

TOWN OF WATERBORO

Economic Development Committee

MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, May 14, 2009, 4:30 to 6 p.m.
Waterboro Town Hall Annex

The meeting was called to order at 4:40 p.m. by President, Chris Binette.

ROLL CALL

Chris Binette, Kerry DeAngelis, Tom Ursia, TammyJo Girard, Doug Foglio, Leo Binette, Dianne Holden

Minutes approved with typo correction.

NEW BUSINESS

MAINE DOWNTOWN NETWORK

TammyJo presented information about a membership into the Maine Street Maine program. Maine Downtown Network is spin-off of the Maine Street Maine program

They select communities to help revitalize their downtowns and help with training, provide resources, etc.

TammyJo said letter of interest is due by May 22 and knows we could benefit from this membership but wonders if we are ready. It's a competitive process. Do we meet their criteria? TammyJo started putting together a letter and struggled with describing our downtown. Closest thing we have is in South Waterboro. TammyJo still wants to make contact with the MDN Project Manager, Roxanne.

Tom Ursia said most success in grants and projects like this have to do with who you know and building relationships. Doing a speaking engagement and writing letters of interest will help build the connections we need. The Village planning that we are working on will help us in the future.

Tom and TammyJo suggest making the contacts now and preparing for next year.

TammyJo mentioned seminars coming up in September.

Dianne Holden suggested putting the Maine Street Maine/MDN on our list of long-term goals.

Tom mentioned that the Maine Street Maine membership program is very time intensive. We'd need committed people. TammyJo went over some of the requirements, which would include hiring a downtown manager.

Doug Foglio asked: how we can revitalize something that never was? Everything in Waterboro that needed to be revitalized has been burned down or torn down intentionally. Doug doesn't think now is a good time to try and raise funds for a big project like this.

Leo Binette suggested using MDN for their seminars for now, and learn what we can.

He sees that Sokokis trail will be the Main Street in 5 years from the Lake to Hannaford...or maybe we will have 2 Main street areas.

Tom says we have to fix a lot of the holes in town. Waterboro doesn't have a downtown. He thinks we need to come up with a vision. Tom says the Comprehensive Plan doesn't give much direction and agrees with attending seminars and the conference.

Doug said he's been a library supporter. He says Waterboro residents and businesses are some of the most financially reserved around. Some of the biggest businesses will not give a dollar. Thinks people here are untied to their community. People refuse to contribute money and/or their time. Thinks it will be hard to find people to commit.

Dianne reminded that we are not an organization that should raise money but an advisory group to the Selectmen to make suggestions.

Chris Binette motioned to table and revisit the Maine Street Maine membership.

Doug said he sees this is a long-term goal (membership) and a short term goal (using services, like seminars).

Tom mentioned there was a statewide annual conference in June.

Motion made by Leo for the EDC to submit a letter of request to the BOS to send the Town Planner to attend the Maine Downtown Center's annual conference in June.

Seconded by Dianne.

Doug asked if we could set up an appointment with the heads of the 3 major banks in town to come to one of our meetings to try to convince them to make financial commitments to our economic Development. Banks are required to provide help with Economic Development in the communities they are part of.

Leo said it's important to try and get the banks to work together.

Dianne suggested going out of our community to maybe Bangor Savings.

Doug says we should invite the 3 locals first, then a separate meeting for outside community banks. Regulation and money will drive our Economic Development.

Kerry suggested getting more organized before we have bank presidents come to a meeting.

TammyJo agreed and suggested maybe a couple more meetings.

Doug said we should listen to what they have to say, not necessarily present anything to them. Doug said that we need to keep moving forward. Lets try to get as many people on board as possible.

Chris said Bangor is aggressive and should be included. Thinks they might push some of our local banks.

Dianne said a business could come to town any day and it would be helpful to know that our banks can finance them.

Leo suggested having Sue Rocray round up the bankers.

Chris suggested putting the Bank meeting on our next agenda.

Tom said we should ask Sue tomorrow and then get others to do it if she can't.

Tom suggested adding Bankers on the short term goal list.

Doug said short-term goal should be local bankers and the long-term goal outside banks.

OLD BUSINESS

EDC MISSION STATEMENT:

Dianne made motion and Leo seconded, to submit the changes to the EDC mission statement as written to the Selectmen. Approved

LIST OF GOALS:

Short-term goals

Welcome Signs

TammyJo mentioned that there was \$40,000 in Conservation Commission and Nancy is looking into the history and how that money can be spent.

Doug mentioned he has a \$25,000 contract with them which might account for some of that money. Dianne said some money came from LAC lot sales.

TammyJo also said there's \$884 in the community center project fund.

Chris mentioned Wells had put up new signs and they were really nice. Tom will research what they paid, etc.

Kerry said she would take some pictures of some welcome signs in the area and put together some potential sign layouts for the 6/11 meeting.

Doug said the sign ordinance says the size is 20 square feet and we should make sure we follow the ordinance in our plans. Doug also reminded that DIG SAFE has to be contacted before we start signs.

More attractive town environment

Leo said he talked to CEO and she had sent out some letters to some of the unattractive properties in town. She said some ordinances might need to be changed to enforce things. She said some had been around for so long that there may be a grandfather status. Some are junkyard properties. Leo will drive around and

log what is seen on the main through ways. Some are landlords that don't want to spend any money to fix up these properties.

TammyJo said MMA will give free legal advice regarding grandfathering.

Chris asked Dianne since she's strong in Real Estate to help Leo identify some properties.

Leo said most are safety hazards, like open foundations, or falling down buildings.

Research top 30 business and industrial parks

Tom said its in progress. He is also bringing 4 premier NH case studies. Tom pointed out that NH markets themselves better than Maine. If you compare there is a lot to learn. Tom can present this info at the 6/25 meeting (unless the bankers can come that night.) or 7/9.

Long-term goals

Updating Comprehensive Plan (also has short-term).

Site Plan part is almost done. The goal is for Tom to be able to do his job and play a role in the Site Plan Review. Doug said Site Plan Review will be presented to the EDC at the 6/4 meeting. Chris said the new Site Plan Review will make much more sense in terms of order of operations.

TammyJo reminded that part of the goal should be getting everything approved by BOS.

Doug said all of the updates to the Site Plan Review are non-controversial. Doug said every site plan review applicant should see Tom and TammyJo said not everyone at town hall would agree with that.

REMINDERS:

1. Next meeting: Thursday, May 28 from 4:30 to 6 p.m., Waterboro Town Hall Annex

Motion to adjourn by Doug, seconded by Leo. Meeting adjourned at 6:20

Respectfully Submitted by Kerry DeAngelis, EDC Secretary