

**WOLFEBORO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING
Tuesday, February 13, 2007
MINUTES**

Members Present: Bob Reid, Chairman, Tony Triolo, Denise Roy-Palmer, David Tower, Mary DeVries, Members.

Members Absent: Mike Cooper, Gene Leone, Members.

Staff Present: Lee Ann Keathley, Secretary.

Chairman Reid opened the meeting at 8:10 AM.

Consideration of Minutes

May 9, 2006

It was moved by Denise Roy-Palmer and seconded by Tony Triolo to approve the May 9, 2006 EDC minutes as submitted. All members voted in favor. The motion passes.

June 6, 2006

Corrections:

Page 3, 16th paragraph; insert "availability" between the and accommodations.

It was moved by Denise Roy-Palmer and seconded by Tony Triolo to approve the June 6, 2006 EDC minutes as submitted. Bob Reid, Mary DeVries, Tony Triolo voted in favor. Denise Roy-Palmer, David Tower abstained due to their absence at that meeting. The motion passes.

July 11, 2006

It was moved by Denise Roy-Palmer and seconded by Tony Triolo to approve the July 11, 2006 EDC minutes as submitted. Bob Reid, Mary DeVries, David Tower, Tony Triolo voted in favor. Denise Roy-Palmer abstained due to her absence at that meeting. The motion passes.

September 12, 2006

It was moved by Denise Roy-Palmer and seconded by Tony Triolo to approve the September 12, 2006 EDC minutes as submitted. Bob Reid, Mary DeVries, Tony Triolo voted in favor. Denise Roy-Palmer, David Tower abstained due to their absence at that meeting. The motion passes.

November 28, 2006

It was moved by Denise Roy-Palmer and seconded by Tony Triolo to approve the November 28, 2006 EDC minutes as submitted. All members voted in favor. The motion passes.

Discussion Items

➤ **Professional Park**

Bob Reid stated there were no changes made to the proposed new Master Plan for the Town under the economic development section concerning a professional business park. He stated that with the anticipation of the adoption of such, the EDC may want to take a direction and formulate ideas regarding a professional business park. He stated there are a number of short and long term possibilities; the Wickers building is in the appropriate zoning district for such an endeavor. He stated he recently met a person that specializes in the construction of buildings similar to Wickers and would be interested in said building. He stated he informed the person that an investor is needed.

Tony Triolo stated the Wickers building consists of 24,000 SF with 2 levels.

Bob Reid questioned the closing of the docking areas of the building.

Tony Triolo stated such could be closed or moved.

Bob Reid questioned the opportunity for expansion.

Denise Roy-Palmer stated there is a 30% potential expansion of the building.

Tony Triolo stated the Planning Board gave preliminary approval in 1993 for 30% expansion on 3 sides of the building.

David Tower stated the Medical Arts Center at the hospital is 24,000 SF and includes 10-13 offices (largest being 3500 SF, smallest being 700 SF), common space, meeting room and two bays.

Bob Reid questioned available financing to an investor.

Denise Roy-Palmer stated there are various programs; economic development grants require job creation with 60% has to be committed to hiring low to moderate income people, CDBG (Community Development Block Grant) Facility Grants would have to benefit 60% of low to moderate income people and USDA monies are available.

Mary DeVries questioned the low and high end of the potential grants.

Denise Roy-Palmer stated the CDBG can only be applied for up to \$500,000 per year and Public Facility Grants are submitted twice per year and highly competitive, Economic Development Grants have a certain dollar amount, is first come first serve and can be applied for at any time during the year. In regard to the latter grant, she stated the entity / organization has to create 25 jobs (\$20,000 per job).

Bob Reid stated the hospital is going to expand exponentially that will draw new people here. He stated there is an opportunity to break up the Wickers building into different types of sections; medical, legal, investment, insurance, etc. He stated he has a perception that part of it would be medical providing a walk-in clinic. He stated it would be more of a success if it is kept professional; wherever it is built. He stated Edie Desmarais informed him the Town needs to do something to bring in younger people otherwise, there will be problems later on. He stated there are no jobs with

benefits and future opportunities for those people and such is validated in the Master Plan. He questioned the expansion and need for additional people at Huggins Hospital.

David Tower stated initially, the need for additional people would be minimal and that if there is growth in the future, that such would be driven by a completed building. He stated the hospital is looking at the opportunity to expand existing or new programs that could be either on site or off site. He stated to attract and hold staff is a significant challenge.

Denise Roy-Palmer stated the hospital is creating efficiency through its expansion.

Tony Triolo verified the bed count is staying the same. He expressed the need to focus on workforce housing.

Bob Reid stated there is a warrant article for the Bay Street Water & Sewer Improvements that would benefit the workforce housing project to be developed across from Wickers.

Denise Roy-Palmer stated such development would have mixed rental and ownership units.

Bob Reid stated there is an opportunity that things may be changing physically in location in that additional acreage could be contiguous.

David Tower questioned the type of jobs people are looking for.

Bob Reid replied jobs that provide benefits with an opportunity for year round employment.

David Tower questioned consideration for more than light service jobs / light industry and questioned the acceptance of such by the Town. He questioned the creation of a service sector that would construct employment however, not the type of employment sector wanted. He stated historically, over the years when there have been opportunities to develop things such as light manufacturing however, such has not been welcomed.

Bob Reid stated quality of life has to be sold and therefore whatever growth occurs, the rural character and quality of life must be maintained (ie: electronics).

Dave Tower stated investments appear to be better suited for the community and recommended targeting a major employer.

Bob Reid stated the Wickers property is worth 2 million dollars and is a significant tax revenue to the Town. He expressed the need for the kind of business that will not compromise Wolfeboro. He stated there is a movement to make the Wickers building the Town Hall.

Denise Roy-Palmer stated the effects of Downtown would be devastating if the Town Hall were moved.

Tony Triolo stated a good argument is made for moving Town Hall; such would relieve a lot of congestion, open parking spaces, make it more accessible and the locals don't have to dread going Downtown to pay bills or go to the Planning Office.

Bob Reid stated the idea is to make the Town Hall into condominiums.

Mary DeVries stated it should be made a convenience for the residents to spend time in Town. She stated she is interested in pursuing the targeting of a business.

David Tower questioned whether people actively consider Wolfeboro an opportunity. He stated quality of life can be found elsewhere and doesn't count for much anymore.

Bob Reid stated it would be driven by who wants to spend the money. He stated the job of the Economic Development Director would be to guide such.

Mary DeVries stated it would be interesting to survey families with children in school, grades Kindergarten through 6, who work out of town.

Tony Triolo stated the Economic Development Director would be the prime recruiter and that such would be a full time job.

Bob Reid stated the position is two years out; cannot wait for such in regard to the Wickers property. He recommended the EDC begin recruiting people who have the money to invest.

Tony Triolo stated a change of use would be necessary for the Wickers building.

Bob Reid verified the property is not on Town sewer. He recommended actively seeking ways to keep the property on the tax rolls. He questioned the potential use of the building.

Tony Triolo stated the building is suited for light industry and could ideally be used as a distribution center or a research facility for the hospital.

Bob Reid questioned what continues to be manufactured in New England.

David Tower stated according to population statistics and State demographics, the State has changed drastically and the number of jobs lost in the last five years in manufacturing is astounding.

Denise Roy-Palmer stated manufacturing is still #1 above travel and tourism.

David Tower stated that if such is used as a premise for job support in production, it doesn't bode well. He recommended identifying someone who has an interest in being in Wolfeboro.

Denise Roy-Palmer stated she would arrange Michael Bergeron, NH State Business Recruiter, to attend an EDC meeting.

Mary DeVries recommended outreach to second homeowners.

Denise Roy-Palmer stated Belknap County distributes a brochure that targets second homeowners.

Bob Reid requested said brochure.

It was moved by Tony Triolo and seconded by David Tower to adjourn the February 13, 2007 Economic Development Committee meeting. All members voted in favor.

EDC meeting scheduled for Tuesday, March 20, 2007 @ 8 AM at Leone, McDonnell & Roberts office.

There being no further business before the Committee, the meeting adjourned at 8:55 AM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lee Ann Keathley