

**WOLFEBORO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE  
REGULAR MEETING  
Tuesday, September 12, 2006  
MINUTES**

**Members Present:** Bob Reid, Chairman, Tony Triolo, Mike Cooper, Mary DeVries, Gene Leone, Members.

**Member Absent:** Denise Roy-Palmer, David Tower, Members.

**Staff Present:** Lee Ann Keathley, Secretary.

*Chairman Reid opened the meeting at 8:37 AM.*

**Consideration of Minutes**

*Chairman Reid tabled the May 9, 2006, June 6, 2006 and July 11, 2006 EDC minutes until the October 10, 2006 EDC meeting.*

**Discussion Items**

➤ **Wickers Sportswear**

Bob Reid stated the Wickers Sportswear building is being sold and questioned the members whether the EDC should have any influence in regard to such. He stated it is a light commercial property with various uses.

Tony Triolo stated the building is well constructed and the replacement cost of the building would be 3.9 million to 4 million dollars. He stated the building is 26,000 SF, including 3,000 SF of office space, radiant heat, 5 acres with the potential to increase its size by 30%.

Bob Reid stated the planning being done by the Economic Base Chapter subcommittee of the Master Plan does not include light industry and that such is not the focus of said subcommittee. He stated the issue does fall into the pervue of the EDC.

Gene Leone questioned the number employed.

Tony Triolo replied the company employed 97-99 people in 1997 and that there is parking for 75 cars.

Bob Reid questioned whether the building could be modified for something other than light industry and questioned modification to office suites.

Gene Leone stated the rent per square foot is low.

Bob Reid stated the conversion of the building could be a motivator for people to move from the Downtown area. He commented on the potential use as a vocational technical institution.

Tony Triolo stated the building could be used as an assembly plant or distribution center for products made overseas.

Gene Leone asked why the company closed.

Tony Triolo stated that Wickers is still in business however; they have lost customers between 2000 – 2002 such as Cabelo's, Lands End and LL Bean to China and the labor and exchange rate. He stated there is no government compliance or OSHA overseas. He stated that manufacturing is not encouraged in this country.

Bob Reid questioned whether the property is something the EDC is interested in being involved with in regard to development with either a private or government interest.

Gene Leone questioned the sales price.

Tony Triolo replied 2 million dollars and that it cost 1.1 million dollars to build in 1993. He stated the State Economic Development Department is aware of the property and it is posted on the State's website.

Mary DeVries stated that if the EDC works within their Mission Statement, the EDC has the responsibility to do something and the sale of the property would be the Committee's first opportunity.

Bob Reid agreed with Ms. DeVries statement. He stated the Committee has a Mission Statement however, it has not yet been adopted. He stated he is unsure of the next step for the Committee.

Tony Triolo questioned what exactly would the EDC do.

Mary DeVries stated she had a conversation with two individuals from the State Economic Development Division regarding the Town of Wolfeboro's EDC and that they had offered to meet with the Committee.

Tony Triolo requested the individual(s) be invited to attend the next EDC meeting.

Mike Cooper questioned the EDC's authority and role in regard to the Wickers property.

Bob Reid stated he is unsure and would discuss the issue at the next BOS' meeting.

Tony Triolo stated he is the listing agent for the property.

Bob Reid requested Ms. DeVries contact the individual(s) from the Stated Economic Development Division and invite them to the next EDC meeting.

Mary DeVries questioned whether the Committee should first identify their role.

Bob Reid stated the State representatives could be used as a resource to aid in such.

➤ **Master Plan**

Bob Reid stated he is meeting with Rob Houseman and David Booth, Planning Board Chairman on 9/21 to finalize the goals, ideals and principles for the Economic Base Chapter of the Master Plan. He stated the final adoption of the Master Plan update will be the driving force of the EDC. He distributed and reviewed the current draft of the Economic Base Chapter. He requested comment and/or recommendations regarding the chapter and any changes to such. He stated that everything in the chapter draft tries to bring itself back to the Mission Statement of the chapter.

Gene Leone questioned why the chapter refers only to Bed & Breakfasts and excludes hotels.

Bob Reid stated that Bed & Breakfasts were used as an example and requested Mr. Leone to submit changes to the language regarding such. He stated that Bed & Breakfasts are the trend in New England and are easier to build than a hotel. He stated the intent was not to preclude hotels.

Referencing page 8, Specialty Trades, Craftspeople and Artisans, Gene Leone questioned whether the last sentence is an exclusionary statement.

Bob Reid no, rather such is to be encouraged. He requested alternative language to be submitted. He stated the subcommittee is not interested in allowing large box stores in Wolfeboro because there is no place to put them and no infrastructure to support them. He stated that specialty trades are encouraged because they do not require a large footprint.

Gene Leone questioned whether a specialty trade is considered true economic development because it only employees one person or minimal people.

Bob Reid stated he disagreed.

Mary DeVries stated the chapter does not speak to retail.

Bob Reid stated the Downtown Committee is addressing such.

Mary DeVries expressed concern regarding such stating that it becomes difficult to hold the document accountable if it doesn't address retail issues. She stated the goal is to attempt to keep jobs, people and money in the Town however, the chapter doesn't speak to retail.

Bob Reid requested Ms. DeVries to provide alternative language that could be incorporated into the chapter. He stated there needs to be something developed to motivate the people to move away from the Downtown area. He stated the committee is adamant regarding big box stores.

Gene Leone questioned the definition of a big box store and whether Hannaford in Alton would be considered such.

Bob Reid stated the Economic Base Committee is not focusing on strip malls.

Gene Leone asked whether Craftspeople is all we want for the Town and stated he doesn't want the chapter to be limiting. He stated he doesn't feel that Artisans is considered economic growth. He stated he feels the chapter is exclusionary and cautioned against such.

Bob Reid requested alternative language to be submitted. He stated the chapter would be reviewed and upgraded annually. He distributed the Downtown chapter for review and comment. He also stated that Wolfeboro has one of the lowest unemployment rates however; many who work in Wolfeboro cannot afford to live in Wolfeboro.

Referencing the chapter's Mission Statement, Mike Cooper stated that such does not speak to new businesses rather, only to existing businesses. He recommended striking the word existing in sentence 5 of the Mission Statement.

Bob Reid stated the Economic Base Chapter subcommittee met with Roger Murray, Downtown Chapter co-chair to discuss the coordination of wording between the two chapters. He requested the EDC to review the Downtown chapter and comment via fax or email prior to 9/21/06.

Referencing pages 8, Educational Assets and page 9, Rationale, 4<sup>th</sup> paragraph, Mike Cooper stated the paragraphs are inconsistent. He recommended striking the word predominant on page 9, Rationale, 4<sup>th</sup> paragraph and placing trade and services before the word employment of said paragraph.

Bob Reid distributed a job title for an Economic Development Director provided by WEDCO.

*Town of Wolfeboro EDC meeting scheduled for Tuesday, October 10, 2006 @ 8:00 am at the offices of Leone, McDonnell & Roberts.*

**It was moved by Mary DeVries and seconded by Mike Cooper to adjourn the September 12, 2006 Economic Development Committee meeting. All members voted in favor.**

*There being no further business before the Committee, the meeting adjourned at 9:30 am.*

Respectfully submitted,

Lee Ann Keathley  
Secretary