

WOLFEBORO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

May 4, 1994

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PRESENT: Chairman Shirley Ganem, Tony Triolo, Bob Garland, Bill Wiebe, Andy Milligan, Barbara Jackson, Bob Grott, Paul Kimball, Wendy Olson representing First NH Bank, and Town Manager Paul J. Skowron

Shirley Ganem called the meeting to order at 7:30 a.m. in the First NH Bank Conference Room. Sue Elder of Charlestown, NH, whom she had hoped to have as a speaker this morning, was unable to attend.

Mrs. Ganem asked for committee reports.

User-Friendly Manual - Paul Kimball reported that this is being worked on every Monday. They've had input from several engineers, and from an unidentified resident businessman who suggested offering owners incentives for creating new commercial and residential properties, or for improving existing ones. Black marks could also be given to properties that are going down hill. Incentives could be offered for new first-home owners - perhaps an award of some furniture or something from a local store.

Kimball hopes to have recommendations and the draft manual ready by June 1. He will run it by various committees for their approval.

B. Jackson asked if it would be possible to favor local businesses and tradesmen for Town purchases. Mrs. Ganem said they try to do this. The Town Manager added that this is not always possible without paying more.

Bill Wiebe suggested offering a consulting service to help businesses design an attractive building. An award could be offered for the best one each year. Perhaps people could barter for services with other businesses in town.

Property Inventory - B. Jackson reported that she and Bob Grott were trying to get together a data base of vacant commercial land, and commercial buildings for rent. The Chairman pointed out that vacant commercial land should be the first priority, and vacant buildings be considered secondary. A. Milligan said that the Chamber of Commerce would be willing to do the data base, but it's difficult to keep it up to date. Some sales are private, and they don't show up in real estate sales records.

S. Ganem said she had gotten an inquiry back from the flyers placed in motels and restaurants several years ago asking people to write for information about business opportunities in Wolfeboro. A. Milligan said he would follow through on it.

Economic Development Chapter of Master Plan - Barbara Jackson and Bill Wiebe had met with Harold Parker to discuss EDC's help with the Master Plan Chapter. Wiebe said that a letter inviting people to participate in this discussion was sent to several hundred people. He pointed out that the chapter was on the Economic Base, not on economic development, and that should be made clear.

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There was discussion of what should go in the Economic Base Chapter. But an economic development plan should not be in a master plan as the general economy constantly changes.

Committee members offered these considerations for a master plan:

- * It should address the economic problems of the Town and the broad trends, like tourists, economic hub, etc., and should consider the reasons behind the changes in recent years. One example would be the outmigration of workers.
- * Aging of the population has an effect.
- * Is Wolfeboro going to become a bedroom community for points South?
- * The changed tourist business and has changed our economic base.
- * Perhaps we should be attracting businesses suitable for a retirement community, rather than industrial businesses.
- * We need to encourage diversity to avoid dependency on any single industry or business. And, too, many high school graduates want to leave their home community, regardless of what it has to offer.

The Master Plan is a guide, a prediction, a desire. We can identify the past trends. We need a favorable mix of tourism, college campus, and some light manufacturing—economic diversity. Tony pointed out that most of his employees come from outside of Wolfeboro. A service-based economy pays only minimum wages, and seldom any benefits.

Bob Grott added that a problem with rezoning in Wolfeboro is that the moment an area is designated for possible development (like Route 28 recently) people immediately protest that they don't want that to become a business zone, or strip. We need to encourage variety. People need to understand that the purpose of zoning is to allow development with control, and to offer a variety of sites.

A Master Plan needs to consider Town character and policies. The Town needs a balance of opportunities. The zoning ordinances should reflect the potential for diversity. Every chapter of the Master Plan should reflect this diversity.

The Chairman passed out copies of a summary prepared by Verne Crosier for guidance in preparing a business plan for Wolfeboro, and asked members to read it and be prepared to put together a specific business plan at the next meeting. Barbara Jackson also passed out material from the Lakes Region Charitable Foundation meeting. Mrs. Ganem explained that this foundation has \$100,000 for regional development. She said that she had heard from people in Wakefield, who would like to form an economic region joining Wolfeboro, Brookfield, Wakefield, and Ossipee.

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Bob Grott pointed out that there were several great commercial properties available in Ossipee, like Kelloway's complex on Route 28, and for Wolfefboro—for example—to recommend that a business locate there would surely benefit the whole area. Others agreed with this regional approach.

The meeting ended with a general discussion of local taxes.

The next meeting will be two weeks from today (May 18).

The meeting was adjourned at 8:49 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Erik H. Arctander

Secretary

