

Economic Development Advisory Council

8.21.13 Meeting notes

Americana Room – Hampshire Hills

Present:

Matt Ciardelli, Ciardelli Fuel Co
Chris Costantino, Conservation Commission
Tracy Hutchins, DO-IT
John McCormack, TIFD
Penny Seaver, Bean Seaver & Smith
Dale White, Leighton A White, Inc.
Sean Trombly, Trombly Gardens

Excused:

Michael Brisebois, Hitchiner Mfg Co
Rosie Deloge, Milford School System
Mark Fougere, Board of Selectmen
Janet Langdell, Planning Board
Heather Leach, Centrix Bank
John Siergiewicz, Hollis Line Machine

Bill Parker, Director Community Development
Shirley Wilson, Recording secretary

M. Ciardelli called the meeting to order at 7:30AM. There was not a quorum present.

Minutes:

D. White made a motion to accept the minutes from 4/25/13. P. Seaver seconded and all in favor.

Economic Development Workshop Follow-up:

There was good, frank discussion and the Board listened to each other. Several good issues came out of that discussion; the survey was a good jumping off point and there is more work to be done. It was a very respectful meeting between the three boards. Some low hanging fruit was picked and the town actually looks better. There was consensus that infrastructure needs to be tackled, especially water for the west end of town.

D. White noted that the Commissioners will be hosting a joint meeting between the BOS, Planning, Wilton and interested landowners. B. Parker added that Dunkin Donuts was before the Planning Board last night for a minor site plan to build a well house on the adjacent property and Janet stated how important it would be to get water out in that area. Mr. Balcom also stated that it was his understanding from the State highway meeting that maybe the water could be done in conjunction with the road work. D. White said it is stated very clearly in the Town's Ordinance that the Water Department does not create, expand or build new lines and explained how the user funded revenue system is maintained. However, extending the line does give value to the Town in that it increases tax revenue by giving those properties the ability to develop to their potential, provides fire suppression and adds to the infrastructure. J. McCormack inquired if there was a formula to charge more for a period of time to offset the initial installation costs? D. White said he would have to look into that, but it was a good question. The Commission hasn't been willing to make that investment without a greater return. In this area though, both Wilton and Milford would benefit from an upgrade and Wilton needs a secondary water supply.

M. Ciardelli said that is selling the vision; trying to promote public awareness and addressing infrastructure. Those were two of the top points from the joint meeting. D. White said it was an important meeting because it was informative for our volunteers.

J. McCormack said the combination of awareness and the results of the survey made for a general appreciation. There was agreement using the roads as an example, there was agreement with improving infrastructure but not to pay for it out of taxes, and there was a confidence factor with the leadership of the Selectmen and with providing a vision for our infrastructure. It would be good to see comparative studies and if the Facilities Committee will address infrastructure and share their sense and vision because it comes back to public trust and perception in order to sell these ideas. This meeting was a good start and it will be good to see what else the committee report will suggest.

D. White said the infrastructure at the west end would be a win-win for all parties and spawn a greater potential for the future. There is more talk and awareness between departments due to the EDAC but the BOS need to sell. He referenced the Nashua St Sidewalk issue at last year's town meeting. It is needed for livability. Is it the right

year, don't know, but when the BOS and DPW are not on the same page it breaks down trust. That discussion should have been started well before the town meeting and there should be collaboration.

P. Seaver said collaborative is the correct word and those types of meetings lead to a collaborative effort where one board isn't in charge; everyone participates and there is a team.

T Hutchins said there was a realization by BOS. They have been trying to keep tax rate stable over the last few years which is good; however, as good as that may be, you have to invest in the Town. There was a clear indication from the survey that people are willing to do that if it means the town will grow and be better. The seed was planted and we can't just continue with a "hunker down" mentality. Gary brought up one company's layoffs, but the reality is that is how some companies do business and we shouldn't have a knee jerk reaction. We need to look at the big picture. B. Parker said that has to be continually re-emphasized. D. White said when you see action, it subconsciously spawns more action. We just saw for the first time in August, sidewalks being swept and weeds being picked. People will not spend money if they don't see work being actively done. T. Hutchins referenced the disappointment when it was learned that the TE grant sidewalk project in Wilton would only cover sidewalks and wouldn't fund any infrastructure. She also referenced a comment from a realtor that before the Oval project was done, you couldn't sell a house in Milford. Now when you drive through Milford, there are many compliments and people say this is where I want to live. So that speaks directly to the impression of prosperity, beautification and curb appeal. Guy attended a MIT Board meeting and spoke to the fact that the maintenance issues had taken a back seat because they had other problems facing them, but it has become clearer that maintenance has to be planned for and continually addressed. She also met with Guy and Rick from DPW yesterday and got their support for MIT's town clean-up day in the spring. The clean-up day will be a small measure but should bring awareness and be a good method to get the word out. It makes sense for MIT to do this and hopefully the town will also take advantage of it and say this is important and is something to move forward with. J. McCormack said it reinforces pride in the community. C. Costantino added that the Masons tried this a few years ago and might be a good partner.

D. White said that the date has not been set for upcoming joint water meeting, but Community Development and a representative from EDAC should also be there. The water line should go from the intersection at the 101 bypass to the Irving gas station because there is development potential in that area and an inter-municipal connection would then at least be doable. There would be benefit for fire suppression and also the possibility of a negotiating factor to purchase water from Wilton. Milford's infrastructure and water tanks are in great shape thanks to Bob Courage over the years, but Wilton needs a lot of work.

T. Hutchins asked if the "parking lot" list had been prioritized. B. Parker said they were items of concern or interest, but were not the most immediate things to address. D. White noted the items chosen by the BOS; infrastructure and selling the vision to town businesses. P. Seaver said the town clean-up is a basic way of selling the vision to the general public and the whole community.

Status of Economic Development Community Input Survey

T. Hutchins said we're up to 128 from 112 at the joint session, so we may need to do a personal push to get to our goal of 500 responses. We will be attending the Lion's Club meeting in September. Janet is taking care of the Rotary and we are asking the members here to ask ten folks or follow up on previous requests. B. Parker said we have a booth at the Pumpkin Festival for the Blue Bus and maybe we could distribute some then. C. Costantino suggested the Expo in October.

Community Development Office reports

- The Milford Medical Center is moving forward with preliminary plans and the Planning Board overall was fairly receptive. We are working with the attorneys to get through the zoning process and the Planning Board is looking at how to address the visual aspect of the parking lot along Nashua St. It was a business decision by St. Joes to discontinue the emergency room.
- McDonalds is renovating the existing building and re-doing the drive-thru and parking.
- Discussion with Steve Desmarais regarding residential and commercial development on several properties between South St and Ponemah Hill Rd. There was also discussion about extending sewer down South St.

D. White said the Commissioners would love to see a water line loop around through there and would also like to work with him to set aside a piece of land for an additional water tank to replace the Prospect St tank that should be taken off-line which would also help with fire suppression in that area of Town.

- Discussion on multi-family development behind Nashua Eye off Capron Rd.
- Still the possibility of a CVS location.
- Colburn subdivision is going back before the ZBA to get re-approved.
- The Reserve is building again.
- Single family building permits are up.
- Discussion for possible six lot subdivision off Melendy Rd.
- The Community Development newsletter Milford Forward was distributed. It is a PR item to share the vision; a communication vehicle from our office that Jodie has been working on. We need to build up our electronic database and figure out a way to get it out. P. Seaver suggested an insert in the Cabinet Press. T. Hutchins said they will include it in MIT's newsletter. M. Ciardelli said marketing strategy is three issues feel like four issues and four issues feel like six issues annually. J. McCormack suggested linking it to the website and adding awareness. P. Seaver noted that she used it at their company meeting because they put several of the new businesses in place that were highlighted in the newsletter.
- No change in status of the former Police Station.
- The Planning Board is working on a new residential overlay district to create better neighborhoods, use smart growth and help developers.

D. White brought up the federal stormwater requirements and a brief discussion followed.

There was a brief discussion on membership and Joe O'Neil of Papa Joe's Humble Kitchen and David Hammer of Contemporary Chrysler were suggested to fill vacancies on EDAC. B. Parker will ask them and stated they would be good assets. J. McCormack also brought up recruitment for vacancies on the TIF Board.

B. Parker will work on the date for the next joint meeting and the next EDAC meeting will be scheduled afterwards.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:40AM