

Windham Economic Development Committee (WEDC)
Friday September 10th @ 7:30AM
Community Development Department
Draft Minutes

In Attendance: Ralph Valentine, Chair, Al Letizio, Paul Gosselin, Amy Spencer, Sally D'Angelo, Jim McDonald, Bev Donovan and Laura Scott, Development Director

Absent: Jay Yennaco, Diane Wasilisian, Charlie McMahon, Sy Wrenn

Public: Mike Keefe from Chatham Grill

7:45 Ralph opened the meeting.

Review of August 13th minutes, approved as amended 4/0/2 abstentions

Project Updates:

- 1) Strategic Plan: Ralph reported that the sub-committee met on Aug. 31st. They're working on a metric by which to measure future development. They'll use the WEDC mission "to promote growth in property valuation that generates tax revenue, which exceeds municipal costs" with a goal of reducing the tax burden. Laura mentioned that the Conservation Commission has hired a consultant to develop a base of community services and list their relative costs. Perhaps the WEDC can use that as well for the metric.
- 2) Community Survey: Jim reported that his committee had met and was working on soliciting a broad sampling of community members to test survey questions as the first step to creating the survey. They should be able to express their goals without biased questions. Ralph listed a few ways he would reword questions and has offered to review questions before they go to the public. Paul said he would like to add some questions that appeal to developers and was added to the committee. Laura noted that although you can't legally specify which business comes to town, you could recruit preferred types of businesses.
- 3) Marketing Campaign: Laura is looking for input for the marketing materials and website to appeal to businesses and developers. She asked for input from those who might have been through the process.
- 4) Website: Laura had met with the committee and said it was coming along. It will have the capacity to do online surveys, link to other groups, would be interactive enabling a list of business news or a calendar of events. It could be set up to have weekly e-mail blasts and a list of vacant properties.
- 5) 2010 Zoning Amendments: Laura listed the major areas that would be worked on this year. They are the WWPDP, the Cobbetts Pond Protection Overlay District,

the sign ordinance and a zoning clean up, especially spot-zoned situations. Laura invited anyone to come to the various presentations if they wanted to comment. We may want to review proposed zoning changes in advance and comment on a few of these as an advisory committee.

- 6) Pennichuck Water: Laura reported that there is potential for expansion along 128, 111 and the Range Road area. There was an area-wide meeting in August with all concerned towns. The water would come from Hudson and there is adequate capacity. The potential cost would be in the 11-12 million dollar range.
- 7) The sewer study is moving forward. The feasibility study was done last year and the costs and construction issues would be studied this year. The pond area would be targeted to protect Cobbetts Pond, Canoby and Shadow Lakes as well as the Wall St. Area. Laura explained that Salem already has an agreement with Lawrence and Windham would negotiate with Salem to come in under their agreement.
- 8) 2011 Winter Series Education: No progress yet, but plenty of time. Bev reported that if it was to be at the high school in coordination with Career day, that there is some discussion of moving that date from the Spring to an earlier date, possibly in January.
- 9) Harvest Fest: scheduled 10/16. Amy reported that the invitations are going out. She needs help with volunteers, a new business banner, and the number of businesses that can be located on site. The WEDC voted to support a flexible number of businesses if possible: vote: 7 / 0

Business openings: 9/11: Woof It Down.

10/2: Fall Into Savings

10/30: Fringe

10/23: Breath of Spring

Laura asked for some help and a discussion followed on how much help to offer. Laura explained that it's strictly volunteer and not mandatory, but she will occasionally offer the WEDC a chance to help.

Ralph asked for input on whether we should rent a table at the Chamber's Expo. It was decided that it was not a good audience for us, as it is a regional event with the Haverhill Chamber and we are strictly a Windham committee .

Bev announced a jazz brunch, 9/26th, 11-2:00, co-sponsored by the Windham Endowment and the Windham Musical Arts Association, with ticketed seating.

Meeting adjourned at 9:08am

The next meeting: Oct. 8th, 7:30am.