

Town of Newington, NH
Economic Development Committee Meeting Minutes
Thursday, June 24, 2021 – Town Hall

Attending Meeting:

Chair Jeff Hiatt, Vice-Chair Mike Donahue, Selectman Chair Ted Connors, Bob Raymond, Judy Miamis, Ken Latchaw, Brandon Arsenault and EDC Coordinator Karen Anderson

Absent: Jill Boynton, Alicia Busconi

J. Hiatt called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

Minutes Approval: T. Connors moved to approve the minutes of April 24, 2021. K. Latchaw seconded the motion with all in favor.

Business Appreciation Effort

K. Anderson shared the article that will be in the next town and business newsletter highlighting Newington Home Businesses. The article points out the differences of working from home and being a home business as well as referencing the applicable Zoning Ordinance for Home Occupations. C. Cross, Planning Board member was in attendance and answered questions about the zoning ordinance.

B. Raymond is assisting with an article highlighting the medical community in Newington. Suggestions for future articles included highlighting Coleman Garage, Outdoor Pride, J. Mitchell's Gas Station/Towing, and Great Bay Marine.

Retail Update

Alicia was not present for an update. K. Anderson told the committee that the Newington Park property (Urdat Biddle) has been sold. The town has the property assessed for \$12,317,600 and the sale price was \$13,350,000 indicating that the town's assessment rate in that sector is accurate. M. Donahue pointed out that the buyer is Torrington, the current developers of West End Yards in Portsmouth.

Report on Conference Calls

NH Department of Business & Economic Affairs

B. Raymond told the committee that the calls have been focused on the labor shortage and the Federal Recovery Programs. SB 155 regarding Outdoor Dining was discussed and has passed, extending the time frame for allowing outdoor dining. B. Raymond explained that there have been discussions about the need for daycare and the potential of a program to assist businesses to add onsite daycare.

The Division of Travel and Tourism is anticipating a strong season with an estimated 3.5 million visitors to New Hampshire this summer.

Seacoast Economic Development Roundtable

The weekly calls were reviewed. The topic of housing needs continues to be brought up as a deterrent for some businesses to relocate to the Seacoast. Ideas are being generated to work with developers to provide incentives to develop affordable housing. The term “affordable” has shown to have a negative impact and efforts are going to be made to refer to the housing needs for “workforce housing” using people centered language. Currently, the issue is an inventory problem for all sectors of the market.

The State is looking at the format/success of this group to replicate it on a state level and there have been discussions on what that relationship would be.

Planning Board Update

C. Cross told the committee that the Planning Board has approved an expansion of SubCom with a 3-story building that will allow for the storage and spooling of cable.

Georgia Pacific will be constructing a new +/-150’ tall stack and decommissioning their two-smaller stacks to improve their operations by decreasing drying times.

Stoneface Brewery has withdrawn their application for an off-site parking lot.

There are two residential subdivisions currently being reviewed by the Planning Board.

M. Donahue pointed out that the Upper Turning Basin project has now been fully funded with the state share being increased and included in the capital budget. There is a November start date planned.

The lot with the approved/proposed hotel has been put on the market. The Credit Union construction remains on hold.

Budget Review

Tabled until M. Roy is present.

Election of Officers

T. Connors suggested that the same officers (J. Hiatt, Chairman; M. Donahue, Vice Chairman) be elected.

B. Raymond Motioned that B. Arsenault be Chairman. M. Donahue Seconded for discussion.

B. Arsenault noted that J. Hiatt has done a great job and put in a lot of effort. He stated that he would like to see a greater focus on coordinating with other Boards. T. Connors said that he would like to stay with the same officers. K. Latchaw pointed out J. Hiatt’s outside connections and bringing that expertise to the committee. B. Raymond said he would like to see the EDC work closer with the Planning Board. T. Connors asked that the planned joint meeting get scheduled now that in person meetings are being held.

T. Connors Motioned that J. Hiatt be chairman and M. Donahue be vice-chairman.
K. Latchaw Seconded and the vote was unanimous.

M. Donahue said that he would like to see if the committee could work with the Historic District Commission to look at property that could potentially generate income.

Next Meeting

July 22, 2021 6:00 PM

Adjournment

J. Hiatt adjourned the meeting at 7:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Karen Anderson
Economic Development Coordinator