



Town of Hopkinton

330 Main Street, Hopkinton NH 03229-2627 - (603) 746-3170 – www.hopkinton-nh.gov

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, January 25, 2024 – 5:30 P.M.

Hopkinton Town Hall

Members Present: Louise Carr, James Fredyma, Andrea Folsom, Amanda Gilman, Ian Hart, Steven Whitley

Members Absent: Alexander Pooler

Staff Present: Anna Wells, *Economic Development Director*

CALL TO ORDER: Ian Hart Called the meeting to order in Hopkinton Town Hall at 5:41 pm.

Andrea Folsom made a motion to allow Steven Whitely to join by phone, Amanda Gilman seconded.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

Louise Carr	Yes
Andrea Folsom	Yes
Jim Fredyma	Yes
Amanda Gilman	Yes
Ian Hart	Yes

MOTION PASSED 5-0.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES from [January 3, 2024](#): Ms. Folsom made a motion to approve the *Economic Development Committee* minutes of January 3, 2024. Ms. Gilman seconded. There was no discussion.

ROLL CALL VOTE

Louise Carr	Yes
Andrea Folsom	Yes
Jim Fredyma	Yes
Amanda Gilman	Yes
Ian Hart	Yes
Steven Whitley	Yes

MOTION PASSED 6-0.

DISCUSSION OF EDC MISSION, VISION, VALUES, AND GOALS

The Committee engaged in a lengthy discussion with the ultimate aim of refining and focusing the Mission and Vision of the Committee. The notes from that discussion are appended to these minutes. The group will continue to brainstorm and discuss at the next meeting.

UPDATES

- AARP Walk Audit + Downtowns and Trails Report: confirmed for the evening of April 3. Details will be discussed at the next meeting.
- Water/Wastewater Expansion: Ms. Wells reported that at their January 22 meeting, the Select Board approved expenditure of \$47,000 from the Exit 6 TIF Fund to engage Emery and Garrett Groundwater Investigations (EGGI) to begin looking for potential sources of groundwater that may be developed to service the Exit 6 TIF area. Hazen & Sawyer has also provided a draft scope of services for Phase 1 of the sewer extension project, to provide analysis of alternatives. The Economic Development Committee should review and provide comment on this proposal prior to the next meeting. Subsequently, that proposal will be provided to the Select Board for their approval.
- Future additional TIF Districts: Mr. Hart and Ms. Wells reported on the conversation with the Select Board at their January 22 meeting, saying they would like more information about the benefits of using the TIF Funds to further economic development. The Committee agreed they would continue to demonstrate success with the existing TIFs and articulate the benefits of additional TIF(s).
- Hart's Corner RFEI: The Committee discussed drafting the RFEI will go into further detail at a future meeting.

OTHER

Upcoming EDC meetings:

-first Wednesday of each month at 6:00pm: February 7, March 6, April 3

ADJOURNMENT

Amanda Gilman moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Andrea Folsom. There was no discussion.

ROLL CALL VOTE

Louise Carr	Yes
Andrea Folsom	Yes
Jim Fredyma	Yes
Amanda Gilman	Yes
Ian Hart	Yes
Steven Whitley	Yes

MOTION PASSED 6-0.

There being no other business to come before the committee, the meeting was adjourned at 7:40 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Anna Wells
Economic Development Director

Hopkinton, NH – Economic Development Committee

Mission, Vision, Values Discussion – January 25, 2024

1) What problems does the committee seek to solve?

- Communicate Economic Development ideas to the public
- New economic development
- New tax revenue / increase commercial tax base
- Lower barriers for new development
- Ensure new benefits outweigh new costs
- Help current businesses expand
- Connect / communicate between developers, businesses, and Town
- Challenges faced by existing businesses
- Point for new and existing businesses
- Identify available properties for Economic Development (which can be hard to identify)
- Lack of resources for businesses
 - Knowledge
 - Access
 - Resources
 - Money

2) Why do these problems need to be addressed?

- Disproportionate tax base (~90/10 residential/commercial)
- Barriers (knowledge, access, resources)
- Negative reputation among businesses
- We like this community and want it to thrive
 - Full store fronts
 - Diversity of economic status
 - Diverse housing types
- Businesses can't fill vacancies
- Industrial land isn't developed
- We want businesses to reflect / support the community
- We want our kids and seniors to be able to stay in town

3) Who does this matter to?

- Taxpayers (residential and business)
- Prospective / future taxpayers (residents and businesses)
- Landowners
- Non-residential workers, students
- Tourists
- The State of NH
- The Town of Hopkinton

- 4) Are there changes/impacts we believe this Committee can make?
 - Raise profile of EDC + Director as a resource
 - Regulatory change proposals / advocacy
 - E.g. zoning, TIF, etc
 - Calling attention to / raising the profile of Hopkinton
 - Support tourism and local spending
 - Keep \$\$ in town - keep local dollars local
 - Highlight available properties + zoning + characteristics
 - Identify + advocate for resources
 - Identify + advocate for removal of physical barriers
 - Advocate for road/pedestrian improvements
 - Support for Economic Development Director's efforts
 - Guidance
 - Feedback
- 5) What are the strengths of this committee?
 - Paid employee
 - Access to grant information
 - Good mix of expertise and viewpoints
 - Operating in good faith
 - We all care about the town
- 6) What are the dreams of the committee?
 - Better commercial:residential ratio (i.e. more businesses)
 - Visible wins
 - Continuum of care for seniors / aging in place is possible
 - Young people can afford to stay
 - Coordination between committees
 - Businesses + business districts thrive
 - Seen as a valuable + effective resource
 - Economic Development Director is a point person, can triage (direct people to resources)
 - Newsletter targeted to businesses, but available to anyone
 - Social media presence
 - No vacant storefronts or commercial buildings
- 7) How would things be different if the Committee's dreams came true?
 - Ratio would be better than 90/10
 - The committee makes itself irrelevant
 - No "help wanted" / "now hiring" signs
 - Hopkinton is a destination
 - Businesses / business districts capture activity (i.e. from fairgrounds, river, etc)
 - Great wayfinding, safe pedestrian crossings, accessibility

8) Where do the dreams connect? What do they have in common?

- Thriving town
- Diverse and inclusive
- Lifecycle town
- Shared benefits

Ideas for MISSION:

- Be a resource for local businesses
- Support existing and attract new businesses
- Diversify tax base (desirable? appropriate?)
- Promote and support non-residential development
- Contribute to local economy
- WILTON: “protect its rural environment, historic charm, and natural resources while promoting opportunities for residential and business growth that are compatible with, responsive to and supportive of the needs of the community and local economy.”

Ideas for VISION:

- Support local
- Retain and enhance physical, cultural, social, recreational, and environmental character of the town (amenities)
- Be a lifecycle community

