

WOLFEBORO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE  
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PRESENT: Chairman Shirley Ganem, Barbara Jackson, Bob Garland, Bill Wiebe, Paul Kimball, Andy Milligan

ABSENT: Tony Triolo, Bob Grott

GUESTS: Barbara Hobbie and Rick Paul of Pathways

Chairman Shirley Ganem called the meeting to order at 7:37 a.m. in the First NH Bank Conference Room.

#### USER FRIENDLY GUIDE

Paul Kimball reported that there was still some work to be done. Pressures of summer business had kept the committee from completing it, but they expected to get back to work soon.

#### PATHWAYS COMMITTEE

Bill Wiebe introduced Barbara Hobbie and Rick Paul, who are co-chairmen of the Pathways Committee, which was organized under Wolfeboro 2000. They had come to report on the committee's work, and future plans. Hobbie reported that she will be living in the Boston area for the next year, and she wanted to clarify Pathways' future before she left. She and Paul have an appointment with the Selectmen this evening to ask for permanent status. She explained that the committee is most interested in maintaining the quality of life and a healthy, safe environment. They believe that recreation should be considered a Wolfeboro industry.

Rick Paul handed out a draft of the Committee's Purpose, Mission and Authorization Statement. He believes there is very strong support in Wolfeboro for recreation, and a great need for sidewalks, improved road shoulders and trails to provide safer foot and bicycle travel through Town. This will serve residents of all ages. He believes that the next wave of immigration will be in the Lakes Region, and we need to persuade people that this focus on making Wolfeboro more recreation-friendly is broad-based.

Mr. Paul sees a need for a commission to study this, and a good public relations effort to let people know the benefits of a good, safe trails network. They should be able to deal with other groups in other towns, handle legal issues, and work with the Public Works Department to study how this can be done with the least effect on the tax dollar. There is also a great need for coordination of volunteer efforts.

Shirley Ganem commended his ideas, especially an emphasis on families, and said that she thought this should be under the aegis of the Economic Development Committee. Pathways is concerned that if they are under EDC,

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they may be seen as part of a bureaucracy. Kimball suggested that this might be named the recreation committee, but Paul's response was that they want to focus on pathways and linkage, not on all sorts of recreational activities.

EDC members agreed that there seemed to be little concern in Town for public safety and provision for sidewalks, but felt that the Pathways committee needs to join with some present town-wide committee, since the Selectmen would probably be unwilling to support another one.

Paul would prefer that they be considered a semi-professional organization with its own authority. He feels there's some grass-roots resistance to the "business" label which the EDC has acquired.

Bill Wiebe pointed out the Economic Development Committee really can link many aspects of Wolfeboro (such as signs, how the Town looks) by undertaking special projects, rather than by commissions or committees, which mean bureaucracy to many people.

Paul asked what benefits there would be for Pathways to affiliate with EDC, and was told that benefits could include a budget, entree to the Selectmen, and better cooperation with Town departments. Paul responded that Pathways was more interested in seeking a more organization, which would draw more outside talent into the Pathways group.

Kimball suggested that the anti-business group in Town believes that EDC is encouraging smokestack economy. This may seem to be anti-environmental in some eyes.

Shirley Ganem said that she wants to emphasize the need for volunteer help in operating Town government, and getting things done.

Rick Paul said he was still uneasy about the perception of Pathways in association with EDC, nor does he see it continuing as an ad hoc group. They have several projects in mind: entrance signs at the outskirts of Town, expansion of the Bridge-Falls Path, a bicycle path and bridge behind Bradley's Hardware. We need a Town-wide concept endorsing sidewalks for pedestrian and bicycle lanes.

Hobbie pointed out that Pathways wanted to remain an autonomous group. For example, they would never meet in a bank building, but would use a public place.

Ganem then pointed out that the Pathways Committee may need some governmental involvement to get things done. Paul Kimball said perhaps Pathways needs to shake off some concerns about being beholden to other groups and just go ahead to get things done for the benefit of Wolfeboro.

Bill Wiebe pointed out that the Pathways committee had credibility in Town because they had accomplished something—extended the corridor 550 feet

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from the end of the Bridge-Falls Path to River Street---much as the docking committee which went ahead and got the Town to rebuild the docks. Pathways did this with private funding.

There was discussion of the need to pursue Town and State help during rebuilding of the Smith River Bridge. to make sure that sidewalks are included. Andy Milligan pointed out that association with EDC could offer assistance with out-of-pocket expenses like copying and mailing.

S. Ganem said that both groups need to step back and consider what is best of each group. Paul and Hobbie want to be sure that any association confers the proper public perception. They want to be sure that Pathways continues, and that its image remains healthy and strong. The Chairman thanked them for coming to talk to EDC, and they left.

**BUSINESS PLAN - BILL WIEBE**

Wiebe said that he would like to communicate with the public to let them know what the Economic Development Committee is doing, because it seems obvious after the discussion with the Pathways reps this morning that they do not have the slightest understanding of what EDC is about. It is time for some publicity about the "big picture" and EDC focus on a "vision of the Town."

He said that he, Shirley Ganem and Barbara Jackson were working on developing a business plan to explain what EDC is all about, and "sell" it, as a business would promote itself. Verne Crosier had discussed this, and the group had started working on such a plan at one meeting. It will describe our vision, goals, strengths and weaknesses, and the specific projects planned to work on specific problems. We need to communicate and educate the public.

He handed out fliers on "Main Street," a 4-session series that is being offered by the National Trust for Historic Preservation, and encouraged people to go.

Paul Kimball brought up the costs of water and sewer improvement and treatment, and the high cost of access fees. The Chairman said that she will ask the Town Manager to come to the next meeting on August 31 to talk about this.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:10 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

*Emil H. Antander*  
Secretary

