

WOLFEBORO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

August 19, 1992

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MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman Shirley Ganem, Tony Triolo, Paul Kimball, Joan Lovering, Barbara Jackson, Bob Murphy, Bob Garland, Andy Milligan, Eric Piper

MEMBERS ABSENT: Sharon Severy, Bob Grott, Bruce Dreisbach, Mike Toomey, Tim Sullivan

TOWN STAFF: Jim McSweeney, Town Manager and Amanda Simpson, Town Planner

Chairman Shirley Ganem called the meeting to order at 7:30 a.m. in the First NH Bank Conference Room.

AIRPORT WHITE PAPER

First item on her agenda was discussion of the Airport Study White Paper, copies of which were handed out. Bruce Spiller and his committee are planning a news conference, and then will mail the paper (with a return response form) to all residents.

There were questions about airport costs. With fees and rentals it is expected to be self-supporting. For economic development, an airport is a major asset, and two of Wolfeboro's main non-retail businesses are regular users of the facility. In response to a question about the Penn Air Strip's superiority, Jim McSweeney responded that a requirement of the feasibility study which is underway is examining another site also, so that will be studied too. The Planner added that this airport property does not have outstanding housing development potential, as the shorefront would only support 6 waterfront homes. The feasibility study should be completed in November.

BUSINESS VISITATION PROGRAM

Barbara Jackson brought in the name of another visitor: Linda Proulx, Box 900, Wolfeboro Falls, NH 03896.

Amanda Simpson reported that she, Bruce and Andy had stayed late after the last meeting and generated a list that categorized the Town's businesses according to the State's categories of manufacturing, retail, service, travel and tourism. It contains several hundred names, and needs to be reduced further, and prioritized to be sure we get a good representative sample of the community, and maybe target businesses that we know should be interviewed.

They had also met and reviewed the survey, and didn't have any problems with it. It's slanted toward manufacturing firms, but does apply to retail also. There are 26 questions in the survey. Shirley Ganem said she would be meeting with Vern Crosier to prepare news releases and invitation

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letters.

Bob Murphy said he had four questions for CEOs which he wanted to add to the survey:

1. Would you serve on a committee to improve the Town's Economic Development?
2. Would you be a member of a focus group panel to look at Wolfeboro's present business conditions and future development?
3. Are Town businesses enthusiastic, helpful, apathetic, other?
4. To what extent should the Town support and fund an Economic Development program? (figures from \$5,000 to \$100,000 are listed to check)

Members of the group questioned whether we wanted to overload the survey. The point of the survey is how can we help you, not what will you give back. Perhaps those questions could go in the survey which the Chamber of Commerce is doing. Ganem said she would take the questions to her meeting with Verne, and see what he thinks, but the consensus of all was that the money question should be omitted.

Murphy explained that he thought we should be spending a great deal more money on economic development: on an intensive external marketing program, for one. Perhaps we should purchase land, improve public areas downtown, get a full or part-time director of economic development.

Others pointed out that this was putting the cart before the horse. What specifically does Wolfeboro have to sell? We need to showcase what we have to offer.

Bob Garland responded for the inventory committee that all they have is the inventory of the real estate listings which Bob Grott had supplied, and the list of Town-owned land. Mike Toomey has put some on the DRED forms and submitted them to the State.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BUDGET

The Chairman reported that the Economic Development budget in the town budget is to be overseen by this committee. We will help set up the budget for the coming year and will decide how the money will be spent. This will be a committee as a whole, and will look at specific appropriations including the Chamber of Commerce, Information Booth, etc

LAND INVENTORY

The group got back to this topic. We need specific details for each piece of property, including water and sewer availability, electric, current approvals, etc. The DRED inventory is specifically for manufacturing uses.

Barbara Jackson reported on the status of Bruce Dreisbach's friend who was thinking of moving his business to Wolfeboro. Reportedly the State

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business development people he had talked with asked him what Wolfeboro would give to help him. There was discussion of what other towns do. Simpson reported that some towns have developed industrial parks, with water and sewer, and can lease the property. It is illegal in New Hampshire to offer a tax break. Wolfeboro really doesn't have anything to offer.

Cities like Rochester have established industrial areas which are available for immediate occupancy. We don't have that to offer, but there are other reasons to come to Wolfeboro. Possibly in the future Wolfeboro could establish an Economic Development Authority controlling town-owned property properly zoned, for lease. But no Town property can be given away or leased away without a vote at Town Meeting.

And in answer to a question, Jim McSweeney pointed out that there was no prospect of early extension of sewer and water lines to prospective industrial properties.

MARKETING COMMITTEE REPORT

Murphy showed the little portfolios he and Andy were putting together for prospective businesses. They include a welcoming letter for prospective businesses, the "warm and fuzzy" Wolfeboro booklet, the "first resort" booklet, a booklet from the hospital, real estate and insurance listings, Wolfeboro walking map, parks and recreation information. He also hopes to get material on Brewster Academy and the public schools. He plans to put together 40-50 of them now.

Murphy reported on the tent cards and other promotion pieces that were distributed to Town businesses July 4. Very few have been put out. The Wolfeboro Inn just put them in the rooms last week, after a number of major business conferences were over. The merchants need to be revisited and jacked up a bit.

There was a question about the size of the Welcome to Wolfeboro Town Signs, which are larger than presently allowed by the town sign code. Murphy was encouraged to stick with the larger size so the signs could be read easily.

ROUTE 28 COMMITTEE

It was almost 9 a.m. as Barbara Jackson started her report. Rick Chellman spoke to the committee again, and said that he would be willing to help with planning what different development options on Route 28 could look like.

The audience had dwindled considerably, and the Chairman suggested postponing this report until the next meeting, which will be on Wednesday morning, September 2, same time same place.

Respectfully submitted,

Rosemary Artlander

