

Economic Development Committee
Meeting Minutes

January 8, 2010

Present: Douglas Clark, Susan Fuller, Jason Lenk, Tom Elliott, and Richard England*

Absent: Chris Mueller

Staff Present: Jim Campbell

*The alternate, Richard England, sat in Chris Mueller who was absent for the meeting.

I. Call to Order

The meeting called to order at 7:35 am.

II. Approval of Agenda

The agenda was approved as presented.

III. Public Comments

There was no public comment.

IV. Approval of the Minutes

The minutes of December 18, 2009 were approved as amended.

V. Business Retention, Expansion, and Visitation Program

The Committee reviewed the letter and the survey that will be going out to the business owners. The committee agreed that the letter was good and is ready to go. The Committee also continued its review of the survey. The Committee agreed that the survey was also good but suggested a couple of changes. They suggested changes to the summary section and to Part I. Part II & Part III were good and no changes were suggested.

There was discussion on how to get the word out about this effort. A PR blitz will be needed. The Committee mentioned the Town's list serve and also having the Durham Business Association help. How to get to the people who have home occupations the survey was also discussed. Mr. Campbell stated that the town has some records on home occupations but only from those who have filled out permits. Everyone agreed that there are many more people who have home occupations but do not have a permit.

The committee then went through some ideas of what process to follow. The first step would be to send out the mailing, followed by a phone call asking for interviews, then interview. Some Committee members also believe that some business owners will not agree to personal interviews but will send in a response to the survey questions.

After some further discussion, Doug Clark motioned to approve the cover letter and survey as revised. The motion was seconded by Tom Elliott. The motion passed 5-0.

Richard England offered to possibly have a student from the Whittemore School of Business to help gather information from the survey.

VI. Update and Discussion with Town Administer Todd Selig on the location of Fire Department, Town Hall, and Library

Mr. Selig described that there have been many sites discussed for civic uses and that the library in particular has had a donor interested in donating money for a new library but it is taking a lot of time to find a spot.

The Library Board of Trustees and the Town have been recently looking at the Jacques property off Route 108. He went on to say that the site has it good and bad characteristics. The wetlands have been delineated and that much of the parcel has wetlands. The Town has been looking at about a ten (10) acre parcel that consists of the vacant lot and part of the lot that contains the Pines. He went on to say that the Town is looking at three (3) separate buildings on the site; one for Town Hall, one for the library, and one for a teen center. The site is such that the buildings may need to be separated. He said that they are looking into a path system that will connect this parcel to the High School. This would cost approximately \$200,000. Mr. Selig stated that the traffic mitigation for Route 108 will have quite a cost to it in addition to the construction costs.

Mr. Selig stated that the appraisal done in 2009 came in much lower than an appraisal of the property that was done about seven (7) years ago. Today the appraisal came in at around \$225,000 (for the open 7 acre field and an addition +/- 3 acres which is part of The Pines parcel, all of which would be necessary for the project due to the presence of wetlands) and seven (7) years ago the price for the one vacant lot which is the open field came in at \$750,000. That is quite a difference that the Jacques are having a hard time accepting.

Mr. Selig went on to describe that the path system, transportation, walking, biking, and making the connection will be an issue for this property. All were in agreement that traffic will be a problem that needs to be dealt with.

Mr. Selig went on to discuss 17 & 21 Madbury, which is owned by Jess Gangwer. Jess Gangwer and his son Sam own the "Greens" and Jess Gangwer owns many properties. The assessed value of 17 & 21 Madbury is approximately +/- \$4 million. The Town is in the process of getting the parcels appraised.

There was discussion on the Fire Station being built at the "Greens" parcel. The Fire Department would like to have this space and would include a possible

parking garage and workforce housing. Mr. Selig stated that the Library might also be interested in this location.

VII. Other Business (Old and New)

Old Business – This item was not discussed due to lack of time.

New Business – This item was also not discussed due to lack of time.

VIII. Next Agenda and Assignments

This item was not discussed.

IX. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at approximately 8:55 am.

Susan Fuller, Acting Secretary