

Cambridge Economic Development Advisory Committee and Economic Development Taskforce Meeting Minutes

February 23, 2016

Call to order

Fonda Ripley called to order the regular meeting of the CEDAC/Economic Development Taskforce at 6:00 at the Varnum Memorial Library.

Roll call: The following members were present: Laurie Cartwright, Jeff Coslett, Mark Delaney, Ron Elliott, Deb Nevil, Mark Schilling, April Tuck.

Introductions: Fonda introduced herself, noting that she was excited to be part of the committee. She stated her area of focus was on facilitation and moving processes forward.

Home Tax Credit: Mark reported that Adam Howard and he were working on the home tax credit initiative. He distributed the Local Option Tax Incentive for Home Businesses/Offices document. He discussed the possibility of reaching out to the VT. League of Cities and Towns. Mark Delaney asked about the criteria in terms of identifying a percentage of home owners as small businesses, which types qualify for the federal earned income credit. Mark Schilling noted that the incentive would come from the town. There are limitations placed by the VT Department of Taxes and the financial impact was fairly minimal. However, it was more of the message such an initiative sent. Ron noted there were other ways to pull home businesses into the initiative. He asked if there were other committees like this one and what would the administrative impact be. The committee agreed there needed to be more research conducted and criteria determined.

Town Signs: Jeff noted that he presented to the Finance Committee that 4 additional Town signs be erected. The sites included 104 - Fairfax, 15 – Johnson, 108 – Bakersfield, 109 – Waterville. The signs would be incorporated into the Town budget. He asked for all 4 signs for this fiscal year.

Community Coordinator: April shared the draft position description. The members recommended that the Community Coordinators from Morrisville and Johnson be invited to speak to the committee.

Rail Trail: Mark Schilling shared the survey. He explained the difference between the Trail Head committee and the Rail Trail committee. The trail is opening this year, which provides an opportunity to showcase the community. The first phase entails the children's

play area while phase 2 addresses signage and parking. The community and Friends of the Rail Trail stepped in and maintained the trail. Two sections have been completed. Signs will be posted at the 2 trail heads. The SNACC will be responsible for marketing the community and getting sponsorships. The committee discussed how we could market the community through the Rail Trail. Mark stated that the SNACC would focus on Cambridge as a destination access to the mountain and rivers. It was asked if bike racks would be provided and if they would be the responsibility of the sidewalk committee. Laurie noted there were plans for bike lanes. The committee wanted to know if there would be bike racks at the trail head. They are also looking at the crossing at the bridge on route 15. Mark Schilling will find out.

Town Meeting: When April presents the update re: the taskforces, she will mention the rail trail and the four areas of focus for the committee.

Moving Forward: For 2016, the committee agreed to focus on tangible planning and implementation goals with a definite timeline. The possibility of a marketing budget was raised. This will have to be brought before the Select Board. April will do this as part of the overall taskforce plan. We need to better define ourselves.

March Agenda:

- How to market the town
- Determine how we define ourselves
- Develop the parameters for a budget
- Examine how we leverage opportunities from the Rail Trail. What is our role in helping to develop and sponsor a triathlon?
- Community Center – This is a big economic development opportunity. Lauri Boyden and Laurie Cartwright are beginning the discussion re: the dorm building and are speaking with an architect.
- What are our priorities?
 - Community Coordinator position
 - Home Tax Credit
 - Town sign update

Adjournment

Fonda Ripley adjourned the meeting at 7:05pm

Next Meeting: March 22 at 6:00pm at the Varnum Library

Minutes submitted by: April Tuck