

WOLFEBORO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
JOINT MEETING WITH THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE EDC
November 10, 2009
MINUTES

Members Present: Frank Giebutowski, Acting Chairman, Gene Leone, Vice-Chairman, Kristi Ginter, Selectman's Representative, Bob Reid, Mike Cooper, Mary DeVries, Dave Tower, Denise Roy-Palmer, Members.

Member Absent: Tony Triolo, Member.

Chamber of Commerce EDC Members Present: Diane Levin, Jane Milligan.

Staff Present: Lee Ann Keathley, Secretary.

Chairman Giebutowski opened the meeting at 8:00 AM.

Consideration of Minutes
October 13, 2009

It was moved by Dave Tower and seconded by Bob Reid to approve the October 13, 2009 Wolfeboro Economic Development Committee minutes as submitted. All members voted in favor. The motion passed.

Discussion Item

➤ **Proposed changes to the Commercial Business District**

The Committee discussed the 25% rule and the purpose of the Master Plan.

Frank Giebutowski stated that when he looks at the size of the impact, he is unsure if it's a good idea and questioned the impact to existing businesses. He questioned the Chamber of Commerce EDC's opinion regarding such.

Diane Levin stated the Committee has not discussed the issue. She stated the Planning Department reviewed the changes with the Chamber of Commerce however, it was clear the Board would be moving forward with the changes.

Jane Milligan stated that many communities that participated in the Main Street Program rebuilt themselves and incorporated such a provision (25% provision) however, noted such took place over a long period of time, in some instances 20 years. She stated the provision was successful.

Diane Levin stated conceptually, it is not a bad idea however, she is unsure if it is a solution. She stated she understands what the Planning Board is trying to accomplish and is supportive of such. She stated there will always be someone who feels restricted and there is always an impact to someone.

Frank Giebutowski questioned what else can be done, other than legislation, to support retail.

Gene Leone stated there is no basis or findings to support the proposed provision and sees the provision as a restriction.

Bob Reid stated the Town has made its statement by accepting the Master Plan.

Frank Giebutowski stated the Master Plan is a set of objectives and that each were not individually voted on; noting it is clear the Master Plan is a vision and tool for planning however, each item in the Master Plan is open to debate.

Bob Reid disagreed.

Dave Tower stated the Town's Master Plan could benefit from the market study; noting timing is critical.

Kristi Ginter stated the Board has been working on the changes for quite some time and has pulled information from other communities; noting a push for tourism and a walkable community as noted in the Master Plan.

Bob Reid noted that Downtown does not encompass the entire commercial district.

Gene Leone stated he does not want to rely on the Master Plan to determine the needs rather, depend on an independent study that may review and incorporate the Master Plan into its findings.

Frank Giebutowski questioned positive incentives.

Jane Milligan stated other changes are needed such as signage, parking and public bathrooms.

Bob Reid stated he is in favor of the proposed changes, specifically the change relative to the need to acquire a building permit only rather than TRC approval for change of use; noting such is a huge incentive.

Jane Milligan stated the Downtown core cannot grow or stay healthy until the market is expanded to a year round; noting the top 200 customers in her stores was not from Wolfeboro. She stated the population is shifting and such is not being acknowledged.

Bob Reid stated the average age of a person who lives in Wolfeboro is 59. He stated the Town cannot survive as strictly a retirement community and noted the need to get people to live here.

Kristi Ginter noted the need for workforce housing.

Denise Roy-Palmer stated that if employees live out of town, there is no incentive for those people to shop in Wolfeboro. She stated a person living and working in Town would generate business.

Mary Devries questioned how to better attract young families with school age children to doing business in Town. She questioned what message as a group could be forwarded to the Town in regard to business. She stated the strategic plan is needed first.

Kristi Ginter stated that measurable results of the change will not be seen until after it is implemented. She questioned what feedback has been received by the Chamber of Commerce.

Jane Milligan stated comments have been made regarding the lack of parking and condition of bathrooms.

Bob Reid stated that since 2004 the Town has been pushing hard for change; noting such is an ongoing process and the Town is in the middle of remaking themselves. He stated he would support delaying the incorporation of the proposed changes until after receipt of the strategic plan. He stated the Town should not be 100% financially responsible for the funding of such; noting the people / businesses should be financially involved in the study otherwise, it would not have the same value.

The Board discussed advertising campaigns and costs related to such.

Mary Devries stated the Chamber of Commerce advertises Wolfeboro as a year round destination.

Dave Tower stated the changes could be perceived as a restriction of personal rights; noting the necessity for a compelling need for the changes.

Diane Levin stated the need is to fund the strategic plan and have the results of said plan prior to the incorporation of the proposed zoning changes. She stated the Planning Board should be requested to consider the restrictions placed on property owners as a result of the proposed changes and consider that the strategic plan could help promote changes to the zoning.

Frank Giebutowski stated he does not want the emphasis of economic development on the Downtown core. He stated he would like the two Committee's to work towards increasing off season business.

Bob Reid stated the Committee needs to raise the funds for the strategic plan.

Denise Roy-Palmer verified the EDC is supportive of all proposed changes to the district except for the 25% provision. She stated the Committee will have more leverage in raising funds now that the Town has committed to funding Phase 1 of the project.

It was moved by Gene Leone and seconded by Dave Tower to adjourn the November 10, 2009 Economic Development Committee meeting. All members voted in favor.

EDC meeting scheduled for Tuesday, December 8, 2009.

There being no further business before the Committee, the meeting adjourned at 9:03 AM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Lee Ann Keathley