

Wolfeboro Economic Development Committee  
November 2, 1994

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PRESENT: Chairman Shirley Ganem, Bill Wiebe, Andy Milligan, Dennis Plante, Pamela Berg, Bob Garland, John Pernokas, Barbara Jackson, Tony Triolo

Chairman Shirley Ganem called the meeting to order at 7:34 a.m. in the First NH Bank Conference Room, and asked Dennis Plante to tell the group about his meeting with Sharon Severy. Plante had discussed with Severy her activities in publicizing Wolfeboro, especially the publication "First Resort." He wanted to be sure that his efforts wouldn't duplicate previous work. Bill Wiebe said that "First Resort" focused on advertisers, rather than on the whole town. Plante responded that it did have a good deal of general information as well. Plante will be meeting with Severy again.

Ms. Ganem reported that she and Pamela Berg had met to talk about school and EDC cooperation. They had decided that the best approach would be to survey graduates of the Voc Ed center, to find out their opinions on the usefulness of what they had been taught. This might be a less threatening approach to the school administration than pointing out the weaknesses in their program.

Members pointed out that EDC's aim is to have effective graduates to work in local businesses. Some 80% of Kingswood graduates leave the area, it's not clear whether this is because there are no jobs in the area, or because the graduates need more basic skills to fill what jobs there are. Members pointed out that a good work ethic is something that also should be taught in the home, not just in school.

Some members suggested that students do not understand the importance of basic math in such simple operations as making change. For example, some workers at Hunter's IGA cannot make change without a cash register to give them the answer. These are things that all young people need to learn, it was pointed out, not just the Voc Ed students. Bill Wiebe reported that in the telephone company, all new employees are trained in all the various jobs. Tony Triolo said that the school people told him that they concentrate on teaching the skills needed in town, but didn't consider training for factory work a necessity. The State also said it was not needed.

B. Garland recommended that the EDC pick up on Superintendent Fleury's statement in the school paper about seeking excellence, and ask how EDC can help. Others recommended sitting down with Fleury and Voc Ed Director Contois to discuss the matter. It was suggested that the summary report from the Business Visitation Program might be helpful in providing information on local needs. Ms. Ganem will be responsible for setting up such a meeting.

#### DESIGN REVIEW

There had been discussion at the last meeting about the need to start informing the townspeople of the benefits of design review. The Planning Board is talking about long-range plans, and EDC members have indicated that they would like to help. Discussion turned to the Rite Aid building, and all agreed that for a concrete block structure it was now looking quite attractive. Perhaps the information effort about what Wolfeboro is trying to do with its downtown should start with the realtors, or even the bankers.

There was a discussion of the difficulties of getting approval for design review. Ms. Berg pointed out that if the bank knew what Wolfeboro was looking for, it could advise prospective borrowers to plan ahead to adapt their design to the guidelines. It can involve additional cost, but would be to the business's advantage to try to please the community. The Town needs to put together an information package. Most developers are reasonable if they get suggestions early enough. The key is appropriateness, and visual appeal.

#### MAIN STREET REPORT - Bill Wiebe

He recommended that EDC join the organization, for a cost of \$195, and purchase their materials for the EDC and the Planning Board. He would introduce the program to the Selectmen and to the Planning Board. It is based on four elements: economic base, design, promotion, and organizational structure. It is project-oriented, and has to do with the entire appearance of the town. The first step is to promote what the town already has. A. Milligan moved that the EDC join the Main Street Network, and B. Jackson seconded the motion.

During discussion, Wiebe explained that the fee included newsletters, annual meetings to bring members up to date, work books and rental tapes. Some 800 towns across the country have used this program. Members asked if there were towns nearby that have used the program or if there were videos available that would show how it had worked. John Fernokas offered to pay to rent or buy the video to provide more information about how the program works.

Wiebe emphasized the program's value, which builds on a community team effort. Learning about what has succeeded in other towns could help Wolfeboro. The Charrette got a lot of attention but has had no followup. Wiebe pointed out that we have talked about and started a lot of projects and haven't gone ahead with any of them. Members spent some time in discussing the value of joining, and unanimously approved the motion made

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and seconded earlier.

S. Ganem will investigate the money situation, because she said that most of the EDC budget has been spent preparing the application for the Block Grant in behalf of the Business Development Corp. Wiebe suggested that after joining, the EDC should share the information with the Selectmen, the Planning Board, and then in a widening spiral extend the information to the Chamber of Commerce and other groups.

The next EDC meeting will be held on November 16. In preparation for the meeting, John Pernokas will follow up on getting the video explaining the Main Street program, and Dennis Plante will revisit Sharon Severy.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:53 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

*Erik H. Antander*

Secretary

