

Economic Development Committee

Meeting Minutes

December 19, 2008

Present: Susan Fuller, Peter Ventura, Doug Clark, and Chris Mueller

Absent: Jason Lenk, Karl Van Asselt

- I. Meeting called to order at 7:40 am
- II. Public Comments  
Julian Smith, Packers Falls Road  
Spoke about the Committee's request for alternate members. He stated that the Town Council passed the ordinance amendment at first reading and set the public hearing for January 12, 2009. They had questions regarding why the Committee is requesting alternates and were questioning whether the alternates could sit in for any member or just the citizen members. There was also discussion on whether the alternate was just a citizen or could they be a business owner. The Chair and Town Planner explained that they had written a response to the Council on these concerns.
- III. Approval of the Minutes  
There were no minutes to approve.
- IV. Durham Business Park  
Eric Chinburg and Steve Schuster of Chinburg Builders gave the Committee background on their efforts to develop the property to date. They have tried marketing the property to eldercare facilities and medical offices among others. Mr. Schuster also gave the Committee background on their discussions with NHDOT for the entrance permit. NHDOT is apprehensive about allowing a large development on the site without a separate roadway from Old Piscataqua Road. This has been discussed for many years and there is a 100' NHDOT ROW that runs along Route 4 from Old Piscataqua Road to the Business Park. Mr. Chinburg also discussed the environmental changes that have occurred on the site over the years and there has been an increase in the amount of wetlands on the property. As a result, the number of potential building sites has gone from 5 to 3. They went on further to discuss a new idea they had for the property and that it would require a zoning amendment. They are considering a Co-housing project similar to one that has been built in Peterborough, NH. The development would consist of 1, 2, and 3 bedroom attached units with central parking and the units would be small and probably affordable. Any residential use, except for an eldercare facility would require a zoning amendment. The Committee discussed the feasibility of opening Old Piscataqua Road. There was also discussion on having a shared goal of economic development and that we should think outside the box. They also discussed the zoning amendments that would be needed. There was discussion of having a workforce housing component to this development as well as the possibility of having a municipal component to it. The municipal

component could include the Town Hall, Library and Police Department, either in the business park or off the extended Old Piscataqua Road. Mr. Chinburg made the Committee aware that the Purchase and Sale (P&S) runs through March 2009. The Committee discussed the idea of starting the whole RFP process over if the P&S were not extended. Mr. Chinburg was invited to attend an upcoming Planning Board meeting to discuss this idea as well.

- V. Research/Marketing Study  
Due to time constraints, this item was not discussed.
- VI. Strategic Plan  
Due to time constraints, this item was not discussed.
- VII. 2009 Action Plan  
Due to time constraints, this item was not discussed.
- VIII. Other Business  
The request for alternates was discussed and whether it was legal to have two at-large alternates that could fill in for any member, including the Council representatives and Planning Board Representative.
- IX. Adjournment at 9:10 am