



2011 Annual Report Economic Development Commission

The Hudson Economic Development Commission respectfully submits our annual report for the year 2011. The Commission met three times over the course of the year, with Donald Garcia continuing on as Chairman. Mr. Garcia was also appointed as a member of the Master Plan Steering Committee to represent the economic development interests of the Town during the upcoming planning process.

Sonny Parente resigned his position on September 1st, adding a second vacancy to one left by Christine Miller last year. Two new members were appointed by the Board of Selectmen on December 19, 2011: Michael DiBona and Matt Tucker. A third interested candidate, Rob Taft, will actively participate as a non-voting associate member. The Commission is very pleased to welcome our new members and looks forward to their new ideas and viewpoints.

Throughout 2011, the Commission continued its support of the Route 85/Washington Street roadway project. The commercial corridor upgrade went out to bid in the fall and will break ground in spring/summer 2012. In anticipation of construction, EDC hopes to host a round-table discussion between Town officials and the business community. The EDC also lent its support to the 2011 Community Development Block Grant requesting funding to continue the Town's Façade Program, reconstruct Houghton Court and implement a housing price buy-down program for low and moderate income first-time home buyers.

New businesses continue to open in our Downtown area. The EDC is pleased to welcome: the Good, Good Sheep, Penny-Wise, Undercover Arms, Hudson Cuts and Colonial Paint Shop. Dirty Harry's Dog Grooming moved to 4 South Street and Donahue's Driving School moved their classroom space to the Hastings Building, located at 45 Main St. Even MassDOT rented office space in the Hastings Building, to be able to have a regular onsite presence during the reconstruction of Route 85.

The commercial/industrial tax rate was a hotly debated topic in 2011. Many EDC members and business owners spoke out at the Town's tax rate hearing held on December 5. The total value of commercial and industrial property decreased by almost 12 percent over last year. Although Town officials were reluctant to raise commercial tax rates substantially, in order to offset the lost tax valuation in the total commercial tax sector, the new commercial rate ultimately rose to \$29.55 per \$1,000 of assessed property value, up from \$26.19 in 2011. This commercial rate increased at a rate three times the rate of increase for the residential tax rate. The total tax impact to individual properties varies but reductions in valuation helps to ease the burden of this rate increase.

The EDC was pleased to see the sales of several vacant commercial properties this year. July saw the sale of 121 Main Street, a 9,500 building formerly owned by Aubuchon's Hardware. Although we were sad to see Aubuchon's close its doors after over 100 years in that location, the space will soon be occupied by Hudson Trading & Loan, formerly located on Market Street.

2011 literally ended on a high note with the December 30th sale of 108 Forest Ave. Facilis Technology Inc., formerly located at 577 Main Street, purchased the 30,000 SF two-story office building and will utilize the top floor, leaving 15,000 SF available for a first-floor tenant.

Although financial uncertainty continued through 2011, the EDC continued its commitment to encourage and assist our business community whenever possible.

Respectfully submitted,

Donald M. Garcia, Chairman
Sarah B. Cressy
Thomas Davis

Michael DiBona
Hugh R. Gardner
Anthony Loureiro

William J. Sullivan
Christopher W. Tibbals
Matthew Tucker