

**TOWN OF FARMINGTON
JOINT MEETING
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE &
DOWNTOWN AND BUSINESS COMMITTEE
Tuesday, April 10, 2012
356 Main Street, Farmington, NH**

Members Present: Ann Titus, Gail Ellis, Kathy King (arrived at 6:48pm) and JoAnn Doke

Members Absent: Sharon McKenney

Selectmen's Representative: Jim Horgan and Joan Funk

Town Staff Present: Planning Director Kathy Menici (arrived 6:50pm)

Public Present: Bill Tsirois, Danielle Curtis (Fosters), Sheila Walter and Barry Elliot

At 6:30pm Chairman Gail Ellis called the meeting to order.

1. Follow Up with Danielle Curtis from Fosters:

Danielle Curtis explained that as a reporter from Fosters she is working on an article on the vision for the future of Farmington. She had a few questions to follow up on. First she wanted to know how much development the town is looking for, whether it be to relieve some of the tax burden or grow to the size of a city like Rochester. Jim replied that the town wants to develop to relieve the tax burden, offer jobs and also maintain the rural character by not cutting down every tree in site. The EDC is looking to identify some businesses that would be good to sustain our community and then contact them to see if they can grow in town. Gail added that the EDC is also looking for any assistance in how to market the town. Bill Tsirois added that he is a small business owner downtown and is frustrated with the bureaucracy in town that proposed businesses go through in order to come to town. He also stated that the Table of Permitted Uses for the downtown area needs to be reviewed and gave the example of a dog grooming business that was not allowed downtown because it is not a permitted use. Joan noted that all downtown businesses should be allowed unless they have chemical/or other hazardous issue. Barry then added that denying businesses because of a lack of parking is ridiculous and also needs to be looked at.

Danielle then asked what types of development would be best suited for Rte. 11. Jim replied a little bit of everything would be good because the town has a lot of different skills. She then followed up by asking how much available space is in on Rte. 11. Kathy Menici explained there is a previously approved building lot right after Ridge Rd which is about 35 acres, along

with the former Collins and Aikman site of 123 acres (that can be subdivided), also there is an approved 9 acre site after Paulson Road on Rte. 11.

Danielle asked if the town is doing anything to bring businesses into town and Jim explained the EDC has contacted town businesses first to get them involved and see what their needs are and have also planned a business expo for Hay Day to promote the current businesses. Bill suggested contacting the county to let them know there are spaces available in town in which they could place some of their programs.

2. Discussion with the Director of Planning:

Kathy Menici explained that Gail contacted Rochester to ask them for a copy of what they give to potential business owners and then asked her to review it and see if it would be something Farmington could use. Kathy M. explained that the first thing she did was to review all the resources to make sure they were accurate and up to date. She would like the EDC to review the documents now to see if there are any resources they would like deleted or added. Barry pointed out that WEDCO is not listed as a resource and should be.

Kathy M. explained one thing she would like the town take advantage of is the small town CDBG economic development funding program. Also the 79-E tax incentive program to encourage reinvestment in the downtown area is an option but would need to be approved by the town legislature. This program would allow for improvements to buildings with the notion that the building will be taxed on the value of the structure before the improvements for five years therefore saving the owner money. Kathy M. will create a list of possible incentives for the EDC to review.

Kathy M. also stated that there is a organization called Plan NH that will organize a charrette and she feels it would be a great idea for the marketing of parcels like the old Collins and Aikman site.

3. Review of EDC members Top 10 List of Companies for Farmington:

Each member reviewed there list and common businesses consisted of a grocery store with a warehouse (Pepsi/Nike for example), sports zone, chain restaurants, medical offices (urgent care for example), manufacturing companies, office buildings (facebook/Microsoft), BJs type stores, favorite stores like a Target/Burlington Coat Factory/Christmas Tree Shop and such. Gail asked Kathy M. to forward the populations of our community and surrounding communities to the EDC. It was discussed that the town really needs to get serious about bringing water/sewer to Rte. 11 in order to entice large corporations to town. Barry suggested advertising a free parcel in the Sarah Greenfield Park for the best business plan as it would create a lot of interest in town.

4. Other Business:

A. Gail explained that she asked the town secretary Megan Fetter to create a email address for the FEDC so that there is one contact place for interested parties to utilize. Megan also created business cards for the FEDC to use. Kathy M. suggested having a metrocast.net email instead of a yahoo address and the EDC agreed. The EDC also agreed that they liked the black and white set up but with color. Gail then suggested the EDC come up with a professional letterhead and showed the members some examples of products available from Vistaprint that would promote a professional appearance.

B. JoAnn reported that the town can get free lilac to put on town property and she would suggest putting some up at the Municipal Parking lot.

5. Review of Minutes:

A. Jim Horgan motioned to accept the minutes of March 27, 2012, 2nd Ann Titus. Motion carried with all in favor.

At 9:02pm, Gail Ellis motioned to adjourn, 2nd Kathy King. Motion carried with all in favor.

Respectfully Submitted,

Brandy Sanger
Recording Secretary