

Economic Developement - MINUTES
December 17, 2019
Town Council Chambers
Durham NH

Members present:

Roger Hayden
Ray Rodon
Al Howland
Warren Daniel
Sally Tobias

Agenda was approved

Christine Soutter's discussion about Jenkins Court will be postponed because she was held up in the snow storm.

Housing Committee:

Al began with an overview on the Housing Subcommittee the group voted on at the last meeting. There was some discussion about the challenges of the lack of affordable housing in the region. Al spoke how important it will be for the committee to look outside of Durham and to look at it with a regional perspective. The group went on at length with discussion about various challenges, opportunities and goals. Roger emphasized how important data will be in this process. Warren commented that as well as surrounding towns we need to look at other college towns.

Jenkins Court:

Christine was held up due to the storm. Al started the discussion by speaking to the fact that there are many interesting and successful businesses on Jenkins Court. The focus of the discussion is "how can we make Jenkins Court more attractive to the public". Ray commented that some of the buildings are getting dated and may not be in need of a facelift.

Al does not want this to be a judgement of the property but to include the property and business owners on how to make the area more desirable. It will be very important to have their input. Sally added that closure to cars is not the main focus and may not be the best solution at this time. Ray added that there are a lot of professional business there as well. There was some discussion that improvements in signage may be helpful.

The group decided that Christine's presentation would be moved to the next meeting in January.

Jay Michaels, Durham property owner, was invited up from the audience to make comments. He expressed that Jenkins Ct has potential to be more attractive. He spoke about the need for more adequate parking. He spoke about widening sidewalks and seating. He commented that there are many issues for property owners to consider.

Christine Soutter arrives at 8:49

Ray asked Jay about a part time closing of Jenkins Ct and how that might work. Jay thought it was a viable option. He admitted that widening the sidewalks and increasing a sense of space would have a positive effect on the businesses.

Roger commented that the town needs to look at long range parking needs in the town. Al added that long range planning of parking needs is something that needs to be done. If we redevelop downtown what would our parking needs be? Warren commented that we have spoken about parking for a long time and that the town has never found it economically feasible to build a structure. He added as a consumer he has never had an issue finding a spot. Al clarified that it is a business parking issue. There was some discussion about business parking in town.

Christine spoke about a conversation she had with Chief Kurz about encouraging employees to park further out. She spoke to him about raising the prices of the prime business parking lots. This would encourage businesses to park further out where there is more parking available.

Al added that he has an article about parking, including maps, on the Celebrate Durham site.

The meeting adjourned.