

## MINUTES

**HOOKSETT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE  
HOOKSETT TOWN HALL  
HOOKSETT, NEW HAMPSHIRE  
Wednesday, October 12, 2011**

**Call to Order:** Chair Ahlquist called the meeting to order at 12:00 pm.

**Present:** William Gillett, Matt Mercier, Nick Mercier, Mark Sanborn, David Scarpetti, William Sirak and Chair Craig Ahlquist

**Staff:** Dean E. Shankle, Jr. (Town Administrator), Jo Ann Duffy (Town Planner)

**Also Present:** John Munn (SNHPC)

### **Approval of Minutes**

*The September 14, 2011 minutes were approved.*

### **Town Administrator's Report**

D. Shankle will be meeting with Councilor Susan Lovas-Orr to start discussion on the Old Town Hall.

### **Town Planner's Report**

J. Duffy informed the board of the following:

1. The MacDonald's project is coming along. They are due to re-open at the end of this month.
2. The Regency Mortgage Company is in the process of going through the Planning Board approval. They are scheduled for a public hearing on November 7<sup>th</sup>. This will be located at the By-Pass near Eastpoint Drive on the opposite side of the street.
3. The Planning Board is holding a workshop on Monday October 17<sup>th</sup>. They have invited the Zoning Board and Conservation Commission. Jeff Larrabee will be coming in to talk about a new proposal for the Hefron property on Hackett Hill Road. His proposal includes a potential winery along with a restaurant next door and a mini golf course. The area is zoned for low density residential. He will need a variance.
4. On October 20<sup>th</sup>, SNHPC is putting together the first review for the certified sites program. Town Planners were invited to come together to talk about the DRED proposal. Certified sites have some approval, which is vested for 5 years. There are different levels of approval (gold, silver and bronze) and depending on the level, there are different site requirements. The Planning Board will set the level standards. Certified sites for the region will be made available on the website for developers to consider. This program has not been presented to the Planning Board. Once the plan is finalized, it will be presented to all Planning Boards for approval.

J. Duffy explained one of the approvals is for design review. Hooksett does not have design review. It's one of the options the State allows the Town to do but Hooksett chose not to do it.

It's just like a conceptual review. This has not been discussed by the Planning Board in detail. J. Duffy thinks the Planning Board will buy into especially if other towns in the region buy into it. This makes the properties more marketable. Each Town would decide whether to go along with this and set the criteria for each level. For example, the bronze level, the lowest level of certification has the least requirement. The owner and the developer have to have authorization to enter into a contract. They have to do a boundary survey. They have to do a market analysis to decide what the market price is. They have to do at least a Phase 1 Environmental Assessment at their cost. They have to obtain zoning verification and a list of what would be the allowed uses for that site. They have to submit their design review in accordance with the State Statute. Then Planning Board agrees to assist in the completion of this application. They would provide zoning verification and the allowed uses for the site. They would have a set of regulations in which to abide by. They would have to have something for the design review and then they would agree to provide a five year plan approval upon approval of the site plan or Master Plan.

John Munn added this is a joint venture between the Metro region and the towns. SNHPC will get a consensus from Town Planners in the area on the process. They will also meet with developers. A final proposal will be put together and seek funding for implementation. The final proposal will be presented to all Planning Boards for approval. Town participation will be optional. The towns will have a choice of which program they would like to implement. This is a popular program and usually done at State level but the DRED office doesn't have the staff or the funding.

Chair Ahlquist asked what would be the role of EDC in this process. Planning Board approves the use of properties. He gave a theoretical example of Hooksett having too many gas stations.

J. Munn explained the goal is to focus on larger development with different certification levels. Abutters will be notified of the process. The Planning Board will approve the program and adopt through ordinances, changes to the subdivision and site plan regulations and the Master Plan. The Town Planners will put together specific guidelines. A gold level, the highest level of pre-certification would allow a site plan to go right to building permit without site plan approval. That privilege does not exist anywhere in the State of NH. The key is for the Planning Board to make sure that impacts and costs are all worked-out in the pre-certification process in the absence of site plan.

**The committee endorsed further exploration of the program.**

**Exit 11 Update**

A questionnaire/survey was sent out to all property owners in the study area. Last month the study area boundaries were set. It goes from Cross Street up Route 3A through the Village center to the west side of I-93 and Hackett Hill. SNHPC met with DOT officials. A meeting is also scheduled with the State Liquor Commission. They are interviewing key property owner and developers to get some feedback. All data collected will be put together for a community-wide workshop to be held (possibly) on December 1<sup>st</sup> from 7 pm until 9 pm at the Public Library.

W. Sirak stated this could be an opportunity for the Town to re-open discussion with regards to the possibilities of moving the State Liquor Store facility to Exit 11 instead of renovating the

current one off I-93. DOT was not in favor of the proposal because of the hill blocking the signage to give people advance notice to exit right. W. Sirak suggested re-opening the discussion, which includes re-designing the whole site and addressing all concerns.

The Town Administrator could coordinate a meeting.

D. Shankle added the Liquor Commission is determined to expand the stores as quickly as they can. If the Town could offer a feasible site, the Liquor Commission would go with that.

### **Master Plan – Economic Development Section**

EDC members were asked to send their final comments (if any) to the Town Planner.

### **2011-2012 Strategic EDC Business Plan Review**

Chair Ahlquist presented a draft plan.

1. Public Education – Making the public aware of current and future projects.
2. Existing Business Outreach – Communication with the top (10) business taxpayers.
3. Reaching out to Hooksett Chambers of Commerce and other business groups.
4. Reaching out to site planners.
5. Form a nominating committee. The board needs members.
6. Hooksett Beautification Program

Chair Ahlquist is looking for a way to measure the board's success. He suggested setting a goal of bringing in a certain amount of business in Town per year. Something to show to the Town why the board exists.

D. Shankle stated the tax revenue and jobs created are good metric system.

J. Duffy added the new Market Basket added about 300 new jobs in the area. This year, to date about \$2 million was added to the tax base. Last year, it was \$10 million.

Chair Ahlquist stated the board is looking for directions as to how to best serve the Town.

J. Duffy stated the most important thing the board could do is to support existing businesses. Let businesses know someone is advocating for them and listening to their concerns. Facilitating communications between businesses and the Town.

N. Mercier (?) added the board can assist businesses in streamlining the process, helping them understand how the process works and making the process easier.

J. Duffy stated better communication is needed amongst the people in the review process.

D. Shankle stated he would work on improving the approval process. There is still some impression out there amongst developers that Hooksett is hard to work with. The Town will strive on changing this.

There is a proposal to put together a Developers' Packet. He suggested for the board to help gather some information on existing sites to be included in the packet. He asked the board not to get too far ahead of the staff.

**Meeting Schedule**

The board will meet on the following dates:

November 9, 2011

December 14, 2011

January 11, 2012

March 14, 2012

**Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted by,

Evelyn F. Horn  
Administrative Assistant