

Economic Development Committee

April 21st, 2021

Meeting Minutes

Present:

Chair Bill Dowey, Paul Bemis, Carolyn Shulman, Hector Hsu, and Britta Hallberg.

Absent

Vice Chair Bruce Dorner, Nancy Spears, and Jamie Bemis.

Call to Order:

With all members remote, Mr. Dowey called the “zoom” based meeting to order at 6:03pm.

Review and Approval of Minutes:

Approval of March Minutes by Mr. Bemis, seconded by Mrs. Hallberg. Motion passed by roll call vote 4-0-0.

Old Business/ New Business:

Mr. Dowey stated that Ms. Dion will be the new Select Board Rep on the EDC. She will be attending meetings starting in May or June. Mr. Dowey also stated that a request for 1.2 million dollars was given to the Transport Advisory Program for the Trail Expansion. More details to follow. Mr. Dowey and his presentation were ranked 3rd, competing against Laconia, Plymouth, Moultonborough, and Belmont.

Mr. Bemis updated the committee regarding Affordable Housing; the group has lost momentum but will be setting up meetings in the future to continue efforts. Mr. Bemis will also continue efforts to support the program with the Select Board. Mr. Dowey stated that he read an article in the Times, that part of the Biden administration plan, has \$170 Billion dollars in affordable housing. Mr. Dowey discussed the mixed-use approach of affordable housing; mix between apartments and business spaces.

Mr. Dowey discussed the progress of working with Mr. Coates and the Northern Boarders application for 1.2 million dollars to go towards the fiber installation from Bristol to Tenney Mountain, PSU, Bridgewater, and Groton town offices. Mr. Dowey and Mr. Bemis talked about connecting with Mr. Morrison about leasing out his airport field/land to the solar company but still owning the rights to the land.

Focus is also on working with NHDOT over the summer to start process on the bike trail expansion. Mr. Bemis stated the expansion of the bike and walking trail would start from Very Excellent Chinese Food to the Middle School, a path by Kathleen’s Cottage into Kelly Park to make it more accessible and make more people aware of Kelly Park since it is hidden on a one-way road.

Mr. Dowey asked if Mr. Hsu or Mrs. Hallberg if they had any topics to discuss. Mr. Hsu highlighted that there are quite a few projects going into different directions and does not want the committee or the town to miss out on opportunist moments. Discussion continued on the fiber installation. Mrs. Shulman discovered that a few different sections of Danbury now have fiber. It was installed for free back in December as many areas wanted to increase their internet access since many adults and children have gone remote and work from home since COVID happened. Mrs. Hallberg discussed how Grafton County

looks at rural versus non rural with fiber and how many schools installed WIFI hotspots in their parking lots so staff and children could remote learn.

Mr. Dowey stated that the Select Board is still coming together but the common project in play is the Sewer Expansion. The USDA has a 7- or 8-million-dollar grant, EDA has 4 million, and CDDG has 3 million.

The committee discussed the Capital Improvements Projects. Mr. Dowey discussed the Safety Building, the need for, and Mr. Dorner's area of interest with this project. Mr. Dorner was a Police Officer prior to attending Law School.

Mr. Dowey then brought up the Planning Board's Master Plan Update. It appears that Mrs. Levey did not address the Master Plan Update in the new documents and if the committee members have any other topics to add to the update. Mr. Bemis brought up to Mr. Dowey about whether to add the Energy Committee to the EDC or it stands on its own. Further discussion will continue. Mr. Bemis also discussed looking at solar opportunities around or at the TTCC on the roof, adding a micro grid to the town office, battery storage at the solar array, and a data center.

Mr. Hsu stated that it would be beneficial to add educational opportunities in as well; work force and volunteer related. Mr. Bemis stated that Barrington Power was interested in his idea to make the solar array space as a teaching facility. Mr. Dowey also had a call with Phillip, Senior VP at Freudenberg with six different divisions and wants to bring in businesses like Hiltz and MRI to get their viewpoints on where Bristol should be.

Member/Select Board Comments/Staff Comments:

None

Adjournment:

Motion to adjourn meeting at 7:32 by Mr. Bemis, seconded by Mrs. Shulman. Motion passed by roll call vote 5-0-0.

Respectfully Submitted,
Shannon Wharton