

MINUTES

HOOKSETT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE HOOKSETT TOWN HALL Wednesday, February 8, 2012

Call to Order: Chair Ahlquist called the meeting to order at 4:00 pm.

Present: Tom Barrett, Leslie Boswak (Town Council Representative), Jo Ann Duffy (Town Planner), William Gillett, Jesse Marchand, Matt Mercier, Michael Reed, Mark Sanborn, Dean Shankle (Town Administrator), David Scarpetti and Chair Craig Ahlquist

Approval of Minutes

The January 11, 2012 minutes were approved.

Ritchie Bros. Auctioneer Letter of Support

At the last meeting, Ritchie Bros. Auctioneer made a presentation on a proposal to use the Palazzi property. They are requesting for a letter of support from the EDC.

L. Boswak stated she would be opposed to a letter of support. Their proposal does not offer the Town significant tax revenue and long term jobs. It is not the most desirable use for the property.

M. Sanborn stated the board should take a neutral stand.

T. Barrett suggested making a statement saying that they are a legitimate business and the Town welcomes their business.

D. Shankle added this is the board's chance to set a good precedent. If the board's position is to issue letters of support only for proposals that goes along with their vision that could be the board's position going forward. The board can politely decline on other proposals.

The board's consensus was not to issue a letter of support.

Chamber of Commerce Meeting

The meeting was held on January 18th. They are attempting to double their membership this year. They requested to provide their information to new businesses in Town. They expressed interest on one of their members to serve on the EDC, which would be a welcome addition to the board. They would like to work cooperatively with the Town.

SNHU, one of the Town's largest businesses and employers offers a debit card for students to use in surrounding businesses. Students get discounts from these businesses when using the debit cards. SNHU is open to adding more businesses in this program. Local businesses are encouraged to contact SNHU for more information on this program.

Exit 11

L. Boswak stated the board will need to close the loop on this project as people who attended the first public hearing are expecting to hear more on this. J. Duffy will communicate with SNHPC regarding sending out notifications that the project is on hold at this point.

It was previously stated that majority of residents would like to keep this area an open space. L. Boswak stated that is not necessarily true. She thought some people wanted to see some development but everyone agreed they wanted some open space.

Chair Craig stated given the choice of having a giant development or leaving it as is, residents who were there opted for leaving the place as is.

M. Mercier informed the board that a Cancer Treatment Facility is moving in the area and currently looking for a site. He suggested someone from the board or the staff should make a phone call to inquire.

D. Shankle stated facilities like these would be looking for a site with water, sewer and preferably, shovel-ready. Hooksett does not have sites like these to offer.

Chair Craig stated there is a proposed legislation to by-pass the certificate of need. If it fails, the facility will have to have chosen a location to go through the certificate of need process. He suggested speaking with the Town's legislators to have an idea of where this legislation is at.

J. Duffy added her department has information for any developers looking for sites in Hooksett. They will have to know what their needs are in order to determine whether or not the Town has what they're looking for.

J. Duffy and M. Mercier will follow-up.

Working with Existing Businesses in Town

L. Boswak did some research and found that the Seacoast area tends to be progressive. Dover has a full-color and professionally-made Economic Development packet. One program, the business visitation program is already being used in Town. She found the best supporting document on this program from the State of Iowa, Department of Economic Development. They have a 76-page, very detailed document on how to effectively visit businesses. L. Boswak suggested making this a part of the Town's businesses visitation program. Another program she found was outreach. Town of Hooksett tend to be reactive not proactive. Partnering with the Hooksett Chambers of Commerce will be an important aspect. The State offers a lot of incentives for businesses. Educating the business community will be very important.

L. Boswak suggested having a quarterly meeting with the Chambers of Commerce, make a presentation of all resources available at the State, educate how to obtain federal contracts, etc.

There was a discussion as to the board's goals and charge. The board is appointed by the Town Council and acts as an advisory board to the Town Council. The board should identify the Town's needs that have to be met.

There were discussions on holding a workshop. The board will update the Town Council.

Town Planner's Report – Jo Ann Duffy

Residential Projects - Austin Woods, a 43-lot subdivision off South Bow Road and University Heights, a 204 apartment units. University Heights is already approved but they are doing an amendment to their application for smaller buildings, with more 1-bedroom and studio apartments.

Granite Height II North, fka, Villages of Granite Hill II North – Project went into bankruptcy and foreclosure a year ago. The Bank took it over and looking to sell a portion of the property.

Projects are mostly apartment units.

Metro Center Annual Meeting

The board attended the meeting. Metro Center is a regional economic development organization that has 13-town members. Hooksett was well-represented. This will be discussed at the workshop.

Town Administrator's Report – Dr. Dean Shankle

The board started the top 10 Hooksett business visitation program. So far, they have visited Shaw's Supermarket, SNHU and Cummings Printing.

Cummings Printing is a family business dating back to the civil war. It's a growing company. They generate some income from recycling. The owner is happy with the Town. Any issues were quickly resolved.

Shaw's Supermarket is concerned about the Town focusing much of their attention to Route 3A and Route 3 being downgraded. Management is happy with the Town and didn't have any complaints.

They met with the President of SNHU. Their main concern is the by-pass. They would like to see this go through. The Town will have to take a look at this. No other issues with the Town. The school has tremendous amount of diversity. They have 900 international students. Hooksett may be, per capita the most diverse community in the State.

D. Shankle added one thing he observed is that there is no feeling of connection to the Town, with the exception of Cummings. Their businesses just happen to be in Hooksett. The Town will have to work on this.

Discussion on the by-pass plan. J. Duffy stated the project has been on the Master Plan by about 30 years and also in the CIP plan. It's supposed to start by CB Sullivan and go through and meet with Manchester Sand & Gravel scale house and continue to the Head's Pond area. Businesses

along Route 3 especially Merchants Auto are against the plan as it takes traffic away from Route 3. The feasibility study is estimated to cost around \$150,000. So far, there is \$50,000 set aside. CIP have asked for additional money towards this project but has not been approved. The Planning Board has been in favor or not in favor of this project depending on who is on the board. The Town feels this is an improvement to SNHU and the Town shouldn't pay for it. There hasn't been any discussion on this lately.

D. Shankle will follow-up.

Nomination of William King to HEDC

William King introduced himself to the board.

Mr. King is a resident of Hooksett. He is a certified accountant and currently the President and Managing Principal for JSI Capital Advisors, LLC, an investment advisor and broker/dealer. His wife owns Cocci Computers, Inc., which is also located in Hooksett.

Note: The Town Council nominates and appoints members of HEDC.

*M. Mercier moved to recommend the nomination and appointment of William King to HEDC. Motion seconded by M. Sanborn. **Motion carried unanimously.***

Top 10 Hooksett Businesses Visits

Meeting with Merchants Auto will be re-scheduled.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned.

Meeting Schedule

March 14, 2012

April 11, 2012

May 9, 2012

June 13, 2012

Respectfully submitted by,

Evelyn F. Horn
Administrative Assistant