

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING
August 3, 1994

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MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman Shirley Ganem, Vice-Chairman Barbara Jackson, Andy Milligan, Bill Wiebe, Paul Kimball, Tony Triolo

ABSENT: Bob Grott, Bob Garland

GUEST: Larry Keniston, Codes Enforcement Officer

Chairman Shirley Ganem called the meeting to order at 7:30 a.m. in the First NH Bank Conference Room and asked for committee reports.

AVAILABLE COMMERCIAL LAND - Barbara Jackson

Barbara passed out copies of a list of vacant commercial property in C-1 and C-2 zones. Unfortunately, most of it seemed to be parking lots for active businesses, cemeteries, etc. The group discussed the stump dump site, and the Town land on Pine Hill Road, which is apparently only 18 acres instead of the 27 often quoted. The Armory property on Middleton Road was mentioned, but that is non-conforming in a residential zone. Barbara was asked to refine her list for the next meeting. Bob Grott is supposed to be assembling a list of vacant commercial buildings.

WOLFEBORO PROPERTY DEVELOPMENT MANUAL - Paul Kimball

Paul reported that he and his committee had all been working practically around the clock during their busy season, and had not had any time to work on this. He said that a stumbling point was establishing jurisdiction—where the decisions start, with Codes or Planning. He hoped to have the process worked out with the ZEA and the Planning Board and expects to have a draft ready for the first September meeting.

SEMINAR ON WORKMAN'S COMPENSATION - Shirley Ganem

The Chairman asked what the best timing for this would be, and members responded that a Thursday evening between Columbus Day and Thanksgiving would be best, probably October 13, 20, or 27. John Simpson has lined up 3 panelists from the State, who will face 3 local business people as a reacting panel. It was suggested that attendance would probably be better if some food was involved, and Mrs. Ganem said she will try to arrange a modest dinner buffet.

CODES OFFICER - Discussion of signs

Mrs. Ganem introduced Larry Keniston, who had come been invited to speak to the group about signs. Larry said that signage is not very well covered in our ordinances, and is often difficult to enforce. Briefly, these are the

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different categories of signs which he discussed:

- * Residential signs of up to 7 1/2 square feet may identify property
- * A business is allowed 2 signs - of 24 square feet each
- * Banners—for special events—have been allowed since 1954. The policy is generally to let them be displayed for 2 weeks.
- * Temporary signs are permitted outside of the State right of way, as long as they are on private property with the permission of the landowner.
- * Hanging signs are allowed over private sidewalks (not public ones).
- * Grocery store signs (listing specials, etc) - State allows them as a right. Also, goods can be displayed in the store window, cars on a lot, etc. Some stores post many signs and banners. The difference is taste, and this is hard to regulate.
- * Real Estate signs - there is supposed to be just one per property, and it is to be removed upon sale of the property.
- * Temporary signs - for a charitable or educational event - can be up for 3 weeks in any calendar year.
- * Vehicle signs - are allowed on any registered truck or van.
- * There are not supposed to be free-standing signs for any business not located in Wolfeboro. This can be a problem for businesses just over the line, like the Perry Hollow Golf Club, which would dearly love to have a sign in Wolfeboro. (Should trucks parked with logo on them be considered a sign?)
- * Directory signs on road - these are no longer permitted, except grandfathered ones.
- * No flashing or motion signs are permitted in Wolfeboro.
- * Interior lit signs are permitted.

Keniston was asked about the Sign Committee, which was a part of the Wolfeboro 2000 effort, and had been chaired by Gary Miller. They had looked at the present Wolfeboro signs and regulations, and then had collected regulations from other communities. They had been concerned about the visual impact, the different kinds of signs appropriate for drive-by businesses or pedestrian businesses. They were especially impressed by the signs in Sturbridge Village. However, the committee grew discouraged and their work never saw the light of day.

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SHOULD THE EDC CONSIDER SIGNS?

Bill Wiebe was very enthusiastic about this project. He said that signs have a great deal of visual appeal for tourists. This would mesh with EDC goals—to improve the looks of the Town, attract visitors, extend the seasons, etc. This would help make the quality of life better for people who live here, also.

He felt that a two-pronged approach would be best:

1. Improve existing sign regulations which can be enforced
2. Build a program to educate the public on how good signs can attract business and be good for the town

Larry Keniston pointed out that there is a Town time limit for dealing with grandfathered non-conforming signs. You can only impose a change at the time when an ordinance is being changed. He said that the present sign ordinances are a fiasco, and very difficult to enforce.

EDC members wondered if the members of the former sign committee would be willing to resurrect the committee and continue their work. The Downtown Committee was also very interested in signs. Harold Parker, chairman of the Planning Board had come in during the discussion, and reported that the Planning Board would start working on zoning amendments at the end of September. Bill Wiebe and Harold Parker said that they would be willing to work with the sign committee, and Larry Keniston said he would talk with Gary Miller and see if he was willing to continue with the work.

It was now 9:10 a.m. and past time to adjourn. The Chairman said that she had two prospective EDC member — Dennis Plante and Gene Leone.

The next meeting will be on August 17 at the Bank.

Respectfully submitted,

Rosemary Arctander

Secretary

