

Economic Development Committee
Meeting minutes May 9, 2008

Present: Chris Mueller, Jason Lenk, Susan Fuller, Karl Van Asselt, Doug Clark
Staff: Todd Selig, Town Administrator

- I. Meeting called to order at 7:40
- II. Public Comments: none
- III. Summary of 1995 Durham Community Development Plan
 - a. Jason Lenk reviewed the document
 - b. Copies of the document's stated goals and objectives were distributed and reviewed verbatim.
 - c. Doug Clark suggested a strategic and comprehensive economic plan should be developed first, then specific goals and objectives should flow down from the overall plan.
- IV. Review of Housing Amendments: review of amendments to the zoning ordinance from the Housing Task Force work.
 - a. Karl: DLA=DBA expressed concern about proposed large student housing projects which may include co-located retail / services.
 - b. Karl: Multi-unit housing amendment memo (May 2, 2008) is timely, changes to habitable space increase the opportunity for more housing downtown, but suggests 3-unrelated issue be addressed later (and feels if property is managed properly there is less need for strict 3-unrelated rule).
 - c. Susan: town is making progress, but question is how to develop without losing rural character of town.
 - d. Doug: we should reach out to towns that have done this successfully.
 - e. Chris: transportation is key to getting downtown.
 - f. Karl: is town willing to invest? ... we need an EDC Master Plan.
 - g. Karl: Motion to recommend to Town Council to accept changes stated in multi-unit housing memo dated May 2, 2008 from Jim Campbell.
 - h. Susan: motion seconded, and passed (5 in favor-0 opposed).
- V. Business Retention / Expansion
 - a. Chris: spoke with Alex Bakman, who is moving his business from Durham to Pease Tradeport, asked why not expand and stay in Durham? Lack of "community services", available space, transportation, etc.
 - b. Doug: a business needs to attract a workforce to a place geographically, employees want restaurants, services, ease of use, which we lack.
 - c. John Wiswell stated approximately 1000 people visit Durham every Sunday, and virtually none go into downtown Durham, opting instead for Newington or Portsmouth. Many constituents are independent business owners, successful, eco-friendly.
 - d. Chris: need to decide what we want in town, develop strategy to package town to desirable businesses
 - e. Discussion:

1. move EDC master plan to priority #1
2. add tax assessment relief document
3. PUD- move forward to have this available if needed
4. work with UNH on incubator space, retail, housing

ii. Doug:

1. incubator space is needed
2. town should invest in renewable energy

iii. Todd

1. UNH has own department of resources and economic development, has discussed spin-off space, none exists today, but depot road lot has been discussed as a possible site.

VIII. Adjournment (9:15 am)

jsl