

WOLFEBORO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
February 3, 1993

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MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman Shirley Ganem; Members Robert Grott, Andy Milligan, Sharon Severy, Tony Triolo, Bill Wiebe, Bruce Dreisbach, Robert Garland, Joan Lovering, Barbara Jackson, Mike Toomey; Town Planner Amanda Simpson, ex officio

ABSENT: Robert Murphy, Paul Kimball, Eric Piper, Tim Sullivan

Chairman Shirley Ganem called the meeting to order at 7:30 a.m. in the First NH Bank Conference Room. Copies were distributed of an Sunday News article on the declining standard of living, based on a study by the Northern New Hampshire Foundation. Amanda Simpson said she would send for a copy of the full study.

AIRPORT COMMITTEE

Bruce Dreisbach reported that there would be a hearing on the State financial support for the Wolfeboro Airport on Wednesday, Feb. 10 at 9:30 a.m. in Room 201 of the Legislative Office Building in Concord. He hoped a number of people could attend.

Dreisbach spoke about the Town informational meeting on the airport, at which a number of people with negative concerns had a chance to express them, and there was discussion about the public's attitudes against any spending. Committee members were all supportive of the airport and its importance to economic development, and spoke of North Conway's experience with giving up their airport. It was suggested that the EDC should prepare a statement in support of the airport for the newspaper, and letters were needed from other supporters as well. Tony Triolo and his company use the airport often and feel it is essential for their business. He was urged to make a public statement of this endorsement.

People who call in to the radio show are concerned about taxes, and needed big-ticket items like a new fire truck, water system improvements. Other people think that only rich playboys need an airport. This is a community of the haves and the have nots, and the have nots are all against it. They need to be convinced that it's important to them on their level--and that means jobs. This needs a very convincing presentation for Town Meeting. This will be a warrant article, and the Town has a history of defeating warrant articles.

The cost of recreational items like the hockey rink and the Albee Beach has risen enormously too, but just about every other parent has a child in the hockey program and families and second-home people use the beach, so those expenses are considered important. There are also fears about airport traffic, and noise, and lack of plans for the use of all the rest of the land. The people who use it and recognize the need should speak up, and write letters to the editor to counteract those negative sound bytes by Claude Roessiger and Dave Bowers.

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COMMUNITY RENAISSANCE PROGRAM

The Chairman reminded the group that the next session will be on Wednesday, February 10 from 7-9 p.m. at the Wolfeboro Community Center on Lehner Street.

INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

Copies of Milford's Articles of Agreement were passed out, and members were urged to read them, and see how they could be adapted to fit Wolfeboro's needs. Their purpose is to attract industry, not retail or service jobs. This is a narrower focus than our EDC's, which also aims to help existing businesses. Should ours be Industrial Development, or Economic Development Corp?

The Planner pointed out Chamber of Commerce and EDC activities could still be carried on. This would be a non-profit Industrial Development Corporation, with very specific functions separate from the Town. The purpose of this Corporation is to provide a source of funding. It should have a very narrow focus, with fixed offices and officers.

Simpson was asked if she would run the Development Corp, as the Milford Planner does. Her response was that she had four years of experience in economic development in the past, but with her present duties she couldn't handle this in addition. At the November 4, 1992 meeting, the EDC had unanimously passed the following motion:

Murphy moved that the Economic Development Committee as it currently exists or might exist in the future, incorporate to form a non-profit development corporation representing the Town. Tony Triolo seconded the motion, adding that the Board of Director should include representatives of Town government, like Selectmen, Planning Board, etc.

This vote needed to be rescinded, and organization of a separate Industrial Development Corporation rethought by the committee that had originally proposed it.

On a motion by Bob Grott, seconded by Bruce Dreisbach, the Committee voted that in spite of previous actions, the non-profit development corporation should be a financial arm of Town government, not the EDC. The original Industrial Authority Subcommittee had been Mike Toomey, Tony Triolo, Andy Milligan and Bob Garland, and their recommendation had been that the EDC should become the Industrial Authority.

Since this is a very chaotic time for all, it was decided to put off work on this until April. The committee will be expected to make a formal report at the meeting on April 28. Andy will serve as chairman of this committee.

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CONSUMER FOCUS GROUP SEMINAR

Sharon Severy reported that the Chamber is planning a consumer focus group on why people don't shop in Wolfeboro, and wants to video-tape it, for showing later to merchants. The problem of funding was discussed, mostly to cover the mailing costs, as they hope the video-taping will be done free by someone. They need a marketing person to lead the later meeting with merchants. Bob Grott said that Hamel would be willing to sponsor this.

ROUTE 28 COMMITTEE

Chairman Barbara Jackson reported that they were working along getting their information together awaiting budget approval to fund their consultant. The question was asked whether some of the work done on the Route 28 area wouldn't be applicable to the C3 district. Jackson responded that was so, and probably some of the members of the Route 28 Committee would be willing to help with C3 planning too. Severy added that there was to be a strategy meeting that evening at Shirley Ganem's home to develop a strategy for winning the vote. Since it's a warrant article, it won't be discussed at Town Meeting, but will be on the ballot.

There were questions as to the principal opponents of the C3 district, and the response was the Land Bank and some of the residential abutters. Severy, who is an abutter, said that her assessment had been lowered when the sewage treatment plant went in, and she expected that this zoning change would raise it. But the media keeps picking up the negative abutters. Committee members added that the Land Bank seems to be the most vocal opponent, and was even thinking about affordable housing in the area, in spite of the fact that no one has built a residence in there in the past 10 or 15 years. It was pointed out that when a forum is held on an issue like this (or the Airport), it is mainly the opponent who come and speak.

At this time the tape was turned off for brief discussion of a confidential matter, and the meeting was adjourned at 8:57 a.m.

Part II of the Community Renaissance Program will be held at the Wolfeboro Community Center on Lehner Street on Wednesday, February 10 from 7-9 p.m..

The EDC will next meet on Wednesday morning, February 17, at 7:30 a.m. at the First NH Bank Conference Room.

Respectfully submitted,

Erik H. Arctander
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