



# Town of Hopkinton

## Office of Select Board

330 Main Street, Hopkinton NH 03229-2627 - (603) 746-3170 – [www.hopkinton-nh.gov](http://www.hopkinton-nh.gov)

### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES

**Thursday, May 12, 2022 – 5:30 P.M.**  
**Hopkinton Town Hall (330 Main St.)**

**Members Present:** Andrea Folsom (by phone), Jim Fredyma, Greg Sagris, Steven Whitley  
**Member Absent:** Meredith Lee  
**Staff Present:** Anna Wells  
**Public Present:** none

#### CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Whitley called the meeting to order at 5:35pm in the Hopkinton Town Hall.

Steven Whitley made a motion, seconded by Greg Sagris, to allow Ms. Folsom to join the meeting remotely. There was no discussion.

#### ROLL CALL VOTE:

Jim Fredyma	Yes
Greg Sagris	Yes
Steven Whitley	Yes

MOTION PASSED 3-0.

#### APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM MARCH 23, 2022

Jim Fredyma made a motion, seconded by Greg Sagris, to approve the Economic Development Committee minutes of March 23, 2022. There was no discussion.

#### ROLL CALL VOTE:

Andrea Folsom	Yes
Jim Fredyma	Yes
Greg Sagris	Yes
Steven Whitley	Yes

MOTION PASSED 4-0.

#### UPDATES

##### 1. Contoocook Village / Riverway Park Improvements

Ms. Wells reported that she submitted an Intent to Apply form for the State's *Land and Water Conservation Fund* for improvements to Riverway Park, including but not limited to: developing a multi-use, ADA-accessible trail along the riverfront, connecting the covered railroad bridge to the existing railroad right-of-way at the far end of the property (this is a segment of the regional Concord-Lake Sunapee Rail Trail); repaving the municipal parking lot; refurbishing the green

space; and improving the boat launch. LWCF is a 50/50 matching grant program, and the match can include donated labor and materials. A pre-application site visit will be scheduled for early June, date TBD. Ms. Wells will inform the Committee when the date is set.

Ms. Wells also reported that she submitted requests to both Congresswoman Kuster and Senator Shaheen for *Congessionally Directed Spending*. One request was for upgrading the sewer pump station, the other was for improving the sidewalks in Contoocook Village. She heard from Kuster's office that the sewer pump station request would not move forward to the appropriations committee, but she has not yet heard from Shaheen's office about the sidewalk project.

## **2. Upcoming/recent grant submittals**

### **i.) NH Charitable Foundation Express Grant (May 6)**

Ms. Wells reported that she applied for an Express Grant from the NH Charitable Foundation for construction of an ADA-accessible pathway in George Park that would allow those with mobility issues to access the fields and facilities there.

### **ii.) NH DES Clean Water Revolving Fund Pre-Application (June 1)**

Ms. Wells explained that, as part of a different grant program, the Water and Wastewater systems in Contoocook both recently underwent an energy audit by NH Department of Environmental Services and Eversource. Because the sewer system is Town-owned and managed, whereas the water treatment system is managed by the Contoocook Precinct, only the sewer system will be addressed here. The recommended measures can be funded by the Clean Water Revolving Fund, which guarantees 50% loan forgiveness, possibly as much as 100%. The recommendations for the sewer system include smaller measures, such as programmable thermostats in the buildings, and more efficient motors for the blowers. One larger recommendation is to install a solar PV array to power the entire sewer system. Ms. Wells noted that the payback on such a measure is estimated at 16 years. But with 50% loan forgiveness, that is reduced to 8 years. The Committee agreed that this was a very good return on investment and should be pursued. Pre-application is the first step and does not oblige the Town to accept any funds. Further, because this is a revolving loan fund (not a grant), the funds would have to be accepted by a Town Meeting vote.

### **iii.) Recreational Trails Program (June 17)**

The Town will apply for funding to continue creating a section of the Concord-Lake Sunapee Rail Trail to connect the Houston Fields/Town Library area to Kearsarge Ave. Ms. Wells will attend the mandatory training on May 18 for parties submitting the RTP Grant Application. Ms. Wells explained that there is a portion of former rail bed currently owned by TDS that will be part of this project. That parcel of land will be transferred to Town ownership for \$1 in the very near future. The Town is very grateful to TDS for their assistance in moving this plan forward.

### **iv.) T-Mobile Hometown Grant (June 30)**

This grant is given quarterly for up to \$50k for anywhere that community comes together. Ms. Wells will apply for this grant in conjunction with the Land and Water Conservation Fund to refurbishing Riverway Park. If awarded, this grant money could be used as matching funds for the LWCF grant.

### 3. **New EDC website is live**

Ms. Wells reported that the EDC's new website, [www.ItsHappeningInHopkintonNH.com](http://www.ItsHappeningInHopkintonNH.com) is now live. The committee members should look through it carefully for feedback and changes. Ms. Wells suggested the group brainstorm a shorter URL for the site. The Committee will bring suggestions to the next meeting.

### 4. **Planning Board Initiatives Updates**

Wetlands Working Group – This group has met twice (Ms. Wells has not been able to attend) and is working toward changes to the wetlands setbacks regulations for Hopkinton. Ms. Robertson in the Planning/Zoning Department has kept Ms. Wells informed and it sounds like they are making good progress toward simplifying the regulations and protecting Hopkinton's natural resources.

Workforce/Affordable Housing – The Planning Board will be discussing this topic at their May 18<sup>th</sup> meeting. Ms. Wells will attend.

## **REVIEW OF EDC PRIORITY PROJECT LIST**

The Committee reviewed the list of Strategic Priorities as presented by Ms. Wells. The group decided that the document – in Google Doc form, so that it is live and updated in real time – would be posted on the EDC's website for all to see.

Ms. Wells presented the following new ideas:

#### i.) Business Survey

In order to further inform the EDC and Town's priorities around Business Retention and Growth, Ms. Wells proposes designing a survey for the existing businesses in town. The intent would be to determine whether businesses know about and are taking advantage of the various tax incentives in place in Hopkinton, whether they feel they are able to be successful in our community, and how the Town can better support them, if needed. The Committee encourages this effort. Mr. Fredyma noted that it will be particularly important to distinguish between issues and concerns that can be addressed by the Town versus those that fall under the purview of the State.

#### ii.) Contoocook Village TIF District

Ms. Wells suggested that the Town could build upon the success of the two existing TIF Districts (at Exit 6 and Hart's Corner) and create a third district encompassing Contoocook Village. The TIF District would be a mechanism for funding some much-needed infrastructure improvements and property-owner support in and around Contoocook Village. Committee members were generally supportive of the idea and had questions around what the physical boundaries would be, what percentage of the incremental tax income would go to the TIF fund, and what the timing would be for creating the TIF, as it would require Town Meeting approval.

With those questions in mind, Steven Whitley made a motion to investigate a Contoocook Village TIF District and bring the idea to the select board with a recommendation from the EDC that the Town continue to pursue it. Greg Sagris seconded the motion.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

Andrea Folsom	Yes
Jim Fredyma	Yes
Greg Sagris	Yes
Steven Whitley	Yes

MOTION PASSED 4-0.

iii.) National Main Street Program Membership

Ms. Wells suggested pursuing recognition as a Main Street America™ community. Main Street America™ is a program of The National Main Street Center (NMSC), a subsidiary of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Becoming a member of the National Main Street Center is the first step toward becoming a Main Street America designated community, which is a mark of distinction and a recognition of Hopkinton's "commitment to creating high-quality places and to building stronger communities through preservation-based economic development." The designation would allow Hopkinton to access resources (including funding and training) offered by the program. The Committee asked Ms. Wells to come to the next meeting with further details on cost and benefits.

iv.) "River-Friendly Business/Restaurant"

Ms. Wells reported that an idea had been presented to her regarding establishing a program to certify local establishments as "River-Friendly," modeled on the [Ocean Friendly Restaurant Program](#). The Committee is generally supportive of environmental efforts such as this and agrees with reducing use of single-use plastics, but at this time feels they don't have enough information about the specifics for this to be a Town program.

**II. OTHER**

Mr. Whitley explained to the group that he has been approached by a resident who is interested in finding a site for a mountain bike pump track. The Committee is supportive of the idea, and recognizes the value of recreational opportunities as a community and economic benefit. The Committee agreed with Mr. Whitley that this idea be discussed at the next meeting.

The next meeting of the EDC will be held on **Thursday, June 22 at 5:30 p.m.** in the Hopkinton Town Hall.

**III. ADJOURNMENT**

A motion to adjourn was made by Steven Whitley and seconded by Jim Fredyma. There was no discussion.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

Andrea Folsom	Yes
Jim Fredyma	Yes
Greg Sagris	Yes
Steven Whitley	Yes

MOTION PASSED 4-0.

There being no other business to come before the committee, the meeting was adjourned at 7:30pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Anna Wells, Economic Development Director