

**Town of Swanzey, New Hampshire**  
**Economic Development Advisory Committee (EDAC)**  
Meeting Minutes – January 14, 2013

*Note: Minutes are not final until reviewed and approved by the Board. 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 5:05 p.m. Committee Members Present: Chairman Steven Bittel, Amy Bush, Greg Johnson, David Cairns, Guy Pronesti, and Arthur Boufford.

**Absent:** Lynn Rust due to illness.

**Others Present:** Town Planner Sara Carbonneau

**Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes:** Minutes of December 10, 2012 - Cairns **moved** to accept as presented, seconded by Boufford. All were in favor. **Motion passed.**

**Review of Current Projects:**

- **West Swanzey Charrette**  
Carbonneau is waiting for final report due the end of the month. She reported that the Charrette is still airing on Cheshire TV. Bittel asked to borrow the DVD of the Charrette to see if he can make copies. Carbonneau offered to provide one to him.
- **Land Acquisition**  
Carbonneau reviewed the land acquisition along the river on Main Street in West Swanzey. She reminded the committee of the two public hearings being held January 15 and the 29, 2013. Carbonneau said everyone is on board with the project. Cairns said that he didn't think the land will provide access to the river since water speeds up near the bridge and it is hard to get a canoe to a landing. There is 200 feet of river front.
- **Update/revision of EDAC presence on Town website**  
Bittel reported that any action is on hold until Bush finishes her Town Hall year-end duties, but it will get done.
- **Hannah Grimes Coordination**  
Cairns said that nothing currently is happening, but he is and will continue to be in contact. Accordingly, he recommended that the committee should reduce its level of scrutiny. All agreed.
- **Broadband**  
Bittel said that FastRoads is actively stringing broadband in Swanzey along Rt. 32. Johnson asked when we would know that service is available. Bittel said he thought we should know by June, if not March. However, he will contact them to get a status report.

**Discussion and consideration of 2013 initiatives:**

Bittel raised this topic and discussion was held as to general initiatives for 2013. He informed the committee that Stuart Arnette, one of the participants in the Plan New Hampshire Charrette, has agreed to come to the next meeting to discuss development ideas with the committee. His firm represents industrial type areas and helps create promotional materials. His ideas might

accelerate the TIF district growth. As well as provide planning guidance to the EDAC. Safford Drive's extension was viewed by all as an essential component.

Johnson asked about the \$70,000 in the TIF District budget, and Bittel responded that the money is a wash. It comes from the General Fund's budget to pay the bonds, but Swanzezy then recognizes revenue in essentially the same amount of funds as tax increments. Bittel then went on to discuss in general terms tax increment financing.

Johnson mentioned that he requested from Town Administrator Shane O'Keefe an update on the extension at the last meeting. Bittel said that he had made inquiries earlier today and learned, not to his surprise, that the Board of Selectmen and town staff are too busy with year-end closing, the budget hearing and deliberative session. Progress on the extension will have to wait.

Johnson asked about the \$2,500 Town budget that is allocated to the work of the committee. Bittel said it is the amount appropriated for this committee and is a carryover from the previous year. Actual expenditures last year were under \$500. However, the committee would have to present firm, economically viable requests for an increase.

Bittel repeated that we need a plan in order to get more money in the budget. He suggested, as discussed in prior meetings, that the committee concentrate on the Route 10 corridor and the TIF district.

Johnson said the committee could do a better job marketing Swanzezy industrial development, noting that Swanzezy is never in any of the books that provide business relocation information. He showed the committee members a booklet entitled the New Hampshire Economic Review for 2012 prepared by NH Public Service. Hinsdale was included, but not Swanzezy.

Johnson mentioned that he received Request for Proposal from a Massachusetts company looking for 16,000 square feet of space. They need parking, a loading dock, etc. Johnson said that our industrial park/TIF district is not advanced enough to appeal to a potential developer. Cairns said EDAC has not taken an inventory and suggested that it is the responsibility of the property owners to develop the TIF district. Johnson said it has to be collaboration since towns have ways to enhance the property value for developers. Johnson said that if there is anything the committee should do this year, it would be to follow up on making the TIF district more attractive to developers of industrial business.

Carbonneau noted that there is a lot of available commercial property along route 10 and the committee needs to be careful in how it promotes development by promoting the community and/or districts thereof and not specific properties.

Johnson pointed out that developers fear the code enforcement process. Carbonneau said the focus should provide information to developers so they know who to talk to with regard to

handling permits and building to code. Johnson said what the town is missing is a quasi-government group with authority. EDAC is just advisory with no authority.

Bittel pointed out that the committee is already moving forward: #1 Stu Arnette is coming in to help committee planning; #2 Bittel has joined Revenue Development District (TIF) Advisory Committee to better coordinate EDAC and TIF committees; and #3 Safford Drive's extension will go forward once staff is able to focus on it.

The discussion returned to if EDAC should compile an inventory of what land is available for commercial/industrial development. Bush said she could run a report of available land. All agreed that would be an excellent first step. Carbonneau pointed out the map showing the land use districts and noted that she often helps direct inquiries to the properly zoned areas of the Town as well as discussing the approval process.

Johnson suggested that EDAC approach the Board of Selectmen after the budget, and try to redefine the EDAC role and ask for authority to expand their role. Boufford asked to do what? Johnson said he thought the committee could do something like Keene Development Authority which worked with land developers. Bush mentioned that Johnson's suggestions were vague and suggested that EDAC stick to focused goals. Bittel said that a development corporation is a specific legal entity with a particular task and this committee does not have a definitive plan that would justify having that kind of authority.

Bittel said we have to have a plan first and believes Arnette might be able to help in that planning process, suggesting that the committee come up with specific questions for him.

Carbonneau reminded the committee about the budget hearing scheduled for January 15, 2013 at 7:30 p.m.

Johnson **moved** to adjourn at 6:05 p.m., Bush seconded and all were in favor. **Motion passed.**

Adjournment at 6:05 p.m.

Next Scheduled meeting: February 11, 2013.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Beverly Bernard".

Beverly Bernard, Recording Secretary