

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
November 18, 1992

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MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman Shirley Ganem, Tony Triolo, Bob Grott, Eric Piper, Mike Toomey, Tim Sullivan, Bill Wiebe, Joan Lovering, Barbara Jackson, Bob Garland, Amanda Simpson (ex officio)

MEMBERS ABSENT: Andy Milligan, Sharon Severy, Bob Murphy, Paul Kimball

Chairman Shirley Ganem called the meeting to order at 7:38 a.m. in the First NH Bank Conference Room. First item on the agenda was -

1993 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Ganem introduced the subject by saying that the Committee should review its history and goals, and set up a budget for 1993. One of the early goals was to collect information in order to move ahead. We seem to be pushing ahead of the plan, or maybe we haven't really developed a plan.

Triolo - We've had 18 months and looked into every angle, aspect and corner of this town, and about a month ago came back with the idea that we don't have anything, can't offer anything, and basically we can't do anything. We have to have something to offer, so that we can attract businesses to come to Wolfeboro and get them some kind of perks. That should be the first thing we do: a Wolfeboro Economic Development Authority that owns land that is developable and zoned commercial.

Ganem - Reminded the group of an early speaker, Richard Green, who recommended that what you needed first was to retain what you have. She was really impressed by the messages she got from the businesses she interviewed for the Business Visitation Plan. Those are the things we should be looking at. We're too scattered--we don't have a plan yet.

Lovering - In addition to a plan, we need to prioritize our actions, and set up a schedule to meet those goals.

Ganem - We need a plan with a budget to go with it. The Route 28 Committee has done a lot of work and we need money in our budget to help fund a consultant for them. The Marketing Committee has devoted a lot of time and money on signs etc. inviting businesses to enjoy Wolfeboro year round, and now we find that isn't the best way to go.

Grott - We don't have anything to offer business to come here.

Triolo - We're working on retention with the BVP; now we need to establish an Economic Development Authority. We put the marketing plan first when we had nothing to market.

Jackson - The trend is up on service and health care jobs, and down on manufacturing. Opportunities don't come easily. It may take 5 years to get anything going. And the marketing plan was a good start and it did get a couple of bites.

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Ganem - Business people she has visited are frustrated that the Town administration has not been responsive to the business community. Government should do more to promote business.

Triolo - In his experience got helpful responses from Town Manager and Planner, but other parts of bureaucracy were not so helpful.

Ganem - Business people say they're always being asked for money, but nobody does anything to help them. They'd like help with Christmas lights, etc. And the BVP is the first time anyone has asked for their opinion. Also they're concerned about lack of confidentiality in Town Hall--everybody knows everyone else's business.

Everyone agreed that was typical small town.

Piper - Doesn't it actually come down to drawing tourists to Wolfeboro?

Triolo - Economic trend has changed from tourists to second homes. There are only about 100 tourist beds today. Twenty-five years ago there were about one thousand.

Wiebe - From his survey visits, feels there's an adversarial relationship between the Town and business, and that creates a climate that customers feel. We can change that. People came up here because they liked it. How do we get rid of that adversarial relationship: perhaps zoning, collective meetings and joint projects. Questions to ask to get all of these points of view:

Positive aspects that brought him to Wolfeboro: character, physical attributes, history, people

Advantages for business: education, labor force

How do we fit in with surrounding towns?

What do townspeople think: attraction of the lake, sports, recreation etc.

What do visitors see?

What are retired homeowners looking for?

If we can put all these differing points of view together we might find what serves them all best. But we don't ever want to lose the resort character of the area.

Ganem - How can we translate a study like this into budget? She got a proposal from Gerry Coogan (who talked about establishing an Industrial Authority at the last meeting) suggesting a study just like this as part of his plan (\$100 per hour). Bill has laid it all out as a volunteer!

There was discussion of the need for a facilitator to lead us through this plan-making to arrive at a consensus, and the question was asked if we should use Bruce Mayberry as a facilitator. The Planner reminded the group that Mayberry was expected to help develop an economic plan after he

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analyzed the results of the survey. That support is available at a reasonable hourly rate. And did anyone submit any of the suggestions Bruce asked for when he was last here?

Garland - We've looked at two possible roads, retention and development. What we need now is something to open the door to action.

Wiebe - we need to get the input organized first, before getting a facilitator. But a facilitator is very important in getting a meeting steered in the right direction. We're ready for something structured.

Simpson - The committee needs to get focused and set priorities, a checklist. She had handed out a publication when this group first got started, and it would be worth reading over.

It was agreed to establish a small sub-committee to outline what the Committee wants. Bill Wiebe, Bob Grott and Joan Lovering will be that committee. The Planner agreed to lend books and materials she has on the subject to committee members. This sub-committee will come back with a report at the EDC's next meeting on December 9. There will be another meeting on December 16.

BUDGET DISCUSSION

The Chairman reported she was supposed to have the EDC's budget request ready by this Friday, and she listed donations and expenses that were expected to be included:

- \$5,000 for Chamber of Commerce
- 2,525 dues to Lakes Region Association
- 2,835 for information booth
- 2,500 that the Route 28 Committee needs

A consultant, like Mayberry, charges \$35/hour for travel time, \$55/hour when he's working. Probably \$3,000 would cover his work for a strategic plan. Or more, for a 12-month period.

Cost of forming a non-profit economic development corporation could be??

Simpson told the group that she will soon be going down to Milford to meet with Mark Fougere, the Planner there, who participated in forming their non-profit industrial development corporation, and is treasurer on their board. Several members expressed interest in going with her. She suggested preparing a list of the questions they wanted to ask Fougere, and maybe giving him the list in advance. Andy, Tony, Shirley, and Bob Garland are the ones who want Amanda to let them know when she sets the date.

Secretarial costs - the Route 28 minutes and the EDC minutes all were part of the EDC budget. Are professionally-done minutes necessary for so many meetings? And do there need to be so many meetings? It was decided that the Route #28 committee should have only 15 meetings. The EDC will continue to meet every other week.

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ROUTE 28 COMMITTEE UPDATE

Barbara Jackson and Tony Triolo reported that the Committee will continue to meet with the Planning Board, but they won't be ready to put the whole plan before the public by Annual Meeting. They may have some public informational meetings before March. They may have a whole package ready some time after that, and perhaps they might want to have a special Town Meeting. Simpson will research the legality of calling a special Town Meeting.

The Chairman reminded the committee that they were supposed to hand in any additional they wanted Bruce Magberry to have for the Economic Chapter of the Master Plan. And labor force information is also needed.

AIRPORT REPORT

Eric Piper reported that he was meeting with the Selectmen this afternoon. The engineers' report is pretty well finished.

There was general discussion of airport development costs and funding. The cost of the property has not yet been established.

Committee members were starting to walk out, and the meeting was adjourned at 9 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Erik H. Arctander
Secretary