



# Town of Hopkinton

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## **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

### **Public Meeting Minutes**

**Wednesday, May 17, 2023 – 5:30 P.M.**

*Hopkinton Town Hall*

**Members Present:** Louise Carr, Sam Delgado, Jim Fredyma, Ian Hart, Alexander Pooler, Steven Whitley

**Members Absent:** Andrea Folsom, Greg Sagris

**Public Present:** Bonnie Christie, Katherine Mitchell

**Staff Present:** Anna Wells, *Economic Development Director*

### **I. CALL TO ORDER**

Steven Whitley called the meeting to order at 5:32pm.

### **II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES from [April 19, 2023](#)**

Louise Carr made a motion to approve the *Economic Development Committee minutes of April 19, 2023*. Sam Delgado seconded. There was no discussion. **Motion passed 4-0** with two abstentions (Jim Fredyma and Ian Hart).

### **III. DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS**

#### **1. Water-Sewer Extension**

Ms. Wells updated the Committee that she met with engineers from the Town's engineering firm on May 12 and the Contoocook Village Precinct on May 15 to determine a path forward for extending water and sewer along Maple Street to serve properties within the Exit 6 TIF District. The Contoocook Village Precinct Commissioners would like to meet with the EDC at a future meeting over the summer to get an understanding of priorities and direction. Ms. Wells will continue communication with the Water and Sewer Superintendent, Sam Currier.

#### **2. [Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy](#) (CEDS) Project Priority List**

Ms. Wells informed the group that Central NH Regional Planning invited them to submit 1-2 additional priority projects. The group agreed that Ms. Wells would prepare a submission for the Re/Development of West Hopkinton (specifically the land in the Hart's Corner TIF District and stretching across the Dam at Hopkinton Lake to include the former paper mill site (including

brownfields assessment and potential cleanup). Louise Carr suggested contacting Bedford Corp to see if they already have done some cleanup and/or are interested in doing so. Ms. Wells said she would work on that. The Town may have an opportunity to submit another additional project; they will discuss this at the next meeting, prior to which Ms. Wells will re-share the CEDS project list, highlighting the ones that were already submitted.

3. [Community Heart & Soul Program](#)

Ms. Wells reported that the contact from Community Heart & Soul has reached back out to her to find out whether the group is interested in pursuing the process. The Committee revisited the idea of bringing the Heart & Soul Program to Hopkinton. Mr. Hart expressed his strong support of further exploring the program and agreed to look into it further and bring the discussion to the next meeting.

4. [Planning Board Meeting // Zoning Amendments Followup](#)

Chair Whitley gave an update on the Planning Board meeting of May 9. He reported that the Planning Board was generally receptive to the EDC's proposal(s), and that this is the beginning of a dialogue with them and he expects to have other opportunities to engage with them. The Planning Board is going to discuss their process the next time they meet as well as solicit input from other Town boards and committees. Ms. Carr and Mr. Fredyma were also in attendance. Ms. Carr reported that the Planning Board thought it would be helpful to have an understanding of what the buildout potential would be of the areas that might be included in the Commerce and Community Overlay District as suggested by the EDC. Ms. Wells will solicit the assistance of Central NH Regional Planning Commission to determine if that is feasible. Mr. Fredyma reported that the discussion encompassed preservation of water resources, both aquifers and surface water. He also expressed that it will be important to incorporate the work of the Housing Committee to ensure that any proposed amendments are not at odds with or go in a different direction than what they come up with. Mr. Whitley replied that the feeling of the EDC is that these suggestions are not counter to the work of the Housing Committee, in that there is general understanding of the lack of availability of housing generally, and that the suggestions of the EDC would be a step toward enabling more housing. Mr. Hart added that if water and land conservation is a concern, it is important to keep in mind that multifamily housing consumes less land and water per capita than single-family housing, and that newer construction is generally more efficient in its use of resources.

The Economic Development Committee looks forward to hearing from the Planning Board after they have had a chance to meet again.

#### **IV. [UPDATES](#)**

1. [Downtowns & Trails](#) Update

Mr. Whitley reported that the Steering Committee is engaging in intercept surveys and key informant interviews. This will last through May and into June.

2. [Hopkinton Housing Committee](#) Update // InvestNH HOP Grant

Ms. Carr reported that the Housing Committee met for the first time on May 4. The InvestNH Housing Opportunity Grant consultant met with Ivy Vann and went through the charge. She reported that several of the charges have already been completed or are underway by Ms. Vann as part of the grant. The group is scheduled to meet again the next day, at which time they plan to prioritize and strategize their work ahead. The second phase of the InvestNH grant is due on June 30, which Ms. Vann will assist the group to prepare. Finally, three members of the Housing Committee, including Ms. Carr are attending the ongoing Housing Academy.

3. Business Outreach Update

The Committee requested that Ms. Wells share the raw data from the business survey. She will send that to the group before the next meeting. The Committee also requested that the survey be shared on the Town Facebook page. Ms. Wells will coordinate with the Town Administrator to post that. The Committee also suggested sending reminder post card if responses are still not coming in.

4. Other Grants Update

Ms. Wells reported that the Town is a recipient of a small grant from AARP, which will be formally announced in June.

5. Other Board/Committee Updates (as necessary)

## V. PUBLIC COMMENT

Katherine Mitchell spoke about the degraded and dangerous condition of crosswalks on Main Street in Contoocook. Mr. Whitley thanked her for her comments and her concern and noted that the poor quality of the crosswalks and lack of pedestrian infrastructure was well-documented as part of the Downtowns & Trails Project field assessments. He will bring the request to repaint the crosswalks to the next Select Board meeting.

Bonnie Christie said that she is part of many environmental/natural resources-related groups and has emailed these other groups and other towns to find out if others are also dealing with housing issues. She reported that she has never gotten such an overwhelming response from an emailed question, and that all the responses confirmed that others are dealing with housing issues. She said she is now starting to grasp the severity and widespread nature of the housing crisis. Additionally, she spoke about whether upgrades to the Hopkinton-Webster Transfer Station could be entered into the CEDS project submissions. Ms. Wells replied that it may be possible if it can be described as a project with regional significance. The Committee will discuss this at their next meeting.

**Next EDC Meeting Date(s):**     **TBD**     @ Town Hall

Ms. Wells will email the Committee members a survey to determine the summer meeting schedule. The Committee will go to one meeting per month for the summer.

## **VI. ADJOURNMENT**

Ian Hart moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Sam Delgado. There was no discussion.

**Motion passed 6-0.**

There being no other business to come before the committee, the meeting was adjourned at 7:17 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Anna Wells

*Economic Development Director*