

Town of Swanzey, New Hampshire
Economic Development Advisory Committee (EDAC)
Meeting Minutes – January 13, 2013

Note: Minutes are not final until reviewed and approved by the Committee. Review and approval of minutes generally takes place at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Committee.

Call to Order:

The regular meeting of the Swanzey Economic Development Advisory Committee was called to order at 5:06 p.m. by Chairman Steven Bittel.

Committee Members Present: Chairman Steven Bittel, Don Skiba, Lynn Rust, Arthur Boufford, Guy Pronesti, and Greg Johnson.

Absent: David Cairns and Bill Hutwelker.

Others Present: Town Planner Sara Carbonneau, Town Administrator Shane O'Keefe, Consultant Stuart Arnett, and Recording Secretary Beverly Bernard. Bob Brockman from Chesterfield, NH's EDAC was also present as a visitor.

Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes: Minutes of October 14, 2013 were considered. Skiba **moved** to accept the minutes, seconded by Pronesti and all were in favor. ***Motion passed.***

Carbonneau gave out copies of an article from the Union Leader newspaper by Larissa Mulkern about the Town of Wolfeboro's economic development committee work.

Review of current projects:

Stuart Arnett gave his presentation to the committee. He explained that his role was to help the committee move the TIF district along by identifying ways to market the district and come up with a branding theme to identify and promote the District. He reviewed documentation provided to the committee. He stressed the importance of talking to stakeholders. He noted that it is unwise to identify the District with local descriptions that would not have any meaning to distant potential businesses. He also noted that since the Town does not own the property in the TIF district, it is important to develop marketing in sync with the people who do own it. Wetlands issues were also discussed.

Boufford said he thought that the committee is doing a lot of work for the real estate industry. He felt that someone else should be marketing the property, not the Town. Arnett said that any successful area is branded as a whole area with an identity, not as specific properties. Bittel explained the need for the Town to be involved if it wants to develop economically for jobs and tax base. Rust suggested that the committee is assisting in promoting the district, not doing the marketing. Bittel said the district is meant to be an economic and tax growth area, and the Town is about to invest \$3+ million in a roadway and utilities delivery for the district, which gives it a very large stake.

Arnett continued that a positive message to potential users is that there are citizens in this Town who will support and help you through the process of building here. Arnett noted that the more coherent the

branding, the greater the attraction. Carbonneau noted that work for developing a particular part of Town helps the entire Town.

Arnett reviewed primary brand considerations and possible site Identifiers (where, what and type) and focused on what people out-of-state might be thinking in their selection process. "Why is Swanzey better?"

Johnson asked Arnett about the void that occurs after a pitch is made by real estate folks. He discussed the fact that there are people already looking at the area and referred to a customer who ended up choosing another location. Arnett said that the customer referred to by Johnson found that existing buildings in the alternate location were one third of what a new building would cost.

Arnett discussed how Swanzey should be distinguishing itself from other localities. Arnett said the committee needs to consider: "Why Swanzey". Johnson asked about a DVD about the Town. Bittel said that branding is part of identifying the uniqueness of Swanzey. That should be done ahead of a DVD so a DVD about the Town could have a consistent message. As an example Bittel noted that a unique quality is that the district is a large piece of property with public utilities. Johnson left the meeting at 5:45 for a business appointment.

The committee went on to review and discuss site identifiers.

Rust asked what types of lots we have and what types of businesses are we looking at. Bittel responded that the Collier property is sufficient for five small building pads because of wetland issues. Arnett estimated that buildings of 25,000 to 30,000 square feet are probably the best estimate for the site and continued to discuss other factors affecting relocation decisions.

Various brand names were discussed with the committee deciding to think them over until their next meeting.

Carbonneau suggested that a get together be planned with the property owners for further discussion. O'Keefe suggested that perhaps that the road name itself should be changed to something like "Enterprise Drive" or at least be considered in the subsequent discussion. There was a brief discussion regarding the cost of hi-speed internet connection service.

A **motion** to adjourn was made by Pronesti, with a second from Skiba and all were in favor. Adjournment occurred at 6:17 p.m.

Pronesti and Rust left at 6:18 p.m. The remaining members (not constituting a quorum) continued to informally discuss development ideas with Arnett for the next 15 minutes.

Next scheduled meeting: February 10, 2014

Respectfully Submitted,



Beverly Bernard, Recording Secretary
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Draft Minutes