



Town of Hopkinton

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

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, September 19, 2022 – 5:30 P.M.

Hopkinton Town Hall

Members Present: Andrea Folsom, Ian Hart, Alexander Pooler, Greg Sagris, Steven Whitley
Members Absent: James Fredyma, Meredith Lee
Public Present: none
Staff Present: Anna Wells

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Whitley called the meeting to order at 5:30pm in the Hopkinton Town Hall.

ACTION ITEMS

1. Downtowns and Trails Program, UNH Extension

The Committee discussed participation in UNH Cooperative Extension's Downtowns and Trails Program. Ms. Wells provided the group with the following information:

- a) **What is it?** Partnership with UNH Cooperative Extension's Community & Economic Development team; process to gather data and explore actions that can be taken to better leverage natural assets for economic vibrancy.
- b) **Why do we need it?** Gain broader understanding from residents and visitors of how businesses can better serve those using the trails, and how to improve the trails and surrounding infrastructure to better accommodate trail users.
- c) **What is the deliverable?** Written report assessing and analyzing physical characteristics (including assets & opportunities) of the downtown and surrounding hiking, biking, walking, and paddling trails & other natural assets. Report includes recommendations and next steps for better connecting downtown and trails.
- d) **What is involved?** UNH helps to assemble a steering committee and trains community volunteers to gather data in 3 main ways: 1) interviews with key informants, business owners, & community leaders. 2) conduct brief and easy "intercept surveys" of residents and visitors using the trails; and 3) a community forum facilitated by UNH staff to share results and brainstorm potential actions.
- e) **How long does it take?** Roughly 6 months. To begin in Spring 2023.
- f) **What does it cost?** Total program fee is \$3,000. Ideally, this would be split two or three ways between EDC, Open Space/Trails, and Contoocook Chamber. (Ms. Wells is meeting with ConsComm on 9/21 and will ask them to partially fund also. Will schedule a time with the Chamber and/or have the EDC/Chamber members bring it to them.)

Following their discussion, Andrea Folsom made a motion to approve expenditure up to \$1,500 and to authorize the Economic Development Director to sign an MOU with Cooperative Extension to engage their services, contingent on securing the other \$1,500. Greg Sagris seconded the motion. **Motion passed 5-0.**

At this time, Mr. Whitley left the meeting.

2. Hopkinton Village Complete Streets Demonstration Project

The Committee discussed the idea of setting up the traffic calming/complete streets project to coincide with Halloween Trick-or-Treating. Concerns were expressed about changing the traffic patterns during a time when the area would be so heavily used by pedestrians, particularly in the evening. The committee suggested that Ms. Wells reach out to Chief Hennessy for his thoughts on timing around Halloween. Other suggestions were made to increase safety if it were done around that time, including setting it up a week ahead of time to give people time to get used to it, and also to possibly have a police officer present on Halloween night to direct traffic.

Ms. Wells plans to establish a budget for the project, which she expects to be minimal given that many resources would be donated or borrowed.

In order to efficiently carry out the project, Greg Sagris moved to establish a “Hopkinton Village Complete Streets Demonstration Project Subcommittee.” Ms. Folsom seconded. **Motion passed 4-0.**

3. 2023-2028 Capital Improvements Plan

The Committee discussed the importance of recommissioning the waster/sewer extension study that was done in 2018 to explore expansion of those utilities along Maple Street in the area of Exit 6. The Committee agreed that a current analysis with updated dollar figures and land uses should be undertaken. The full cost of that study would come from the TIF District Fund. Ian Hart moved to support the submission of a CIP project request to undertake a water/sewer extension feasibility study and cost analysis in 2023. Andrea Folsom seconded. **Motion passed 4-0.**

In addition, the Committee discussed the need to plan for a town-wide marketing and branding effort to unify the Town’s public identity and establish uniform design standards for signage and other branding opportunities that would attract and retain visitors and businesses to our town. Ms. Wells said she would look into the cost of such an effort and whether this would be a CIP request or more appropriate for the operating budget.

4. FY2023 Budget

The Committee discussed the FY2023 Economic Development Budget. The committee would like to change the “Community Relations” line to “Community Relations & Marketing,” and they would like to increase that line in order to a) allow the Committee to support additional community events in the future and b) fund increased marketing/outreach efforts to attract and retain people and businesses that would contribute to Hopkinton/Contoocook’s economic growth and health (including, among other efforts, wayfinding and signage). They also recommended increasing the “Professional Services” line in order to have the flexibility to engage partners, such as UNH Cooperative Extension, PlanNH, and others to collaborate on economic development efforts.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Andrea Folsom made a motion to approve the *Economic Development Committee minutes of September 6, 2022*. Ian Hart seconded. There was no discussion. **Motion passed 4-0.**

UPDATES

1. Discussion of Zoning/Policy Changes for 2023 Town Meeting

Ms. Wells gave a brief overview of the possible zoning changes she has been working on with Karen Robertson, Planning/Zoning Director. These would all be put forth by the Planning Board and be presented at public hearings in December.

- EDC-supported suggestions include:
 - i. TIF District Boundary Adjustments
 - ii. corrections to CCOD language
 - iii. application of CCOD to other areas
 - iv. adoption of [RSA 72:80](#) *Commercial and Industrial Property Tax Exemption*

2. Business Visitation and Survey

Ms. Wells reported that she is compiling a list of contact information for local businesses and creating materials to inform them of the existing tax incentives Hopkinton offers.

3. Grants update:

- RTP Grant (Kearsarge Ave-Library Connector Trail)
 - *approved* (\$73,432.80)
 - contingent on TDS land transfer, which is in process and nearing completion
 - trail to be constructed in Spring 2023
- WWTF (Sewer) Energy Audit Measures Implementation Grant & Loan
 - *pre-application approved* (\$250,000 in ARPA funds)
 - full application due January 31
 - if full application approved, solar array to be constructed in 2023 or 2024 at no cost to the Town and would provide all the electricity needed to power the sewer plant into the future.
- [T-Mobile Hometown Grant](#) (quarterly, next deadline September 30)
 - Ms. Wells is preparing this application to fund improvements in Riverway Park.

OTHER

Next Meeting Date(s): Monday, October 3 5:30pm @ Hopkinton Town Hall

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Folsom made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Hart. There was no discussion. MOTION PASSED 4-0.

There being no other business to come before the committee, the meeting was adjourned at 7:15pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Anna Wells, Economic Development Director