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Durham Economic Development Committee

Wednesday, November 16, 2011

7:00pm at the Durham Town Hall

Members Present: Tom Elliott, Yusi Wang Turell, Jim Lawson, Jim Campbell, Andrew Corrow

Members Not Present: Ken Chadwick, Doug Clark

Also Present: Ken Young, Scott Gahan, Stephen Petrouitsis

I. Call to Order

Chair Elliott called the November 16, 2011 meeting of the Durham Economic Development Committee to order at 7:10 pm and elevated Yusi Turell to a voting member for the evening.

II. Approval of Agenda

Jim Lawson MOVED to approve the agenda as written, this was SECONDED by Yusi Turell and APPROVED unanimously.

III. Public Comments

None

IV. Committee & Staff Round Table

Planning Department – Jim Campbell

Mr. Campbell reported that there will be a public hearing on November 14th regarding the amendment to the zoning ordinance to remove two parcels on Strafford Avenue from the Professional District to the RA district as they were in 2006. He said the Public Hearing would also be held for the new building of a dog day care at the dog kennel. Mr. Campbell also reported that a citizen petition was submitted to change “elder care facility” to a non permitted use in the RA zone and there will be a public hearing regarding this on the 14th as well.

Mr. Campbell reported that the Technical Review Committee met on the 8th and approved a request by the Thompson Inn Highland Farm for an out building to be used as a function hall for

1 up to 18 events. He noted that the Planning Department met with Aroma Joes regarding the
2 possibility of moving into the Ballards' Building. Mr. Campbell said that a barber shop and
3 cigar store will be leasing space on the second floor of 13 Jenkins Court and have requested
4 technical review with the hope of opening in January.

5
6 Chair Elliott asked about the status of the zoning changes.
7

8 Mr. Campbell said the zoning changes will be discussed in December. He said the Planning
9 Board did a good job of getting through the document and feel that after one more round they
10 should be ready to go to public hearing; perhaps in January.
11

12 Parking Update – Jim Lawson
13

14 Mr. Lawson said he would discuss this issue at the December meeting.
15

16 TIF District Update – Jim Lawson
17

18 Mr. Lawson said the subcommittee met to discuss the TIF and decided it should present a
19 broader range of projects and should emphasize that risk can be mitigated through the savings
20 account approach and by having it set up so that any bonding will be paid by the incremental
21 revenues received. He said the document has been drafted and the EDC will have the
22 opportunity to review it in the near future. Mr. Campbell said a significant amount of
23 redevelopment is not needed to have a significant impact on the tax base.
24

25 Mr. Lawson reported that he had a meeting with Dr. Larry Mayer to discuss the University's
26 work on Arctic Ocean mapping. Mr. Lawson said that Dr. Mayer noted he is the largest small
27 business in Durham. He said he employs 85 people in his group and 83 are funded through
28 outside, long-term grants, not the University. Mr. Lawson said that these types of groups have a
29 tremendous impact on our region and our decisions help influence how much of that is captured
30 by this community.
31

32 Chair Elliott asked Mr. Lawson if there has been any further information regarding a CVS on the
33 corner of Route 108 and Main Street.
34

35 Mr. Lawson said he believes they are working on the traffic analysis.
36

37 Chair Elliott said that the Traffic Safety Committee met in October and Mark Henderson spoke
38 and expressed his interest to engage the Town in a discussion regarding the corner of Main Street
39 and Madbury Road. Chair Elliott said he appreciates Mr. Henderson's thoughtfulness in coming
40 to the town and being proactive.
41

42 Chair Report – Tom Elliott
43

1 Chair Elliott reported that Young's Restaurant has been undertaking a renewable energy project
2 which includes converting to natural gas, installing siding, windows, and insulation, which has
3 lowered their carbon footprint tremendously.

4 Kenneth Young said it has been a great project which has taken a long time; starting two years
5 ago. He said it required a lot of education on his part. Mr. Young said the Energy Audit did a
6 good job of identifying areas that could be improved. He said the change to natural gas has been
7 a huge improvement for the restaurant and they are already seeing an increased efficiency of
8 17% in the cooking process alone. Mr. Young said they have also been reaching out to local
9 vendors.

10
11 Chair Elliott noted that a new business will be opening on Main Street; Momma Macs. He noted
12 that more restaurants have opened in Durham than anywhere else on the Seacoast over recent
13 months.

14
15 Chair Elliott said that he was invited to a meeting to discuss UNH updating its campus Master
16 Plan. He said it is becoming clear that UNH is committed to and interested in working with
17 Durham to provide space for commercialization efforts.

18
19 Chair Elliott welcomed Andrew Corrow as the new representative from the Planning Board. He
20 noted that Mr. Corrow is the secretary to the Planning Board and will be replacing Susan Fuller's
21 position on the Committee.

22 23 V. Master Plan Chapter Revision Discussion with Beth Della Valle and Jim Campbell

24
25 Chair Elliott said the discussion this evening will be the scoping discussion about the updating of
26 the two chapters in the Master Plan regarding the downtown commercial core chapter and the tax
27 stabilization chapter. He said the process is an update of the chapters, not a rewrite. Chair
28 Elliott said the goal is to hear from the committee, proceed with the writing and have the
29 Committee review the draft.

30
31 Beth Della Valle said she is hoping to have a general discussion of what the Committee sees as
32 the major issues to be focused on in these two chapters. She said she forwarded 18 questions
33 that occurred to her while reviewing some of the various documents and asked the members to
34 keep track of three to five of the most important areas to be discussed.

35
36 The members each noted which areas they felt were most important to be discussed and the top
37 five were chosen to be discussed.

38
39 Chair Elliott noted that a different Committee member would read a question with a discussion
40 to follow.

41
42 Ms. Turell read question 9:

43
44 "The "Town-Wide Market Analysis" notes that the core of a university based commercialization
45 strategy currently exists, though start-ups and university-led commercialization initiatives will

1 present a limited opportunity for the Town. Without the necessary space to compete for
2 business, “the start-ups will eventually out-grow Durham and seek alternative communities for
3 the 2nd and 3rd Phase growth”.

4
5 *How much effort/how aggressively should the Town pursue a strategy of identifying appropriate*
6 *sites and making the investments necessary to ensure they are development ready? Should the*
7 *Town focus its efforts on creating a small scale (50-100 acres) University Research Park?*
8 *Should the Town try to assemble parcels for large development opportunities? How can the*
9 *Town better collaborate with the University?*

10
11 Jim Lawson said he feels the phrase “...should the town pursue a strategy of identifying
12 appropriate sites and making the investments necessary...” implies the Town has not identified
13 appropriate sites while it has. He said for him the question is if what has been identified is
14 sufficient, and does it need to be expanded or contracted. Mr. Lawson said he is also concerned
15 about the idea of “development ready” and said he feels this implies an investment prior to the
16 development which can be challenging. He said he believes it is more important to have the
17 Town be development capable; not development ready. Mr. Lawson questioned if it is necessary
18 to have water and sewer extended or more important to have a plan ready if there is
19 development. He said with regard to the question; “...should the Town acquire larger parcels for
20 development opportunities” leads to more questions; what would costs be, what benefits, risks
21 and impacts would there be. Mr. Lawson said more information is needed. He said with regard
22 to the question; “....can the Town better collaborate with the University” the answer is
23 absolutely.

24
25 Chair Elliott said he is very involved with the UNH commercialization strategy and feels it is
26 dangerous for the Committee to view the UNH commercialization opportunity as an economic
27 development strategy. He said he feels this places an expectation on UNH’s research enterprise
28 that is more than UNH wants to commit to. Mr. Lawson said he is aware that there are
29 companies who wish to locate in Durham because of UNH’s willingness to commercialize
30 research here. He said it is not realistic to expect UNH research efforts to fill all of the office
31 space in the downtown area, but they can provide a good opportunity to draw companies to
32 Durham.

33
34 Ute Luxem said she feels the Town needs a broader approach than just relying on the University.
35 She said as a town with a highly educated population and the availability of a highly motivated
36 fairly cheap labor pool (UNH students) we can attract vibrant businesses. Ms. Luxem said we
37 should provide the opportunity to build space in the commercial core and along gateways to
38 address their needs of locating in Durham. She said she would like to see a wide focus on what
39 types of businesses we are willing to attract and she would like to see the town consider a
40 broader picture than just UNH.

41
42 Yusi Turell said she feels the chapter needs to reflect that UNH is a competitive advantage and
43 helps to draw businesses. She suggested the town should make it easier for businesses who think
44 they want to work with UNH to come to Durham and perhaps provide a guide to working with

1 UNH. Ms. Turell also suggested forming relationships with groups at UNH outside of the
2 commercialization body to see what types of businesses they would like to work with.

3
4 Ms. Turell said she is concerned that being “development ready” versus “development capable”
5 would set the bar for entry that smaller companies would not be capable of meeting.

6
7 Mr. Lawson said companies do not want to come to Durham and build an office building; they
8 want to be able to come to Durham and find office space and the appropriate infrastructure. He
9 said if Durham does not have office space and the zoning and programs to allow office space to
10 be developed than there will be no place for companies to go.

11
12 Chair Elliott suggested that they also focus on light industrial space which Durham lacks and
13 will see more demand for. He said Durham has an asset in Goss. Chair Elliott said Durham has
14 the opportunity to have light manufacturing space in Durham (not just in the downtown) and said
15 that the Planning Board is looking at considering allowing light manufacturing in downtown.

16
17 Mr. Lawson said all of the companies that he has been involved with would be considered
18 extremely desirable to the Town of Durham, but none of them could exist in anyplace that did
19 not allow light manufacturing as currently defined in Durham. He said if the Town does not
20 allow light manufacturing in the downtown area it makes it extremely difficult for attractive,
21 viable companies to come to Durham. Mr. Lawson explained that these types of companies have
22 the heavy manufacturing done by outside vendors and the light manufacturing done in town.

23
24 Chair Elliott said the Town is currently struggling with the interest of a light manufacturing
25 company for property on Route 4. He asked Ms. Luxem to describe the company and what they
26 could not do in Durham.

27
28 Ms. Luxem said the light manufacturing consists of attaching two parts together with a Federal
29 Express truck arriving once a day. She said office work would be permitted in the desired
30 location, but this is not and there is no way for zoning to approve the application. Ms. Luxem
31 said the company would have brought 12 high paying jobs into town with very little impact. She
32 said the company wanted to be in Durham to have access to UNH students and because the
33 owner lives locally in southern Dover and wanted to be able to bike to work. Ms. Luxem said
34 unfortunately this did not work out, but she hopes in the future to be able to address these kinds
35 of needs. She said there was no environmental issue, the building was already there, parking was
36 there and the company would have caused minimal traffic and personal impact on the neighbors.
37 Ms. Luxem suggested structuring land use regulations to give the Town flexibility.

38
39 Chair Elliott said this is an example of a company that wanted to be in Durham, whose impact
40 would have been very minor. He said they felt being in Durham would have been better than
41 being somewhere else. Chair Elliott asked where the building is that a company can go into
42 without needing Zoning Board approval. He asked if it should be in the downtown core or if
43 there is a better location. Chair Elliott suggested that Route 108, the Stone Quarry area and the
44 Goss location would be attractive locations for these types of businesses.

1 Mr. Lawson said his concern is that if a business is successful and growing there will be a lot of
2 reasons why they will be motivated to move into those locations. He said his experience shows
3 that many good companies begin with 2 or 3 people doing very light manufacturing that might be
4 desirable for the downtown. Mr. Lawson said the intent is to attract smaller companies that will
5 grow to the downtown. He said if they are not able to be in the downtown it limits the types of
6 companies that can be downtown.

7
8 Chair Elliott said allowing light manufacturing in the downtown core may mean using higher
9 value office space. He asked if it would make sense when going to the next step to seek lower
10 cost space.

11
12 Mr. Lawson said the market will dictate what type of space is best, he said when the companies
13 grow it typically does not make sense to be in the downtown area then. He explained that small
14 businesses start in the downtown and as they grow larger they will move out of the downtown.
15 Mr. Lawson said the market will accomplish that and the Town does not need to do that by land
16 use policy.

17
18 Chair Elliott said the discussion has gone beyond policy and is now involving strategy. He said
19 he would like to see the Master Plan express a strategy to encourage light manufacturing
20 somewhere in town.

21
22 Mr. Lawson said light manufacturing is often difficult to differentiate from office space and does
23 not necessarily need to be incorporated into the design of the space.

24
25 Ms. Luxem said it is a very important point that light manufacturing is still an office building, an
26 attractive building and not a steel building in an industrial park. She said light manufacturing
27 can be done within the downtown area without having a negative visual impact or a negative
28 impact on other businesses.

29
30 Ms. Della Valle suggested moving on to the next topic area, Question 7.

31
32 Mr. Corrow said this conversation seems like it would be beneficial to the Planning Board. He
33 asked if there are ever joint sessions between the EDC and the PB. Mr. Corrow said
34 brainstorming on these two chapters with the two groups would be helpful.

35
36 Chair Elliott said the EDC would welcome a joint meeting.

37
38 Jim Campbell said it has happened in the past, but not often enough.

39
40 Andrew Corrow read Question 7:

41
42 The "Town-Wide Market Analysis" notes Durham's shortage of office space, its location off
43 major regional transportation routes, and significant competition with existing office space in the
44 region. One of Durham's constraints to office development is the lack of development ready
45 space. The report recommends that the Town focus on a long term strategy to add development

1 ready land, particularly in the Durham Business Park. At the same time, opening up large areas
2 to office development that are remote from Downtown won't help support employee use of the
3 retail, service, and restaurant opportunities Downtown.

4
5 *How much effort/how aggressively should the Town pursue a strategy of identifying appropriate*
6 *sites and making sure they are development ready? Alternatively, should the Town focus its*
7 *primary efforts on renovation/revitalization of existing developed space? Does the Town have*
8 *the resources and resolve to do both?*
9

10 Chair Elliott said he sees little opportunity for rehabilitation of existing buildings with regard to
11 the immediate downtown corridor. He said the town's building stock in the downtown core does
12 not lend itself to rehabilitation; he suggested tear down and rebuild of some of the buildings.

13
14 Mr. Lawson said the town does not need to tear down everything to make it successful. He said
15 if the market creates an opportunity to redevelop 15% of the downtown that would create almost
16 50 million dollars of redevelopment. Mr. Lawson cautioned that to do the things the Committee
17 is talking about will require major redevelopment of some of the downtown. He said he does
18 not want people who have invested in the downtown to feel that the only way to participate is to
19 tear down their building and rebuild. Mr. Lawson said everyone can participate, he said some
20 landowners who are at the point of wanting to completely rebuild may want to go that route.

21
22 Chair Elliott said there are plenty of places on the seacoast where large existing buildings have
23 been repurposed. He said Durham does not have that type of building.

24
25 Mr. Lawson said this question has the tone that the Town is going to accomplish this.

26
27 Ms. Della Valle said the question is how aggressive does the Committee think the Town should
28 be.

29
30 Mr. Lawson said he feels the Town should not do this, the market should. He said the question
31 is if the Town has land use policies that will allow the market to do this.

32
33 Chair Elliott said he believes the town should be reliant upon partnerships with businesses to
34 provide the space needed.

35
36 Mr. Lawson agreed, saying partnerships are needed at some level. He said he feels the question
37 leaves the impression that the town being aggressive means the town will do these things. Mr.
38 Lawson said he feels the Town should not be doing them.

39
40 Ms. Turell said the Town should be playing the role of broker; recruit and facilitate
41 conversations between private landowners looking to move on and developers.

42
43 Chair Elliott said many places have been identified as having a gap between private developers
44 and the market place. He said the true town government is limited in their focus. Chair Elliott

1 said many towns fill that gap with a facilitator from an economic entity able to find public
2 dollars to buy land and assemble parcels, not the town government.

3
4 Ms. Turell said it would be good to hear more about that direction. She suggested the Master
5 Plan planning process consider including this in the chapter.

6
7 Ms. Luxem suggested refocusing the question and acknowledging the shortage of office space.
8 She said the TIF on the Stone Quarry Drive can be utilized to provide the water and sewer
9 infrastructure, as well as the downtown TIF providing the opportunity of needed infrastructure.

10
11 Ms. Della Valle said she is looking to get a sense of how actively this committee feels the Town
12 should be engaged in promoting certain economic strategies. She said on the aggressive end of
13 the spectrum would be having a dedicated Economic Development Director who is actively
14 recruiting businesses, assembling land, extending infrastructure, aiding developers in the process
15 of getting low interest loans, seeking foundations or economic development monies from State,
16 Federal and nonprofit sources, packaging deals, promoting development of a Main Street Group
17 that is an outside entity formed to work in partnership with the Town. She said some
18 communities embrace all of these efforts and are considered extremely aggressive. Ms. Della
19 Valle said the other end of the spectrum would be a Town that provides the opportunity for
20 businesses that want to come to town.

21
22 Mr. Lawson said that he does not feel the second approach works well. He suggested
23 considering what the Chair has mentioned regarding an outside entity of people to facilitate
24 things. Mr. Lawson said an example of the second approach not working is the Professional
25 Office District in Durham. He noted that Zoning allows offices, but it has not happened because
26 it has not been facilitated. Mr. Lawson said he also does not feel that Durham can or should be
27 the builder, but should have a facilitator to be successful. He said it is most likely that the Town
28 Staff does not have the resources to act as a facilitator, so may need to consider moving toward
29 an outside entity as the facilitator.

30
31 Chair Elliott said he feels there are roles for the Town government and staff to play that are
32 critically important and need to be fulfilled and that the staff does well. He noted he feels the
33 next layer is more of the facilitation, deal making, land acquisition, grant writing processes that
34 needs another entity in order to be successful.

35
36 Mr. Lawson said if the Town has a facilitator working to help fill office space in the downtown
37 area, the Stone Quarry Drive and Durham Business Park areas will provide a path where the
38 businesses can move to when they grow. He said that would be a selling point for Durham.

39
40 Chair Elliott said there is an assumption that the next layer of space will be fulfilled by the
41 Business Park which will be ready soon. He said he believes it is fair to say that that one parcel
42 of land will not solve the problem, but the Town needs to think bigger.

1 Mr. Lawson said if the Town begins to take parcels out of ORLI zoning and won't consider
2 development along Route 108, it will make it more difficult to address the spectrum of
3 businesses that would be looking for a place to locate.

4
5 Ms. Turell said she supports the proactive piece and feels that additional resources are needed
6 whether it is done within the Town or as a separate entity. She said the discussion has been
7 focusing a lot on growth companies and technology companies, but that there is also a need for
8 health services and professional services that are not based on growth and will make Durham a
9 destination. She said she believes this is another reason to have a facilitator.

10
11 Chair Elliott agreed saying a mix of businesses helps even things out.

12
13 Mr. Lawson said the quality of life is affected in a positive manner by having primary care
14 doctors and other health and professional services available in Durham.

15
16 Ms. Luxem, said she agrees that a facilitator is needed and said she is not ready to put a lot of
17 investment upfront into any area to extend infrastructure. She said if there is interest from a
18 developer than the Town should consider the investments needed to attract the developer.

19
20 Chair Elliott read Question Five:

21
22 Off-campus student housing is a significant contributor to Durham's economic based (rental
23 housing represents approximately 51% of taxes paid) and existing student housing demand is
24 unfulfilled, causing many students to live outside of and regularly travel to Durham for school.
25 At the same time, off-campus student housing has created conflict in some areas of the
26 community. The "Town-Wide market Analysis" recommends that additional student-focused
27 retail should only be encouraged when demand for student housing is met with additional student
28 residential units in the Downtown area.

29
30 *Should the Town seek or support efforts to add additional off-campus student housing? If so,*
31 *where in the community should these housing units be located? What do you think of the*
32 *recommendation to not encourage additional student-focused retail unless the demand for*
33 *student housing is met with additional units in Downtown?*

34
35 Mr. Lawson said the question implies the Town is a broker for retail space and that is not the
36 case.

37
38 Ms. Della Valle said the Committee can comment that student housing and student-focused retail
39 is not something that the Committee wishes to focus on. She asked how the members feel about
40 student housing being built in ORLI zones, is that acceptable, should it be closer, should there be
41 more of it or less.

42
43 Chair Elliott said the consensus from leadership in Town is that student housing needs should be
44 met in areas that will have the least effect on citizens. He said the Capstone project provides an
45 area for student housing without creating conflict with single family homes.

1
2 Mr. Lawson said he is not as confident that the value of Capstone is where it is located as the
3 characteristics of the housing type. He said the specific housing characteristic of the project was
4 demonstrated as being valuable to students. Mr. Lawson said he does not believe that the
5 Capstone Project is a statement/policy saying that the Town does not want student housing
6 downtown. He said he does not feel that the Town should preclude student housing from either
7 types of area by land use policy. Mr. Lawson said student housing will continue to be important
8 to the downtown and he does not want to see it precluded. He said he believes the Town should
9 define what it wants in terms of the characteristics of student housing.

10
11 Ms. Turell said the chapter needs to acknowledge that student housing is an economic driver of
12 the tax base currently, but should not go into too much detail. She said one of the benefits of the
13 Capstone project is to create an additional supply and encourage redevelopment of some of the
14 older housing stock downtown. Ms. Turell said it is important to acknowledge that the financing
15 portion of student housing projects is important. She said enabling student housing as part of
16 redevelopment projects downtown may be a way to get to more redevelopment.

17
18 Ms. Luxem said student housing is crucial to the downtown because of cash flow. She said the
19 strategy is to use cash flow to leverage what the community wants to see in additional
20 development and used Jenkins Court redevelopment as an example. Ms. Luxem said the student
21 housing in that project supports the commercial space on the fourth floor and the retail space on
22 the ground floor, which are both very desirable to the Town. She said by integrating student
23 housing and leveraging it it creates a situation which encourages office and retail space. Ms.
24 Luxem said she believes mixed use is a good path to be heading towards and that it also lowers
25 the negative impacts of student housing. She said more residents will frequent the downtown in
26 the evening, which keeps student activities at a more appropriate level. Ms. Luxem said she
27 would like to see workforce housing for singles and young couples that would be interested in
28 living in the downtown area.

29
30 Chair Elliott noted that a building owner in downtown Durham can get more than double per
31 square foot for student housing than they can for retail or office. He said until that changes it
32 will be difficult to increase office and retail use.

33
34 Mr. Lawson said he believes it will take only a modest amount of additional student housing to
35 begin to normalize the market. He said he feels strongly that public/private partnerships should
36 not focus on student housing but should be in the areas that benefit the Town and provide value
37 to the community and the downtown.

38
39 Chair Elliott asked Mr. Lawson if he feels the projects that have happened in the last four years
40 have started to produce enough student housing to begin to round down the per square foot cost
41 curve for student housing.

42
43 Mr. Lawson said at some point there will be a turn and the Town needs to carefully look for that
44 turn in order to keep current projects full. He said he believes student housing should be in a
45 constrained smaller land area.

1
2 Jim Campbell read Question Two:

3
4 The “Town-wide Market Analysis” recommends that the Town focus on “enhancements” of
5 Downtown with “retail targeted to the residents and employee population.”
6

7 *What strategies would best do that? Should the Town primarily or entirely rely on local business*
8 *and property owners to address enhancements or should the Town or other elements “actively*
9 *recruit” desired retailers as an economic strategy?*
10

11 Ms. Della Valle commented that some of the answers regarding the role of an outside entity and
12 how aggressive the Committee feels the Town should be have already been answered in
13 discussions this evening.
14

15 Chair Elliott said this question asks if we are seeking to have more resident and adult focused
16 businesses how we go about encouraging that and how actively engaged in the process the Town
17 should be.
18

19 Chair Elliott said he believes the best way for the Town to achieve a well-rounded mix of retail
20 and restaurants that is more diversified and more oriented to residents and adults is to have as
21 many offices and businesses downtown so it will be easier for the businesses to survive 12
22 months a year, rather than 7 months a year.
23

24 Chair Elliott said he does not support any effort that would reduce the number of students eating
25 and making purchases in the downtown. He said the goal is to increase non students doing those
26 things and not to exclude the University population.
27

28 Jim Lawson read Question Eight:

29
30 Among the major findings of the “Master Plan Community Survey”, there is an important set of
31 contradictory results: *make more land available for commercial development¹, economic*
32 *development beyond downtown should be encouraged by the Town², and concentrate*
33 *commercial development in existing developed areas to preserve outlying, high quality areas³. It*
34 *is very difficult to both encourage economic development beyond downtown and concentrate*
35 *commercial development in existing developed areas to preserve outlying areas. While the*
36 *Planning Board, EDC, and the Conservation Commission have independently discussed the need*
37 *to work together to figure out which areas are most important to develop and which areas are*
38 *most important to conserve, they have not resolved these issues.*
39

40 *How should the Town resolve these conflicting positions (both highly supported by the*
41 *community) and how might it better frame and balance these competing concerns? How might*
42 *the Town’s committees identify the highest priority develop and conservation areas?*
43

44 Chair Elliott said he does not see the conflict.
45

1 Mr. Lawson said some of the same people answered the same question both ways and this shows
2 that the community is looking for balance. He said the Town's objective is to achieve the
3 balance that the community is looking for, but questioned if the Town is out of balance at the
4 moment.

5
6 Ms. Della Valle said the survey results were contradictory.
7

8 Mr. Lawson said the statistics show that the majority of people answered the question both ways,
9 so it is not a contradiction but a desire for balance. He said he feels the residents do not want
10 economic development at a cost of protecting land that they feel should be protected, but do not
11 want conservation at a cost to economic development.
12

13 Ms. Della Valle asked if he saw a conflict between promoting additional downtown and outlying
14 areas.
15

16 Mr. Lawson said there is a need to develop land use policies that make it possible for the Town
17 to choose where to develop in outlying areas.
18

19 Ms. Luxem said other surveys reflect that residents are willing to give up certain areas such as
20 Stone Quarry Drive, sections of Route 155, Route 4 and Route 108 to Newmarket. She said
21 there are certain areas that are very valuable to people, like Wagon Hill Farm that they do not
22 wish to see development.
23

24 Ms. Della Valle asked the members to discuss location and the types of development that would
25 be desirable and if there were different types of businesses that would be acceptable in the
26 downtown area than in outlying areas.
27

28 Ms. Luxem said Durham needs design standards because the residents will not want box type
29 buildings. She said she feels the designs should be true to the small New England town
30 character with brick façades and two stories, and not have an industrial feel. Ms. Luxem said if
31 the outside is appealing and the inside is environmentally friendly there will be high acceptance
32 from the citizens in town.
33

34 Chair Elliott said he believes the highest level of consensus will be in the existing downtown
35 core and as you move away from the downtown there is a need to stay to the existing developed
36 roadways and parcels to gain acceptance. He said if the projects look nice and take into account
37 environmental considerations there will be less resistance. Chair Elliott noted that looking at raw
38 land on the edges of Town may garner resistance, but may be overcome with a good site plan
39 review and common sense. He said he feels the area with the most conflict would be a surge in
40 single family housing on raw land.
41

42 Mr. Campbell said Durham's zoning is not conducive to that type of development and most
43 developers do not want to go through the Town's process to get approval for a subdivision.
44

1 Mr. Lawson said a lot of the analysis that drove those zoning decisions are now being revisited
2 and may cause a different approach now. He said he believes the characteristics of commercial
3 development outside of the downtown can have a different characteristic. Mr. Lawson said the
4 2000 Master Plan went to great lengths to highlight Goss, whose building is not quaint. He said
5 location of the building and its visibility has a lot to do with what designs will be desired.

6
7 Ms. Luxem agreed, saying if the Goss building was at an intersection and highly visible Durham
8 would probably not be happy, but its secluded location makes it acceptable. She said on visible
9 areas design standards are needed to keep the appeal for the residents.

10
11 Mr. Lawson said projects need to be reflective of what people in town desire.

12 Ms. Turell said the Committee should be sure that the EDC chapters and the Conservation
13 Chapters are consistent. She asked if the Conservation Commission feels there is a conflict
14 between the two.

15
16 Mr. Campbell said the Conservation Commission has not begun their chapter yet. He said he
17 believes there will be some members of the Conservation Commission who will believe there is
18 a conflict. Mr. Campbell noted that the Conservation Commission members feel that some of
19 the areas zoned as business are sensitive areas environmentally.

20
21 Ms. Luxem asked if it would be possible to have a combined meeting.

22
23 Mr. Campbell said he and Ms. Della Valle discussed that possibility. He said the EDC, the PB
24 and the CC all want to have areas that can be developed and areas that can be conserved without
25 opposition from each other. He said he felt it would be an important conversation to have.

26
27 Ms. Luxem said she feels it is important as the chapters are rewritten to meet. She said it would
28 be helpful to have a guideline on structuring the meeting so the groups can come to a consensus.

29
30 Chair Elliott said he feels the discussion would be academically interesting but not productive
31 with regard to policy making unless the EDC has a clear goal for the tax base. He said if the
32 EDC can identify what is needed to add to the tax base (how many acres would that involve
33 redeveloping or developing from raw land) that would give the Conservation Commission a
34 better sense.

35
36 Mr. Lawson said as the Town looks at the CIP and other costs that are being transferred to the
37 Town from the State level and new projects that are being considered (fire station, library, waste
38 water treatment plant) it becomes clear that there is a need to increase the tax base.

39
40 Chair Elliott said the Capstone project will provide a 20 million dollar increase in the tax base on
41 only 42 acres. He said he feels the Committee needs to know the numbers in order to have a
42 discussion with the Conservation Commission.

43
44 Mr. Lawson agreed saying the Committee needs to have a feel for where they think the Town
45 needs to be and what that looks like from a land use point.

1
2 Ms. Della Valle said one way to gauge success of efforts is to take one of the goals and put it in a
3 quantifiable fashion and assign a time frame to it, thus making it trackable.
4

5 Chair Elliott asked where the Committee stood with regard to the process of rewriting the
6 chapters.
7

8 Ms. Della Valle said if the members had any other comments to send them to her or to Jim
9 Campbell. She said she will update the inventory part of the chapter, reviewing the studies and
10 the economic profiling, she will write a draft for the Committee to review and have them provide
11 comments at another meeting until a consensus is reached about the chapter. Ms. Della Valle
12 said there will be community meetings in January/February and a Public Hearing will be held on
13 each chapter or grouping of chapters. She said some chapters influence other chapters so it is
14 sometimes helpful to hold the Public Hearings regarding them together.
15

16 The members discussed the need to have the draft to them at least a week before their next
17 scheduled meeting to provide enough time to review it.
18

19 VI. Approval of Minutes of 10/24/2011 20

21 *Yusi Turell MOVED to postponed review of the 10/2411 minutes until the December meeting,*
22 *this was SECONDED by Jim Lawson and APPROVED unanimously.*
23

24 VII. Next meeting scheduling and agenda items 25

26 The next meeting of the Durham Economic Development Committee was tentatively scheduled
27 for Thursday December 15, 2011.
28

29 XII. Adjourn 30 31

32 *Jim Lawson MOVED to adjourn the November 16, 2011 meeting at 9:42 pm, this was*
33 *SECONDED by Ute Luxem and APPROVED unanimously.*
34

35 Respectfully submitted by,
36

37 Sue Lucius, secretary to the Durham Economic Development Committee
38
39
40
41