

Economic Development Committee
August 24, 2015 Minutes



Don Ball Splash Park, Derry, NH

The Derry Economic Development Committee met on August 24, 2015 in room 207 of the Municipal Center. Members in attendance were Tom Cardon, Janis Del Pozzo, Albert Dimmock, Marc Flattes, Terri Pastori, George Sioras, and Richard Tripp. Also in attendance, but not committee members, were Chris Black, Andy Day, and Steve Trefethen.

Meeting opened by chairman Cardon at six PM. Minutes of July 27, 2015 meeting read with clerical changes noted. Motion by Tom Cardon, second by George Sioras, to approve minutes as amended. Motion passed.

Real Estate Presentation – Steve Trefethen, a local real estate businessman, shared his thoughts on what could be done to get more businesses to come to Derry. He agreed that improving the town website is critical to doing so. He cautioned against merely hiring a web developer as his experience showed they need guidance otherwise they will treat it as an art project. It was also noted the website needs to be mobile friendly as the younger generation uses their mobile devices almost exclusively.

Steve said it is critical that businesses be able to quickly identify what commercial properties are available otherwise they will look elsewhere. Criteria such as lot size, cost, existing buildings and utilities are crucial. He suggested linking the website to other sites containing this information. As examples he thought the Manchester and Windham sites were good starting points.

If the downtown is to serve as a cultural destination (restaurants, boutiques, etc) then he suggested using the opera house in a fashion similar to what Manchester does with the

Palace Theater. If people come to see a play or show then chances are they will also visit the local restaurants afterwards.

His last suggestion was to think of downtown beyond the current boundaries. Expansion beyond Broadway would open up more space for business growth and thereby increase the reasons for people to come to Derry.

Approve Vision Statement – the vision statement proposed by Terri Pastori was approved after a clerical change (Mark Flattes motion, Richard Tripp second). It reads:

“To assist in creating an environment that attracts robust businesses to Derry that meets the demand of our residents and the local workforce. Inspiring current and future businesses to succeed in our community of historic Main Street storefronts complimented by the convenience of larger retailers, industry, and medical professionals.”

Review Committee Goals for Council Presentation –The particulars of what the presentation would contain and who would be making it were discussed. The final decision was postponed until the August 31st meeting.

Economic Development Goals/Thoughts

- Andy Day – Derry needs to provide more encouragement for businesses to locate in the downtown area. There needs to be a sense of leadership to set direction and provide support in the downtown area.
- Terri Pastori – suggested that educational facilities for such as culinary, dental assistant, or medical technicians be promoted. There also needs to be more done to deal with the difficult landlords who are stymieing business growth.
- Chris Black – rather than promoting retail Derry should be attracting tech or such businesses. It would be better to have the workers here rather than having them pass through Derry on their way to work.
- Al Dimmock – exit 4A will divert traffic from Broadway. If congestion is the issue, then change traffic flow so Broadway is one way and South Avenue is the other.
- Rich Tripp – identified the general steps necessary to encourage economic growth. Chairman Cardon stated he will put on next meeting’s agenda.
- Mark Flattes – we need to support the existing businesses in town. Doing so will attract other businesses hoping to share in the bounty.
- Janis Del Pozzo – we should adapt our plans for a local business CCTV show from being studio only to going out and visiting the businesses we are highlighting. Also contact within the committee should not only be at the

meetings. More effort should be made to communicate between meetings via email or other means.

- George Sioras – update of the town website is necessary but that is only a starting point as the businesses need someone at town hall to talk to and answer questions as the permitting process can sometimes be intimidating.
- Steve Trefethen – the use of a technical review committee (TRC) makes the permitting and approval process much simpler than it is in other towns.
- General – there was discussion of having an event similar to the Concord Market Day here in Derry. Some thought that it could be done concurrent to Derryfest while others suggested market day being its own event. This will be discussed further at our next meeting.

Motion by Richard Tripp, second by Marc Flattes to adjourn. Meeting adjourned at 8:30 PM, next meeting August 31st at 6 PM.

Richard Tripp
EDC Secretary

PS If anyone has a photo they would like on the next minutes, send it to me.