

WOLFEBORO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

May 26, 1993

Page 1

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman Shirley Ganem, Bill Wiebe, Mike Toomey, Bob Garland, Andy Milligan, Barbara Jackson, Sharon Severy, Bob Grott, Amanda Simpson, ex officio

ABSENT: Joan Lovering, Tim Sullivan, Paul Kimball

Chairman Shirley Ganem called the meeting to order at 7:40 a.m. in the First NH Bank Conference Room. She reported that the Route 28 contract with Rick Chellman was all approved and would be signed on Friday. Town Attorney has approved the Bylaws of the Business Development Corporation. When it comes back to the Selectmen, they will appoint the Board of Directors.

Sharon Severy asked if there would be insurance to give the directors financial protection--would they be protected under the Town's policy? This is something to be checked into.

There was a question about the upcoming Charrette, and the Chairman reported on the discussion at the Planning Board meeting the previous evening. The C-3 area is what will be worked on, but probably ideas will be brought out which will apply to other areas of Town as well. The probable dates will be August 26-28. Four Boston architects, 2 planners, and several engineers have volunteered their time to work on the Charrette. It will be under sponsorship of the Selectmen and the Planning Board, and public input is very important to the process.

General discussion of the Charrette continued. In a way the Route 28 study has been a dragged-out Charrette. This will be an intensive, two-day process and should produce concrete products, which are actionable. There's been so much great stuff done in the past which is languishing in drawers and reports and never produced any goals and objectives, and results. We need to do a sales job to convince people to participate, and give their opinions. We need to prove to people that they can work within the system and get things done, without trying to do an "end run."

LAKES REGION BREAKFAST - Bill Wiebe had attended this on May 13. He reported that their main thrust seemed to be how to get government grants. Every town has different problems, and the same problems, too. Every town is looking for nice clean businesses providing high-paying jobs. Wolfboro has a great quality of life, which most other towns do not.

He reported that in order to get a government grant you must meet a lot of requirements: percent of unemployment, etc., but most important the town must have an overall economic development strategy documented with objectives, problems, what you're trying to do, what you expect to get out of the project. Their objective is to save businesses, rather than to entice new businesses. The featured speaker was Rita Potter.

Wiebe passed out copies of a survey which the Association wanted each town

WOLFEBORO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

May 26, 1993

Page 2

to complete, and the group worked on it.

1. What general strengths do you believe your community possesses relative to economic development? Quality of life, good schools, hospital, infrastructure in place, natural environment. There was discussion over whether the work force was motivated or not.

2. What general weaknesses do you believe your community possesses relative to economic development? Poor transportation network and access; seasonal; lack of available land zoned for manufacturing and some other kinds of business; lack of sewer, water, electric in outskirts; limited work force

3. What specific primary thing keeps your community from making the economic progress which it desires? Don't have consensus, leadership, and focus

4. What one thing from outside your community might be most helpful in moving your community forward economically? Money, a business that wants to move here, an awareness of Wolfeboro statewide and nationally as a community great for business as well as a tourist attraction. Better economic climate in the state. What this boiled down to was: we need a marketing plan and the money to support it.

There was a lot of discussion on this question. The State wants to support tourism, but doesn't consider second home owners as tourists. The tourist facilities we have now people don't find attractive--like the Allen A. The cottages were turned into second homes or condo colonies. People today are looking for the "country inn" with a lounge, restaurant, etc.

5. What steps has your Town taken to address its assets, problems, and goals in support of economic development? There were a number of choices listed under this, and we have done or are doing many of them: Revising Master Plan, working on capital improvement plan, economic development committee, business visitation program, working on infrastructure--water, sewer, etc in process, Downtown Committee (W2000), used community block grant, also Charrette and Route 28 study committee.

6. What are your town's major short-term economic development goals? Development of strategic plan; completion of the master plan and capital improvements program based on community goals.

7. What are your town's major long-term economic development goals? Completion of above; actually need consensus on vision and community goals

REPORT ON MAY 25 PLANNING BOARD MEETING

Ganem and Simpson handed out copies of the survey that was discussed last night at the Planning Board meeting. This was a special work session to

WOLFEBORO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

May 26, 1993

Page 3

discuss the economic development climate in Wolfeboro. Don Hughes had put together a list of statements to elicit responses, and Shirley and Amanda went through the Board's responses.

1. Population forecasts indicate Wolfeboro will grow by about 100 people each year with 1/3 of this in the age 65+ category. All agreed that based on current trends this is correct. Retired people are the largest group.
2. Almost all growth increases taxes per household. Population growth. There's a difference between growth of seasonal, retired, lakefront, affluent residents and family-oriented growth with children. Because of the cost of education (about \$8,000/child) it takes the taxes of 3 retired households with no children to support one household with one child.
3. Growth in the \$20,000 per year and under type jobs would raise real estate taxes the most while growth in the middle to upper middle income retired would have the least effect. Agreed, but diversifying socially may not always match economic development.
4. The Economic Development Chapter of the 1980 Master Plan suggested Wolfeboro set aside 30-50 acres for manufacturing to accommodate needs to 2000. The 1992 study suggests that growth in manufacturing has been and will be about 10% of new jobs. Planning Board upped that to 50-100 acres. Agreed that 10% of new jobs will come from manufacturing.
5. The Town should prioritize capital expenditures so that items that attract and retain retired and second home people come ahead of industrial parks or other aids to business. For example: increased boat docks, sidewalks, trails, downtown beautification, adult recreation, cultural and educational opportunities. Didn't discuss fully, but agreed that Wolfeboro's environment and quality of life were special advantages.
6. The Planning Board should make planning allowances for institutional entities--such as a quality retirement center, private or public college, cultural center, year round recreational or tourist attractions as these facilities represent Wolfeboro's best opportunity for economic growth that is compatible with its current character. Board listed advantages and disadvantages of different type of land use, but really didn't discuss them much.
7. Retention of a strong downtown business district is a priority for economic development. Agreed

Board skipped over the next two statements.

10. Do you favor adopting a design review process for some of our commercial areas? Don't want an historic district, but approve architectural continuity.

15. We should not add any new retail shopping zones for the types of

WOLFEBORO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

May 26, 1993

Page 4

business already represented in the central section of Town until the population justifies it. Don't repeat downtown foot traffic area.

16. Small shopping malls (such as Ames Plaza in Ossipee) would benefit the overall economy of Wolfeboro. Planning Board said no.

18. If a business zone were conceived that would include local contractors' service business, small manufacturers, auto oriented service, home building, etc. and it was a fixed size, would you favor a floating zone concept restricted to a few sites? Liked this idea.

The Planning Board members were asked to go over these statements, and bring in one opinion of their own for discussion along these lines.

There was discussion now about how to reach consensus--shouldn't it be done by one big group instead of by a number of different little groups? The Planner pointed out that it's hard to get members of a big group to talk--you have to hire a facilitator--while they will open up in a smaller group. One way would be to coordinate the views of all the different groups and then let the public make the final decision.

BILL WIEBE'S REPORT ON STRATEGIC PLANNING - This will be typed up and mailed out with the minutes of this meeting, and then discussed at the next EDC meeting, which will be on Wednesday morning, June 9.

There was discussion of all the time and staff support required to work on Economic Development. Most of this comes out of the Planning Department, but no provision is made for the time spent by the Planner and her staff. When the Library grows, new staff is hired. The Town needs to consider staff support for Economic Development a priority too.

BUSINESS VISITATION FOLLOW-UP - There are copies of the report which each visitor should pass on to the businesses he/she visited. No one remembered who he visited, so the secretary will make copies of that list.

OTHER BUSINESS - For the June 9 EDC meeting, members should consider nominations for the Board of Directors of the Business Development Corporation.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Erik H. Arctander