



Town of Hopkinton

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ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, August 16, 2023 – 6:00 P.M.
Hopkinton Town Hall

Members Present: Andrea Folsom, Jim Fredyma, Ian Hart, Alexander Pooler, Steven Whitley
Members Absent: Louise Carr, Sam Delgado
Public Present: Bob Lapree, Katherine Mitchell
Staff Present: Anna Wells, *Economic Development Director*

CALL TO ORDER

Steven Whitley called the meeting to order at 6:10pm.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES from [July 26, 2023](#)

Andrea Folsom made a motion to approve the *Economic Development Committee minutes of July 26, 2023*. Jim Fredyma seconded. There was no discussion. **Motion passed 4-0.** (Mr. Hart had not yet arrived at the meeting.)

DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS

1. [Zoning Amendments](#)
Mr. Whitley began the discussion by explaining that from a regulatory standpoint this group has talked at length about how to enable development other than single-family housing. Applying the CCOD in other areas of Town, as the EDC is suggesting, advances that goal. Ms. Wells updated the Committee on the meeting the previous evening with the Conservation Commission, who had been notified of the EDCs proposal by the Planning Board as part of their new rules of procedure for proposed zoning amendments. The Conservation Commission recommended removing a parcel with potential conservation value from the suggested overlay around Exit 6, and recommended removing the overlay from all the land at Burnham Intervale. Following some discussion, the Committee agreed to remove the parcel from the Exit 6 area, as it is land-locked and comprised of significant wetlands. The Committee would like to continue to pursue overlaying the CCOD on the currently zoned M-1 land along Burnham Intervale in order to allow for more flexibility in developing that land. However, taking into consideration the Conservation Commission's concern with enabling development along the Contoocook River, the EDC agreed to remove from the recommendation two large lots that front the river and are within the flood zone and subject to an Army Corps flowage easement.
At this time, Mr. Hart joined the meeting.

Andrea Folsom made a motion to recommend to the Planning Board the proposal as written, but excluding from the suggested overlay lots 228-046, 228-008, and 228-009. Alexander Pooler seconded. Additional discussion by Andrea Folsom: the CCOD does not encroach on any federal regulations, nor does it guarantee development of any kind, it simply gives residents and developers more options. **Motion passed 4-0.** (Mr. Hart abstained as he was not present for the majority of the prior discussion.)

2. [TIF Districts Discussion](#)

The committee briefly discussed their suggestion that the Hart's Corner TIF Boundary be expanded to include the so-called Bio-Energy property along Maple Street across from the Rowell Covered Bridge. The Committee agrees that proposal should go to the Select Board to be placed on the warrant at Town Meeting. The TIF Plan would also need to be updated, so the group will look at the TIF Plan before the meeting on September 6 in order to discuss what changes might need to be made.

3. Review of [Strategic Objectives](#) and [2023 Ongoing Projects](#)

This discussion was tabled until the full board is present.

4. Committee Chair Discussion/Vote

Mr. Whitley is stepping down as Chair. Mr. Whitley nominated Mr. Hart as the new Chair, seconded by Andrea Folsom. There was no discussion. **Motion passed 5-0.**

The Committee members thanked Mr. Whitley for his service as Chair of this committee and thanked Mr. Hart for stepping up to take on this role. Mr. Hart's tenure will begin at the conclusion of this meeting.

UPDATES

1. Water/Sewer Expansion Update

Ms. Wells continues to meet with the Town's engineers to explore the scope and costs of expanding the water delivery system. She will continue to update the Committee.

2. [Downtowns & Trails](#) Update

Ms. Wells reported that the final interviews for the project have taken place and the team at UNH is now compiling their report. When a draft is ready, the D&T Steering Committee will have a chance to review and offer feedback. The final report will be shared community-wide once it is complete.

3. Grants Update

Ms. Wells updated the group on the status of the Walk Audits being supported by the AARP Community Challenge Grant. One has been completed and three more are now scheduled. Attendance was good at the first one and several people have signed up for the second on August 19. Two additional are scheduled for September 7 at 3pm and September 12 at 7:30am.

4. [Business Outreach](#) Update

Ms. Wells reported that she will continue to strategize with Ms. Carr and Mr. Delgado to reach out to more businesses to get their feedback through the survey. They were not able to coordinate prior to this meeting, however, so there is nothing to report at this time.

5. Other Board/Committee Updates (as necessary)

None at this time.

OTHER

Public Comment

Katherine Mitchell said she is disappointed in the vote about Burnham Intervale. She would like the changes to be more incremental. She also takes issue with building housing in the M-1 zone, saying that building houses in that area precludes industrial development and then puts residents near industrial uses, and those residents may not want further industrial development.

Bob LaPree explained that he does not want to put the CCOD over the M-1 district because it would dilute the ability for an industrial base. He doesn't want to lose land zoned M-1 to housing. He stated he believes Burnham Intervale was an ill-conceived industrial area to begin with because it does not have good highway access. But anything that is built there brings traffic through the village and kids to the schools. He stated the Towns has desperately needed industry for decades, but has been resisted for decades, and the Town is missing the opportunity to build an industrial base.

Mr. Whitley thanked the public for those comments and reiterated that this is not the final say on the issue, that these amendments will be suggested to the Planning Board and they will determine how to proceed.

Upcoming meetings: FIRST WEDNESDAY OF THE MONTH AT 6:00PM

September 6, 2023	6:00pm	Town Hall
October 4, 2023	6:00pm	Town Hall
November 1, 2023	6:00pm	Town Hall
December 6, 2023	6:00pm	Town Hall

ADJOURNMENT

Andrea Folsom moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Steven Whitley. There was no discussion.

Motion passed 5-0.

There being no other business to come before the committee, the meeting was adjourned at 7:25 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Anna Wells

Economic Development Director