

Town of Swanzey, New Hampshire
Economic Development Advisory Committee (EDAC)
Meeting Minutes – September 9, 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 5:06p.m. by Chairman Steven Bittel.

Committee Members Present: Chairman Steven Bittel, Greg Johnson, Don Skiba, Guy Pronesti, Lynn Rust, and Alternate Bill Hutwelker who was seated for Cairns. **Absent:**David Cairns, Arthur Boufford.

Others Present: Town Planner Sara Carbonneau, Town Administrator Shane O’Keefeand Recording Secretary Beverly Bernard.

Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes: Minutes of July 8, 2013 were considered.Hutwelkermoved to accept the minutes, seconded by Pronestiandall were in favor. **Motion passed.**

New member, Don Skiba, was welcomed by Chair Bittel. Bittel asked the committee members to review the members list with term expiration dates and contact information. Corrections were made.

UOLD BUSINESS

TIF District and Safford Drive extension development promotion

- **Update on Stuart Arnett**

Bittel reported that Arnett will be returning to meet with other Town businesses. He also reported that Arnett said the branding of the TIF district would be easier if there were more properties included. A larger parcel will draw more interest according to Arnett. Question put to discussion by Bittel was whether the branding should be associated with propertiesoutside the TIF district.

- **Expansion of Marketing area**

A discussion was held regarding additional land that might be included in marketing the TIF district. It was noted that there arecontiguousproperties that are zoned business that could be considered. Bittel pointed out there is no planned municipal water and sewer on these properties and suggested that the properties with water and sewer services likely would be more marketable.

Others on the committee said that adding properties outside the TIF district gives the offering a bigger footprint, which might get more folks looking at the properties. Hutwelker said the more land you have to offer, the better the attention it will get from potential buyers. A brief discussion was held regarding when water and sewer might be available for the properties outside the TIF district and it was noted that would not be accomplished any time soon.

The committee discussed inclusion of airport and fair properties and concluded that they should be retained in the footprint but with notation as to limited development potential.

A discussion was held about the Collier property which is within the TIF district. The discussion was in regard to plans on that property for an extension road that might connect to adjacent properties. Carbonneau noted that the Collier property has not formally come to the Planning Board yet, but provisions have been made to accommodate potential connection to additional lots. Johnson noted that the Collier property has flexibility on the location of the connecting road.

The committee agreed to expand the district definition for marketing purposes.

- **Report on Safford Drive Construction**

O'Keefe said the construction should go out to bid this fall. The committee considered a resolution to urge the Board of Selectmen to move ahead aggressively with the project as it is placing constraints on the committee's marketing program. He also noted that bond rates have increased, adding approximately \$20,000 in annual debt service over the summer, with further increases more likely than not. O'Keefe noted that a winter project would be optimum for Town and resident businesses.

A discussion was held regarding whether or not assistance to buyers for feasibility studies was available. Assistance for the Collier property in relation to road planning to contiguous properties was further discussed.

Bittel stressed the important step is getting a bid for the construction of the road first so that the committee knows how much money is left for buyer assistance or additional marketing efforts. Both Collier and Medicare(Burke) properties have conceptual plans for development. Bittel pointed out the need for a pumping station for sewer access if several larger properties were developed.

O'Keefe reported that Clearwater still has not signed off on the plans for the Rt. 12 access points, but The Town may not require Clearwater agreement. Bittel agreed to join O'Keefe at the next meeting with Clearwater.

After further discussion, Bittel made a **motion** that due to the crucial nature of completion of the Safford Road extension to both the committee's marketing efforts and common benefit to the Town in general, the committee urges the Board of Selectmen to reiterate their firm commitment to put construction out to bid no later than November 1, 2013. Hutwelker seconded the motion. All were in favor. ***Motion passed.***

O'Keefe asked about Arnett considering a different name for the district. Bittel said Arnett is considering that as part of the branding process. Johnson added that the Colliers are also

considering names for their development. Bittel said Arnett should have the branding ideas to submit to the committee by next month.

Internet access progress and issues

- **Time Warner plan changes and Fast Roads/WiValley possibilities**

Discussion was held regarding broadband availability. Bittel said that Time Warner is raising its rates for small businesses and demanding longer term contracts. Rust reported that by leaving Time Warner and going with Fast Roads/WiValley his business is saving about 50% in costs. Time Warner's strategy appears to be one of applying pressure for multi-year contracts in order to sustain reasonable bandwidth at the business. Bittel and Rust will monitor the situation.

OTHER BUSINESS

Expiring terms

Bittel and Cairns terms are both expiring as of September 2013. Bittel expressed his wish to continue on the committee and will contact Cairns about his preference when he returns home from his trip.

Next scheduled meeting: October 14, 2013

Motion to adjourn by Hutwelker. Motion seconded by Pronestiand all were in favor. Adjournment at 6:02 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Beverly Bernard, Recording Secretary