

DRAFT MINUTES
BROOKFIELD ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION MEETING
TUESDAY, MAY 19, 2015 ROOM 209
7:00 PM

1. Convene Meeting: Chair Kurfehs called the meeting to order at 7:05 PM with the following in attendance:

Present: Chair Hal Kurfehs; Secretary Dave Matte; Vice Chair Greg Dembowski; Commissioner Nancy Tolmoff

Absent: Commissioner Jim Fisher

Also Present: Mr. Mike Dorè; Recording Secretary Emily Cole Prescott

2. Approval of Meeting Minutes (04/21/15): Chair Kurfehs noted that there are not enough Commission members present at this time to take a vote on the approval of the minutes.

3. Discussion of Strategy/Metrics Creation: Chair Kurfehs stated that Mr. Mike Dorè has a background in strategy and planning. Chair Kurfehs stated that Mr. Dorè has looked at the EDC's current strategy and has offered some comments to make the current strategy more concise. Chair Kurfehs stated that the re-write is a bit more direct, and is better overall. Secretary Matte and Commissioner Tolmoff both agreed that the re-written version is better.

4. Update on Website Functioning & Newsletter Contact List: Chair Kurfehs stated that the business incubator on the home page has been replaced with the Town Center information. Chair Kurfehs stated that there was a story on high school ratings in the *US News and World Report*, and asked that one of the Commissioners write a piece about Brookfield's high school rankings as indicated in this report. Secretary Matte volunteered to draft the article. *Vice Chair Dembowski entered the meeting room at 7:13 PM.* Chair Kurfehs mentioned that perhaps the Brookfield High School rankings may be compared to other State high school rankings.

Chair Kurfehs reviewed some of the points covered earlier in the meeting with Vice Chair Dembowski. Vice Chair Dembowski stated that he will review the re-written EDC Strategy document; he asked that the document be sent to him via email.

The Commission moved back to discussion of Strategy/Metrics Creation.

Strategy/Metrics Creation: Vice Chair Dembowski stated that since the EDC met a month ago, he and Chair Kurfehs had been to meetings regarding the Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD). The Board of Selectmen had a meeting workshop last week (05/11/15) to discuss revisions. These changes had been given to the Planning Commission, and at the next regular BOS meeting, the BOS will vote on the document. Vice Chair Dembowski stated that the EDC Strategy should work hand-in-hand with the POCD. He urged all of the Commissioners to read the completed POCD document, when it is available. The EDC should review the EDC-related action items of the POCD, and plan to discuss these action items at the next meeting.

Vice Chair Dembowski reviewed the changes discussed at the last BOS meeting: Police Station upgrade, Center and Huckleberry Hill School renovations. Mr. Dorè asked when the term "Four

Corners” came into existence, and Chair Kurfehs stated that it has been part of the terminology in the area for years. Chair Kurfehs stated that Brookfield Center (the Historic District area) used to have a separate zip code: 06805. Commissioner Tolmoff commented that perhaps the Brookfield Center section of Town should be named the Historical Center, and the “Four Corners” area should be termed the Town Center, as to help reduce the confusion of having two areas of Town termed “Center”.

The POCD is 115 pages, according to Vice Chair Dembowski. Every Board and Commission has action items, and the plan is comprehensive. Vice Chair Dembowski stated that he spoke at the last BOS meeting, and his comment at that meeting was that it is very easy for the Town to be critical, but a lot has been accomplished in the past years.

The Commission moved back to discussion of the Draft Minutes.

Approval of Meeting Minutes (04/12/15): Vice Chair Dembowski made a motion to accept the minutes of the previous meeting. Commissioner Tolmoff seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously.

6. Other Discussion:

Business Incubator: Vice Chair Dembowski stated that he brought a book he bought at the Business Incubator Conference he and Nelson Malwitz had attended last year, *Developing a Business Incubation Program*, for information about how to create a business incubator. Commissioner Tolmoff stated that she needs to make some time in her life before pursuing work on the business incubator.

CEDF Event: Chair Kurfehs stated that at the last meeting the Commission discussed the Community Economic Development Fund event, which free event is scheduled on May 20th at Mohegan Sun. Chair Kurfehs stated that a notification was sent out to the EDC Constant Contact list about the event. Commissioner Tolmoff stated that she saw the email and has passed it along to someone she knows who is starting her business. E. Cole Prescott will re-send the notice to the Commissioners.

Regional Website: Chair Kurfehs stated that there was funding from HVCEO to create a website for the region. The approval was for \$25,000 for the build of this website, and the responses to the request for proposal have since been evaluated. The bids were narrowed from 13 to 3, and there was a meeting with presentations of those three. Image Mark – a firm from Wilton – has since been selected, and the contract now must be approved through the new regional organization, WestCOG. There will be a vote on the matter this Thursday. The next step is to review strategy meetings with the vendor to decide what is to be presented on the site. Chair Kurfehs presented a memo dated 05/14/15 from David Hannon, Deputy Director, WestCOG, regarding Request for Contract Approval – Northern CEDS Economic Development Website. The second page of this memo outlines a strategy for the website creation. Vice Chair Dembowski stated that it is important to have someone trained to keep the website current, and Chair Kurfehs stated that the remaining funds of the original project (due to the amount of the bid being lower than the estimated project amount) will be used to keep the updates going for at least a year. Vice Chair Dembowski stated that this website will need to be added to the

Brookfield EDC website, just as this regional website will have the Brookfield EDC website as a link. Chair Kurfehs stated that the idea of this website is to sell the region. It will be up to the municipalities to personalize their individual sites.

5. Demographic Shift & Modern Libraries Articles sent in emails from Chair H.

Kurfehs: Chair Kurfehs mentioned the emails sent out earlier, throughout the past couple of weeks. Chair Kurfehs stated that since the millennial age group prefers an urban environment for social interaction, a Town Center atmosphere may help to capture some of these people. Commissioner Tolmoff stated that she is on the Church council at Prince of Peace, and they have the same problem with attracting the younger age group. If the younger age group was attracted to the community, perhaps that would also help to attract the community to the Church. Chair Kurfehs stated that convenience is primary, with access to the railroad for the younger generations looking to rent. Commissioner Tolmoff stated that it would make sense to have a train in the area. Chair Kurfehs stated that transit-oriented development is an asset for development.

Chair Kurfehs stated that the concept of a Library has changed quite a bit. Chair Kurfehs stated that he thinks a library in the Four Corners is needed. Chair Kurfehs mentioned a proposed location for the Library in the Town Center District, on land that would be donated in a proposed development in the area. The Town was offered another spot in the general vicinity of Brookfield Village. There is also another potential location at the Ptak House, 108 Pocono Road.

There was a discussion on the nearly completed Laurel Hill Rd apartment development. Chair Kurfehs explained that the lack of elevators will most likely be relative to the Laurel Hill Apartments, and not to the other apartments and residential units in the area. Chair Kurfehs stated that the funding for the Laurel Hill Apartments is through State CHFA, and the emphasis on affordable rates makes amenities difficult.

Other Discussion: Vice Chair Dembowski stated that when Cadigan Park and the Town Park are both complete, it would be important to get some new pictures to add to the EDC website.

Other Discussion: Development – Vice Chair Dembowski stated that he met with Roy Young, Greg Steiner, and Tony Rizzo, Jr., and these three men own the four largest parcels in Town, anywhere between 30+ acres to 60+ acres. They were very complimentary of Brookfield, and stated they were happy to have their investments in this part of the State. According to their comments, the focus of efforts should be on bringing in businesses from this State or to help businesses in this Town grow. Two of the three of them know that tax incentive program options are available. One owner noted that big box stores are slowly being replaced by online shopping. Vice Chair Dembowski reported that Tony Rizzo Jr. would like to do something with the land he owns in Town, on Vale Road and in the Four Corners area. He owns the properties just south of the Dunkin Donuts on the same side of the road. The Rizzo family also owns 36 acres on Vale Road. Mr. Tinsley and Vice Chair Dembowski met with Mr. Rizzo last week and discussed the options in the current zone. Vice Chair Dembowski stated that the Development Services Team meeting is scheduled on every second and fourth Tuesday of the month, and perhaps this would be a meeting for Mr. Rizzo to attend to discuss future development.

Chair Kurfels stated that he has worked with two of these developers quite a bit, and there are some wetlands and other issues on some of the properties. He mentioned the difference a welcoming attitude can make for developers.

7. Adjournment: Vice Chair Dembowski made a motion to adjourn at 7:57 PM. Chair Kurfels seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously.