

## FINAL MINUTES

### Exeter Economic Development Commission

February 28, 2017

Present: Lizabeth MacDonald-Chair, Dan Chartrand-Selectman Rep, Darren Winham- Economic Development Director, Ian Smith, Madeline Hamel, John Mueller, Chris Surette, Kelly Bergeron and Russ Dean, Town Manager.

1. **Call to order:** The meeting was called to order at 7:00 by Lizabeth MacDonald.
2. **Approve Minutes** – November 22, 2016 and December 20, 2016 are on the agenda as needing approval, but this is not true as Tom Monahan had come in and made a presentation the night of these meetings. No motions were made on these evenings and these were working sessions.

**MOTION:** Mr. Mueller moved to approve the January 24, 2017 minutes and Mr. Surette seconded. Mr. Dean, Ms. Hamel and Ms. Bergeron abstained due to not being in attendance for this meeting. The motion passed.

3. **Town Election** is March 14, 2017. This does not only include the election but it includes the warrant. The final warrant is up on the town website at this time. Selectman Chartrand wanted to say he is very much in favor of article 5, the Lincoln Street area improvements. This would help us to attract folks to redevelop or develop further some of those great old buildings in this area.

#### 4. Update on the Master Plan Steering Committee

Mr. Smith felt there was a fabulous turnout for the working session at the high school. Ms. Hamel was impressed with the participation and felt that it was a great turnout of different populations from town that turned up to work together. The importance of communications was emphasized at this meeting. Mr. Smith said that child care being included in this meeting was phenomenal, it was incredibly helpful for families with small children. John Mueller felt that a great cross section attended the meeting and he felt it was time well spent. There is another meeting March 9, 10AM and Mr. Smith cannot attend so other members will need to attend. Ms. Hamel agreed to attend this meeting. Mr. Chartrand appreciated Mr. Smith's work on representing the commission here.

#### 5. Economic Development Project Updates

Mr. Winham thanked everyone who attended the Sea Dog hearing at the ZBA meeting. They are hoping for a fall opening. Mr. Winham said he has been working on the George and Phillips property, and they are working on bringing some great ideas forward. It would be investment on the other side of Water Street. The empty building lot between the Chocolatier and 11 Water Street has a lot of work going on behind the scenes right now. There is some good news about the Salt Cave which is where the Orange Leaf was. The owners are Exeter residents and it will be a really good fit. The rinks project is moving forward ahead of schedule, and it will be a bit bigger than intended which is good news. There is a man who owns 60 acres on Kingston Road who walked into his office and said "let's do a subdivision" so they will see where this goes. Mr. Mueller just signed a contract to represent the restaurant from the old Friendly's restaurant, they are looking to get a lease and it could be a turn key operation for a restaurant. The temporary signs just went up this afternoon.

## **6. TIF Advisory Board & it's vote regarding allowing a developer to front the "carry" on a TIF bond Payment**

Mr. Winham said that himself, and John Shaftmaster were in front of the Planning Board for the balance of his property on Epping Road. What is interesting about this project is that he is planning on retaining the parcel that had been approved for residential because that project fell through. He has resurrected it in a much better fashion. The conceptual plan was shown to the Planning Board at their last meeting. For the project that Mr. Shaftmaster is looking at building the road would only need to go halfway into the property and the active adult community would be on the left side. They have almost \$34,000 of uncontested money in the TIF right now which won't get them very far this year. There are a lot of items they can get full tax on next year, but not this year. In order for them to put into this facility and the sports complex they don't have the money in the bucket to make it happen. The TIF advisory board discussed this last May and the idea was put forth to allow a developer or end user for a project to pay the carry. That idea was vetted with the attorney which confirmed they could do this. The developer would have to agree to pay whatever the carry is until such a time as the incremental tax increase is sufficient to pay the annual payments. Mr. Winham wanted to be clear that the ZBA approved this use for the land in October 2014, and the TIF approved in March 2015. It was determined the town council said they would have to have a lot of security to make this happen. Mr. Shaftmaster and the Town Attorneys are working on this now and they will have a contract when they appear before the Selectman for approval. The TIF Advisory Board said at their last meeting, what if another development comes along that needs TIF resources. They came up with a plan that was voted on, and the lawyer has to go through this. Mr. Chartrand wanted this to be clear in the public's mind, the first thing they are talking about is that in order to put the needed infrastructure improvements in to make these projects move forward for water and sewer the developers would contract with us to make the difference in bond payments that we can't pay. They carry the rest until the town can cover it. The developers carrying the bond payments while the TIF district gets up and running helps them to get a year or two ahead of the original plan. Mr. Chartrand wanted to know if this had happened in other communities. Mr. Winham said that he does not know what he can list but they came up with this on their own. Ms. Hamel asked how long a company was able to participate in the TIF program, was there an end point. It was confirmed that it was 20 years. Ms. MacDonald wanted to know if this would cause it to turn out more expensive in the end. Mr. Dean said that was a good question and he did not have the answer to this yet. Mr. Dean has been reviewing other agreements in the area and the devil is in the details. Hopefully they will have all this information soon to look at. Mr. Chartrand asked when this would be going before the Selectboard for approval. Mr. Winham said that Mr. Shaftmaster wants to get this moving, and he expects with a guess about a month. Mr. Chartrand would like this commission to review the proposed agreements and vote on a recommendation to the Selectboard. Mr. Mueller asked if Mr. Shaftmaster was going to be the developer going forward. This was confirmed that he would be the landowner and the developer. He is selling everything but the residential piece of this project.

Mr. Winham said with all the development they are looking at in the Epping Road corridor, if there are other infrastructure needs that occur, how will they pay for it? They are putting an application together to apply for CEDs grants. If they get this, it would put up to 6.8 million to do other infrastructure things if they are needed in that corridor. Mr. Chartrand asked Ms. Bergeron what the sense of the Planning Board was for the project. Ms. Bergeron said that Mr. Shaftmaster presented his design review. The plan was she believes well received. There were some comments about it being an age restricted community

but because this was approved by the ZBA a while ago there wasn't anything they could do about this. She felt that there was some misinformation on the TIF district and if more clarification comes through there will be less heated discussions on this issue. She felt it would be helpful on projects like this, if they could get an overview on everything that has happened previously, with definitions etc. This would help avoid confusion.

## **7 Communication**

Ms. MacDonald felt communication was getting better and Mr. Smith agreed. Mr. Smith felt a lot of information had come from tonight's meeting itself.

## **8. Updates**

Ms. Bergeron gave a Planning Board update, they heard Mr. Shaftmasters plan and next meeting they have another design review for Tuck Realty on Linden Street and a presentation by the gun club. Also, the master plan steering committee continues to do great work.

Mr. Mueller said the housing committee is very close to having a final presentation for the master plan committee. He thinks it's the Seacoast Workforce Housing Coalition has had an idea about having workforce housing and it would be an exciting opportunity to work on something that has been identified as a challenge. Mr. Dean felt the report they were working on was coming along great and it was a very interesting report to read. One of the recommendations coming out of it is to possibly spend some Planning Board money to work with the group and further hone a housing strategy for the town. Mr. Winham asked if this strategy would come out with the master plan or come out afterwards. Mr. Dean felt it would be afterwards, but it could inform some of the master plan.

**Next meeting: Tuesday, March 28, 2017**

**ADJOURNMENT:** Mr. Chartrand moved to adjourn, Mr. Smith seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Dionne