

Town of Swanzey, New Hampshire
Economic Development Advisory Committee
 Meeting Minutes – October 15, 2012

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 Board.

The regular meeting of the Swanzey Economic Development Advisory Committee was called to order at 5:00 p.m. Committee Members Present: Steven Bittel - Chair, David Cairns-Vice Chair, Arthur Boufford, Amy Bush, and Guy Pronesti.

Absent: Greg Johnson

Others Present: Sara Carbonneau

- **Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes:** The minutes were reviewed and a motion to approve them made by Boufford, seconded by Cairns, all in favor. Motion passed.
- **Review of Current Projects:**
 - Charrette update – Carbonneau reported that postcards are going to all Swanzey residents to solicit thoughts of people who work and live in town.
 - Most renters of the Mill building have moved to other areas of Swanzey. The future use of the mill is in doubt.
 - Going to be someone at Charrette with economic development expertise.
 - Bush asked if there would be conference call capability as she will not be able to attend in person.
 - Charette be held in the office building in the mill.
 - West Swanzey water company issues will be addressed. Bittel suggested that EDAC might want to participate in this project element. Federal match funding for water projects is currently good and attractive bonding alternatives exist. All agreed that utilities are a key element to future development.
 - West village residents and many others will be attending. Carbonneau worried about having sufficient space. That said, all EDAC members are urged to attend. Bittel and Boufford will attend selected sessions on Friday and Saturday. Cairns will try to get there for some of the meetings but has conflicts.
 - Areas west of the Thompson Bridge will be included, including the Woolen Mill and the old AAC buildings. There are some derelict buildings at the end of Prospect Street that may need to be addressed. They will look at the general area east of Route 10. Carbonneau suggested going to the listening session and coming to the presentation on Saturday afternoon as well. Carbonneau explained the Charrette process for the 9:00 AM session. It will probably be a 1 ½ hour session. .
 - Town Website – EDAC presence thereon. Victoria Barlow, Beth Fox and Carbonneau were working on the website, now Fox and Barlow are gone. Boufford and Bush have generated significant updates and other EDAC-focused changes, but are on hold pending staff time available to post.

- Should the committee make a recommendation to the Select Board regarding staff availability? The platform is simple; the problem is having staff time to keep it updated. . The committee wants to place the development brochure on the website. **Motion** made by Cairns to recommend that the Selectmen consider a part-time position for a webmaster seconded by Boufford. All in favor. Motion passed.
 - Bittel suggested including available business properties on website. There are some significant properties available, including in the TIF and Charrette Districts. Listing new/relocated businesses was also considered. All agreed that any links created must be to all realtors without bias. Concept is to demonstrate Town’s pro-business attitude.
 - Budget – Carbonneau reminded the committee that they need to consider proposed budget. Bittel will send an email to the Town Administrator.
 - Hannah Grimes Coordination – Cairns – nothing new to report.
 - Broadband Update – Bittel – FastRoads is planning to have Swanzey hooked up by end of 1st quarter next year. EDAC will follow-up next year.
 - Airport Development – Johnson was following up. No report. Carbonneau said she thought that there were trees being cut down at north end of airport recently.
- **Discussion and Consideration of New Initiatives:**
 - Exploring other initiatives – Bush suggested that EDAC may have common interests with OSC and might investigate coordinating initiatives. Carbonneau suggested the Planning Board may be closer in goals. Carbonneau further suggested the status of the NW quadrant be again explored. OSC is looking at it. Development corridor is in the middle of the Yale Forest. There is interest in looking at ways of protecting Yale’s property while also maximize commercial/industrial development where utilities are more available. Very few of the parcels on Route 10 are developed. It was agreed to monitor progress on NW quadrant at future meetings. Bittel mentioned that the Revenue Development District Advisory Board has a direct relationship to EDAC as defined by the Selectmen, and we should establish tighter relations. He will follow up with Town personnel.
 - **Other Business**
 - Mail Service – Business members reported mail is being lost more frequently and arriving later than in the past by one or two days, both in-going and out-going. Other mail has been lost for several weeks, if not entirely. Swanzey has not had a postmaster for quite some time. They apparently posted for a postmaster position limited to one year, which likely diminished interest and could indicate USPS plans to close the facility. Postal Service likely has a long term lease, which means they have to keep paying lease even if they close the post office, but it would leave a vacant commercial building. The space might not be available for other business development. Committee members expressed a strong desire to keep the post office as it has impact on economic viability and future development to the Town. Recommendation: send memorandum to selectmen requesting further investigation be authorized or otherwise pursued. **Motion** on recommendation made by Cairns, seconded by Bittel. All in favor. Motion passed.
 - Granite Fund Event – nothing to report.
 - Open EDAC seat – Bittel is speaking with a highly qualified candidate who has indicated an interest in the position.

- **Next meeting is Monday, Nov. 5th, 5:00 PM.**
- Adjournment – **Move** to adjourn by Bittel, seconded by Pronesti. All in favor. Meeting adjourned at 5:50 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Beverly Bernard, Recording Secretary