoning Amendment for Epping Road: Mr. Winham felt this was a no brainer and made a lot of sense to invest in this corridor. This would be a big plus to have extra space in this area. That it was a detriment to have the 75-foot setback in this area. It will help build jobs in town, and build commercial real estate. Mr. Mueller said he did not know which buildings on Epping road were even at the 85 feet mark. Mr. Winham said the majority on industrial drive are 75-85 feet back. Mr. Chartrand asked if this was recommended by the Planning Board, and it was confirmed that all 3 articles were submitted by them.

Article 5: Lincoln Street Area Improvements: The article was read by Ms. MacDonald. Mr. Chartrand said this was all about following through on the vision that was created for Lincoln Street. To make it more pedestrian friendly, and complete street scape. Mr. Mueller would love some form of visual representation when this is discussed for vote. Mr. Winham didn't feel that there was any design plan ready to go, this was just to get money to get going. There are some big-time developers who would invest significant funds in this area. Ms. MacDonald said this area is incredibly busy, and it's wonderful.

Article 14 Epping Road, Spring Street and Winter Street Sidewalks: Ms. MacDonald read the article. Mr. Chartrand explained that this is a very important article, the town was awarded a TAP grant for this work. They are trying to focus on other important areas now that downtown has had work done. Mr. Chartrand said they are trying to fill in some sections with missing sidewalks. Ms. MacDonald asked if this goes up into the TIF area and it was confirmed that it does. It will connect the sidewalk that Aroma Joes were required to add that initially had no connecting sidewalk. Mr. Smith asked if this had fully been planned yet, or if the sidewalk plan was completed. Mr. Smith asked this because there are two parks and difficult to cross due to lack of crosswalks. Mr. Chartrand didn't know if it was part of this project but there has been discussion about crosswalks on Main Street leading up to Epping Road. Mr. Smith said walkability to Lincoln Street area and you have half of it without a sidewalk and that makes it difficult to travel with children.

5. Report on All Boards Meeting re: Master Plan

Ms. MacDonald explained two weeks ago, they had an All Boards meeting in respect to the Master Plan. Barb McAvoy sent out questions they were planning to discuss and that is what was discussed. She felt part of it was what part of the master plan do you use. So, there were no Economic Development issues addressed in the 2002 Master Plan so some questions were difficult to answer. Mr. Chartrand said that he addressed this in his group at this meeting, because they are looking to get development addressed in the next master plan and having the balance between development and what is best for the town. Ms. MacDonald urged everyone who is interested to weigh in on the Master Plan. Mr. Winham There will be a meeting on January 25, there will be a playgroup set up for children and pizza, etc. Mr. Winham said Kudos to the chosen consultants for this, as they also chose to open an office on Water Street. They asked that he provide them all the information on the EDSP, and to provide them with a track. They have been great in this regard and he has provided them with all of this information. Mr. Winham also said that he was also asked to connect them with the developers to get their input. He has questions to take to the developers, they can't interview everyone so Mr. Winham is asking if the committee may be able to help him package this and send it out to groups. Mr. Chartrand said that tomorrow's meeting is all about getting public input, and Mr. Winham explained the basic plan for the meeting. Mr. Chartrand said this is not about showing up and being talked at, this is collecting information from the public.

6. Public Workshop for Master Plan Steering Committee: **Wednesday, January 25, 2017 – 6:30PM., Exeter High School, 1 Blue Hawk Drive, Exeter.**

7. Recap of Economic Forecast Breakfast

Mr. Winham is going to put on the town website the presentation that went along with this. He felt the data was fascinating, he was happy to hear how strongly the Seacoast is doing. Mr. Mueller asked what was so interesting about the data, Mr. Winham said he didn't know they were going to be as strong as they are. Mr. Chartrand said it struck him that there was this image of New Hampshire as graying and they are in for a tough go, but the economist said the Seacoast is a special case. Young people are attracted to the lifestyle, and they should try to attract employers so they don't have to commute to Manchester or Boston. Mr. Smith found it interesting that they have the lowest child birth capita in the country because the Seacoast attracts couples with 1-2 kids. The area is attracting young families so if they can get the employers in it will attract more. Mr. Winham said decisions communities make determine the demographics.

8. Economic Development Project Updates (Darren Winham)

Mr. Winham explained that all kinds of great things were happening, they have convinced a lot of developers and businesses to think Exeter is a great place to be. They have some great spots to fill, now that the dam has been removed companies are looking into the water front properties. The Wolf and Ladle, will be filled which should be announced soon and they are applying for the 79E which is something the town has to vote it in, they can delay taxes for a piece of property if the Selectboard agrees to it. Mr. Winham said there was an article on Franklin Street and Ms. Mahoney in the Seacoast Online. The question put to him was will that gentrify that area of town, and he doesn't believe it will at all. Mr. Winham said they have an end user for the Orange Leaf and a lease has been signed and that will be announced next week. Mr. Seline has come forward on his project and been to the Zoning Board. This will be next to the McDonalds and contain most likely a Bank, Medical Office with residential on

top. Mr. Winham said they are working with Mr. Shaftmaster on two project. One is the 116-unit residential building that is going to open up the TIF. He has offered to pay the carry on a bond if they were to go ahead and build the road. In addition to this, there is a commercial development on this property, and it will be fantastic. One more piece of good news is a 100,000-square foot building and hopefully the Planning Board should get the plans on Continental drive. Mr. Chartrand asked where they were on Creative Gift Baskets, and it was explained they were just about done. And C3I which was a great project but in a challenging location. Mr. Winham said it took some convincing, but they were convinced to come to Exeter. Now they are being built, the foundation is in. The company will allow the parking to remain as it is, they will not have to make a whole new trail for the mountain bikers. They will hook up to the road and they will continue to allow their parking lot to continue to be used when they are not working. Mr. Chartrand wanted to make sure they always continued to discuss projects as they moved along, not just until they get green lighted. Mr. Mueller said the Creative Gift Baskets was a beautiful state of the art building. Mr. MacDonald said all the more reason for folks to support the warrant article they put forward because it's the same gentleman that wants to invest more money into the town of Exeter. You can drive out there and see the quality of the work. Ms. MacDonald asked if there was any sense of the job creation of these, Mr. Winham said some he can't talk about, but some will create many jobs in certain locations. Mr. Chartrand wanted to say that he feels Mr. Winham is doing amazing work and he is grateful for all the work he has put in. He feels the balance has been found and they are not pushing for things that are not in the town's interest. The work is essential to getting high quality of life at a great cost. Mr. Winham said he has a lot of support, and the commission has been very supportive.

9. Communication

Ms. MacDonald wanted to have a discussion on getting information to support Mr. Winham. Mr. Smith asked if this could be another agenda item next meeting assuming there are more people at the next meeting. Mr. Smith said they have talked about ways to communicate issues regardless of opinion better. In his time here they have talked about newspapers, Facebook, etc. He still thinks they are missing some still. He has spoken with some young families, who had no idea what the master plan meeting was for. He feels they should find a way to make this better for people who not as engaged in the town as Commission members are. Mr. Winham has a couple of interns starting next week, and one of the tasks is the Economic Development website. Then there is Facebook and they need someone to actually do this, etc. When they were younger, everyone read the paper now that's not the case. How can they get this out there and he doesn't have an answer to this. Mr. Chartrand, felt they had to do more as a commission, when this is being done they are on mission. Mr. Chartrand also said the Deliberative session is important, it is being educated on these warrant articles. Mr. Chartrand said this is critical meeting, but they only typically have 75-150 people who attend. The focus on getting more people to attend is right on target and he will be thinking about this more over the next week. Ms. MacDonald asked how much it would cost to do a mailing for the items that relate to economic development. Brian said some people see it as politics and get disinterested. Mr. Chartrand felt that this wasn't political at all. Mr. Winham said the YMCA is trying to find volunteers to watch kids that day as well. Mr. Mueller felt they were talking about civic engagement what if they reached out to the schools. They had volunteers do some presentations, and include handouts. Children may go home and talk to their parents about what they learned.

10. Updates

Mr. Mueller discussed the Housing Committee and they are making progress and they have a final meeting on Friday where they debate to have a draft to present to the master plan committee.

Ms. MacDonald said there has never been a report by the Economic Development Commission to go into the towns annual report, they are past the deadline now but she has managed to find a little bit of light where they may be able to slip something in. She would draft something and Mr. Chartrand and Mr. Winham will look at the draft. The treasurer explained that the Board has \$6765 still left in the funds.

Next meeting: Tuesday, February 28, 2017

ADJOURNMENT: Mr. Chartrand moved to adjourn at 8:15, Mr. Smith seconded. The motion passed.

After adjournment, a young man who runs Exeter Streaming said that young people he knew had mentioned they wished that the town would utilize social media more, including live streaming on Facebook and Twitter. The young man offered if they could get an iPhone or iPad at a meeting to stream a meeting live himself.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jennifer Dionne