

Town of Farmington  
Economic Development Committee  
Tuesday, August 9, 2016

**Committee Members Present:**

Resta Detwiler, Chairman  
Denise Roy-Palmer, Vice Chairman  
Ann Titus, Selectmen's Rep.  
Martin Laferte, Planning Board Rep.  
Randy Orvis  
Elaine Aylard  
Diane Blair

**1). Call to Order:**

Chairman Detwiler called the meeting to order at 6 p.m.

**2). Pledge of Allegiance:**

Because the meeting was moved to a room with no flag, there was no Pledge of Allegiance.

**3). Public Comment:** Committee members welcomed new member Diane Blair to the committee.

**4). Review of Minutes:**

July 12, 2016- Page 4, third line after the motion- Add "Members asked Mr. Capello to determine if the TIF account can be used for other utilities".

Motion: (Titus, second Roy-Palmer) to accept the minutes as amended passed 6-0-1 (Blair abstained).

**5). Old Business:**

A). Newsletter- Members reviewed the August edition of the Farmington Economic Development Committee News and Information. They discussed distribution of the newsletter to all town board members and by electronic public notices. Ms. Titus said she will discuss the newsletter with Selectmen at their next meeting.

Motion: (Detwiler, second Titus) to accept the newsletter as presented passed 7-0.

B). Planning Board Information- Mr. Laferte said the board granted conditional approval to Aroma Joe's to construct a coffee shop on Route 11 adjacent to the Wagon Wheel. Members discussed traffic issues, location of the entrance to the site and whether a "slow down lane" will be required. Mr. Laferte said that the Planning Board is unaware of what the state may require for approval of a DOT permit at this time and that the final approval cannot be granted until the permit is received.

He said the Planning Board also agreed to the joint meeting with the EDC on Sept. 6.

C). Meeting with Gas Company- Mr. Orvis reported he has called the natural gas

company twice and left messages with no response. He said he will try to contact them again. He added that he is hoping to get a gas company representative to attend the Sept. 13 EDC meeting.

**6). New Business:**

A). Mobile Farmer's Market- Ms. Titus said Selectmen approved a Peddlers License for Seacoast Eat Local to operate a mobile farmer's market on Wednesdays from 10:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. outside the Community Action Partners office (Old Court House). Chairman Detwiler will contact the owner to set up a ribbon cutting ceremony for the new business.

B). NHEDA Meeting- Ms. Roy-Palmer said the NH Economic Development Association held their quarterly meeting in Littleton, NH on July 28 at the Littleton Opera house. The topic of the meeting was the Littleton Downtown Revitalization project, funding and logistics. She said the downtown area was in poor condition and now is on an "uptick". She described some of the activities and events held in Littleton and noted their population is about the same size as Farmington and both communities are located near a highway and said "it could happen here".

**7). Any Other Business:**

A).Trail Opening- Chairman Detwiler told the committee the grand opening of the French property trail off Hornetown Road is set for Sept. 18. Discussion included trails can increase the value of surrounding properties as people like to have places to walk, the Master Plan includes plans for a trail from the downtown core to Paulson Road and there is potential for a marsh walk behind the new Public Safety Building.

B). FYI- Members received copies of the town's electronic public notice informing residents they may obtain day passes to the beach at Lancelot Shores as guests of the Town of Farmington lot owners. The passes may be obtained at the front desk of the Municipal Building. Proof of residency is required.

**8). Strategy Session:**

Ms. Roy-Palmer began by asking members if they wished to prioritize the ideas discussed at the last meeting.

Ms. Aylard said the members had some great ideas but noted some of them may be dependent on the ability to bring natural gas to town.

Ms. Detwiler said she will obtain the number of postcards sent out to property owners in the ERZ zones from the Interim Planner.

Members discussed the purpose and benefits of the ERZ and 79-e programs and how to get this information out to business owners.

Ms. Titus suggested the committee invite business owners to an EDC meeting and explain the programs to them.

Ms. Detwiler said she is planning to invite a representative from the Dept. of Resources and Economic Development to a public meeting to inform business owners about the

programs.

Ms. Roy-Palmer suggested that inserts containing information about the ERZ and 79-e districts be put in with the tax bills sent to property owners in these areas.

Members also discussed housing and parking issues such as the recent state law allowing in-law apartments as accessory units, the potential effect of commercial store fronts being converted to residential units on the businesses downtown, plans for the current Fire Station lots, set back requirements and how to provide more public parking downtown.

Chairman Detwiler told the committee that she researched the status of the former Collins-Aikman site and found that the state has not completed the remediation of the Super Fund site so it can't be included as an ERZ zone.

Mr. Orvis asked about the businesses in the Sarah Greenfield Business Park and how many lots are for sale.

Ms. Titus said there are three lots for sale in the park and that Selectmen did not receive any response to the recent RFP for the lots.

Members then discussed past and recent efforts to sell the lots. Suggestions on how to promote the sale of the lots included putting the "For Sale" signs back up, contracting with a commercial real estate agent and to have committee members actively promote the sale of the lots.

Ms. Titus said the town is making some progress and cited the approval of the TIF District and added it didn't happen overnight.

Mr. Laferte noted that one more member is needed for TIF Advisory Board.

Additional discussion on the TIF District included tax money from the Sarah Greenfield lots will go into the TIF account if they are sold, discuss the next steps with the Planning Board at the joint meeting, town water is available to the lots, businesses will have more usable space if a septic system is not required and the lots may be more restricted by the lack of parking space and the impervious cover regulations.

Ms. Titus suggested sending a letter to distribution centers to try to interest them in coming to Farmington.

Ms. Roy-Palmer said distribution centers typically don't pay good wages so it may not be the type of jobs the town would want to attract. Mr. Orvis added this type of business has a lot of heavy trucking.

Ms. Detwiler said she would like to see some industry brought to town with "decent pay" for blue collar workers.

**9). Next Meeting:** Sept. 13, 2016 at 6 p.m.

**10). Adjournment:**

Motion: (Laferte, second Titus) to adjourn passed 7-0 at 7:22 p.m.

Respectively submitted

Kathleen Magoon, Recording Secretary