



# Town of Hopkinton

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## **Economic Development Committee Meeting**

August 16, 2016

Members present: Byron Carr, Bob Gerseny, Meredith Astles, and Tony Quinn. Patrick Miller and Mark Beaudoin were absent.

Also in Attendance: Planning Board members, Bruce Ellsworth, Jim Fredyma, Mike Wilkey and Celeste Hemingson. Central NH Regional Planning Commission's Executive Director, Mike Tardiff.

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*Purpose of Meeting: To discuss updating the Population and Economics chapter of Hopkinton's Master Plan and strategies in improving Hopkinton's economic development.*

Meredith Astles called the meeting to order at 5:30 PM.

Bob Gerseny provided a brief overview of the Economic Development Committee's (EDC) approach in reinvigorating Hopkinton's economic development. For example, the EDC has broken up into smaller groups to review the following: Zoning within the Contoocook Village area and along Maple Street, charrette, public/private partnerships and Tax Increment Financing (TIF).

The Planning Board and EDC discussed the importance of communication, such as gaining input and support from those residents that will be most affected by recommended improvements and/or changes in zoning. Those that were part of the previous charrette believed that, at that time, the disapproval of residents about the proposed infrastructure changes in Contoocook Village were as a result of the way the information had been communicated. Members of the EDC concurred, indicating that they intend to meet with residents in small group meeting to discuss the specifics of any changes being proposed.

Bob Gerseny advised of the modest proposed changes that the EDC will recommend for the 2017 Annual Town Meeting that may involve re-zoning of property that is being used for commercial purposes. The few properties are currently zoned both residential and industrial. Another recommendation may include re-zoning of properties at the Hopkinton/Henniker Town Line, along Route 202/9 and Route 127, in the vicinity of the Dunkin Donuts in Henniker.

In 2018, the EDC hopes to have a more comprehensive plan of proposed zoning amendments that will include the Maple Street corridor. Furthermore, the EDC anticipates presenting recommended changes in infrastructure that may involve public and private funds.

Meredith Astles briefly reviewed other efforts of the EDC, which include supporting a new Chamber of Commerce, developing a business user-friendly website, meeting with the Superintendent of Schools to discuss the District's long-term plans for Maple Street School, and setting up a booth at the Hopkinton Fair to share information about the Town.

Mike Tardiff discussed the Central NH Regional Planning Commissions (CNHRPC) work with other communities, such as Hillsboro and Loudon, in developing strategies in improving their economic development. He also advised of grants that have been obtained by the CNHRPC that will help communities working to improve the potential for redevelopment of hazardous sites, such as assistance in completing an assessment of the old paper mill site. Once completed, the assessment of what is on the site, such as hazardous materials, can be a key tool in helping to sell and/or redevelop the property.

Celeste Hemingson suggested that the EDC review previous studies outlining the types of development, such as warehousing and distribution, which were found to be most suitable for Hopkinton. EDC members agreed, and noted that they were aware of the findings. While they agreed that warehousing and wholesaling businesses are ideal, they also suggested that the I-89/Maple Street corridor is a key area for other types of commercial and industrial uses. Maple Street has direct access to I-89 and Route 202/9.

Lastly, brief discussion ensued concerning the work being done in updating the Town's Population and Economics chapter of the Master Plan, which will include CNHRPC's review of the employment trends and demographics for the area.

**Meeting adjourned:** 6:35 PM

**Next EDC Meeting:** September 8<sup>th</sup>, 7PM, Town Hall