

**Town of Newington, NH**  
**Economic Development Committee Meeting Minutes**  
**Thursday, July 29, 2021 – Town Hall**

**Attending Meeting:**

Chair Jeff Hiatt, Selectman Chair Ted Connors, Bob Raymond, Judy Miamis, Ken Latchaw, Alicia Busconi, Jill Boynton and EDC Coordinator Karen Anderson

**Absent:** Michael Donahue, Brandon Arsenault

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

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

**New Business**

**New Construction Tax Incentive – RSA 72:81**

K. Anderson explained that there is new enabling legislation available to towns that would authorize tax incentives to commercial and industrial properties to build and/or expand. RSA 72:81 was approved in 2019 and K. Anderson said she has been reaching out to towns that have adopted it to learn about their experiences. The town determines the amount (up to 50%) and term (up to 10 years) of the tax exemption on the new construction. The exemption applies only to the town and local school portion of the tax rate. Once adopted, the exemption authorization is good for five years. As an example, if the town adopted a 50% exemption for year one, and a commercial property applied for and was approved for the exemption in conjunction with a \$100,000 addition and on April 1<sup>st</sup> the work was 75% complete, the added assessment to the value of the property would be \$37,500 rather than \$75,000 for the town and local school tax.

*I. An eligible municipality may, by vote of the local legislative body pursuant to RSA 72:82, adopt a new construction property tax exemption for commercial or industrial uses, or both. The intent of the exemption is to provide incentives to businesses to build, rebuild, modernize, or enlarge within the municipality. The exemption shall apply only for municipal and local school property taxes assessed by the municipality which shall exclude state education property taxes under RSA 76:3 and county taxes assessed against the municipality under RSA 29:11, and shall be a specified percentage on an annual basis of the increase in assessed value attributable to construction of new structures, and additions, renovations, or improvements to existing structures, but which shall not exceed 50 percent per year. The exemption may run for a maximum period of 10 years following the new construction.*

*II. Once adopted by the local legislative body, the percentage rate and duration of the exemption shall be granted on a per case basis based on the amount and value of public benefit as determined by the governing body either:*

*(a) To all properties within the municipality; or*

*(b) To a specific group or groups of parcels within the municipality as designated by the*

*legislative body.*

*III. For the purposes of this section, public benefit shall be defined by the local legislative body as part of the adoption of the property tax exemption.*

Erol Moe, Peter Beauregard, and John Ricci representing Stoneface Brewery were invited to attend the meeting to share their thoughts on the exemption. Peter told the committee that Stoneface is looking to relocate to a property between River Road and Shattuck Way, constructing a 28,000 sq. ft. new building that would double their capacity and serve as a restaurant with a beer garden and potentially add live music. From an economic development standpoint, this exemption would provide some relief from the high wastewater treatment costs that Newington has, encouraging businesses to build or expand. Peter noted that Stoneface has had significant expenses to pre-treat their wastewater and truck it off-site.

Erol said that he believes that Stoneface is good for the community and the proposed building has been purposely designed to be more efficient.

John Ricci said that it would be important to determine specifically how the exemption would apply and if it is done on a case by case basis. The town determines at the time of adoption if the exemption would apply to all properties, commercial and industrial or just commercial.

T. Connors said that he would bring the topic to the Board of Selectmen for discussion and possible inclusion on the 2022 Town Meeting warrant.

#### **Business Appreciation Effort**

K. Anderson told the committee that the next Business Newsletter will be in September. B. Raymond said that he has meetings set up with medical facilities and will have a draft article prepared shortly.

#### **Retail Update**

Alicia Busconi told the committee that the commercial market is very busy now with new buyers in the market that are investing. She said that they are seeing new ideas for family attractions, eco-friendly projects and unique ideas for the utilization of green spaces. She said that there have been discussions about legislation to eliminate gas fired rooftop units which is important to be aware of. The use of the buffers for things like community gardens, and bee hives are being considered which will require planning boards to look at green spaces differently.

#### **Report on Conference Calls**

##### **NH Department of Business & Economic Affairs**

B. Raymond told the committee that the recent call was focused on the organization of the Outdoor Activity Commission. Discussions have also explained the four relief plans that are available for businesses.

### Seacoast Economic Development Roundtable

The weekly calls were reviewed. The topic of inclusivity within the business community and connections to the available programs was one focus. The regional EDD is looking at a federal grant opportunity for infrastructure, Build Back Better. Projects that would be a benefit for the area are being looked at and a workshop is going to be held with the group members in early August to brainstorm ideas.

### Planning Board Update

John Krebs submitted that there have been several projects discussed by the Planning Board and approved by the ZBA (Wilcox Industries) but nothing has been approved to a shovel-ready point as of now. Subcom will be coming to the Planning Board soon for a 140,000+ building expansion (creel storage) adding 2-5 employees and will hopefully be approved early this Fall; Georgia Pacific has plans to add +-100,000 s.f. of space but no application has been received to date. The hotel approved on Shattuck Way is on hold for at least 1 more year. Stoneface Brewery is forging ahead with plans to build a new brewery on Mark Phillips' land on Shattuck Way which may be in front of the Planning Board in the next few months.

### Budget Review

M. Roy told the committee that the budget was in good shape and copies of the expenditure reports were given to the members. She asked if there was any thought of a business appreciation event this year. Judy suggested a BBQ be held to thank the businesses for their efforts during the Covid hardships. The committee was in agreement and Judy and Mike will work together to plan an event for September/October on a weekday. The possibility of holding it at Stoneface under the tent or possibly at the new Subaru dealership with Stoneface catering were ideas presented. A. Busconi will approach Subaru with the idea.

### Planning Board Meeting

J. Hiatt reported that the Planning Board suggested that the EDC come to their September 13<sup>th</sup> meeting as an appointment at the end of their meeting. Since it is unknown how long the discussion could take that does not sound like it would provide enough time for a good discussion. The Planning Board will be invited to an EDC meeting as the only item of business.

### Next Meeting

August 26<sup>th</sup> 6:00 PM

### Adjournment

J. Hiatt adjourned the meeting at 7:10 PM.

Respectfully submitted,  
Karen Anderson  
Economic Development Coordinator