

**MINUTES OF THE STRATHAM ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
MEETING OF FEBRUARY 12, 2003**

The Chair, Sharon Sykas, called the meeting to order at 9:10 a.m., in the Selectmen's Meeting Room of the Municipal Center. Other members present were: Felix McGuigan, and Steve Horlacher.

I. Approval of Minutes:

Minutes of January 15, 2003 were approved as read.

II. Reports of Committee Members:

A. Steve Horlacher – Board of Selectmen.

The minutes of the Board of Selectmen from October 21, 2002 through January 6, 2003 have been reviewed. No matters of concern to this Committee were found. However, the Town of Stratham has hired a professional planner. His name is Mark Smith.

B. Sharon Sykas – Conserving Landscapes in New England and Economic Development.

Sharon reported that she had tape recorded each of two television broadcasts on NHPTV. The first was on conserving landscapes in small communities in Vermont, New Hampshire, and Maine. John Hutton III and the Town of Stratham were featured in this broadcast. The second part dealt with varying approaches to economic development by these communities. Sharon suggested the Committee meet at her home on the morning of February 19th or 25th, 2003. It might be useful for this Committee to obtain, from the second part of the taped programs, the names of people we may contact for ideas and information about economic development initiatives.

C. Felix McGuigan – Liaison Activity.

Felix said he had nothing new to report.

D. Sharon Sykas – UNH Student Project on Stratham.

Sharon reported receiving an e-mail from a UNH student, Sarah Lauria, of Newmarket. Sarah asked about doing a senior project on the Town of Stratham. Sharon replied with a suggestion that Sarah develop a driving tour of the Town designed to interest representatives of a company that might be induced to relocate here. Sarah evidently liked the idea and joined Sharon on a tour of the Town starting from the Municipal Center.

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E. Sharon Sykas – EDC Budget and Town Report.

On January 16, 2003, Sharon presented the EDC proposed budget to the town Budget Committee. She said that our budget and that of the Beautification Committee were accepted without change. She went on to note that the EDC and the Beautification Committee's submissions to the Annual Town Report were received by the Town Administrator's office on time.

F. Sharon Sykas – Expansion of Commercial & Industrial Zones.

Sharon began the discussion by suggesting we do research on an area in Stratham other than that in the vicinity of the Industrial Park. The Committee then began a review of the Zoning/Tax Map of the Town to consider another area for study. Steve suggested we consider a comparatively undeveloped area lying immediately west of the Town Center. He said this area, currently zoned for Residential and Agricultural use, might be suitable for what the Exeter Planning Board is now calling "Mixed Use" zoning. By mixed use zoning, he was referring to a relatively intensive mix of commercial space and residences on the pattern of the typical New England downtown area.

Sharon said that before proceeding further, we need to decide where we are going with this project, and what steps we needed to take to get there. There followed a discussion of those things we needed to do before bringing the Town Planner into the process. The Committee's decision was to proceed as follows:

1. Review the Town Zoning Ordinance – especially those parts of the ordinance relating to Industrial and Commercial Zone.

Note: The Committee has its own copy of the Ordinance which is on file with the other EDC records.

2. Define the possible boundaries of the proposed expansion area of the Industrial Park.
3. Determine whether the Rockingham Planning Commission (RPC) can determine the acreage of the defined area.
4. Determine whether the RPC can also provide topographic or aerial photogrammetric data on the defined area. From this information, we can estimate how much of the land is actually suitable for industrial development.
5. With this data in hand, consult with the Town Planner as to how to proceed further.

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In addition to the foregoing procedural steps, we also need to get a definition of "Mixed Use" zoning and to review the provisions of the Town Zoning Ordinance concerning the Town Center Zone.

III. Other Business.

A. Sharon said she would be out of town during the month of March and will, therefore, be unavailable for the regularly scheduled meetings of March 5, and 19, 2003. As we will not have a quorum on those dates, it was suggested that Steve and Felix meet in working sessions to continue the review of the properties previously selected for investigation as candidates for rezoning.

B. Adjournment.

There being no further business, the committee was adjourned at 11:17 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Stephen L. Horlacher
Recording Secretary