

ASHLAND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

MEETING MINUTES

May 26, 2015

6:30 pm

Ashland Fire Station

Steering Committee Members Present

Susan MacLeod, Cheryl Cox (Planning Board ex-officio), Steve Felton (Board of Selectmen ex-officio),

Absent with Notice

Jill White, Beno Lamontagne

Ad Hoc Committee Members Present

Lee Nichols, Superintendent (Ashland Electric Department)

Others present

Norm DeWolfe, Kathleen DeWolfe, Eli Badger

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm by Chairperson MacLeod.

Meeting Minutes

Steve Felton made a motion to accept the minutes from the April 27th meeting. The motion was seconded by Susan MacLeod. The motion carried 3-0.

Whitten Woods

Susan shared information about a Squam Lakes Conservation Society initiative called Whitten Woods. They are in the process of raising money, in conjunction with Squam Lakes Association and the NE Forestry Foundation to purchase the 414 acre parcel off of Highland Street in Ashland. All but \$100,000 of the asking price has been raised. This land is in current use (all but two acres) and has been for sale for several years. It has been considered for development in the past but due to steep slopes and other issues, development would be very costly. Eastern Adaptive Sports is also involved in this effort.

This would be a recreational multi use, free to the public area to be used for hiking, mountain biking, snowmobiling, etc. Some activities such as ATV use would not be allowed.

A lengthy discussion took place on the positives of this project for the town. It was agreed that Steve Felton on behalf of AEDC, would write a letter of support for this project, to be signed by other appropriate groups in town. SLCS will be doing a presentation on the project at the June 15 select board meeting to be followed by a community presentation on June 25.

Marketing Sub-committee Update

Members: Cheryl Cox, Jae Demers, Fran Newton, Lee Nichols, Jill White

Jae Demers has put together a plan to improve the appearance of the welcome to Ashland kiosks. If we update the kiosks, we need to ensure they are being updated and maintained. It is

understood by a few in attendance that someone at town hall was supposed to be managing these kiosks. We need to determine who should be charged with maintaining the kiosks. We can't rely on volunteers for this.

GIS Sub-committee Update

Members: Steve Felton, Michelle Roberts, Norm DeWolfe, Eli Badger

At the June meeting of the GIS Steering Committee, Michelle Roberts will be doing a presentation on the current status and next steps in the GIS mapping project. Other appropriate individuals and groups will be invited.

Land Available Sub-committee Update

Members: Susan MacLeod, Eli Badger Paul Branscombe, Lee Nichols

The effort to catalog all commercial and industrial properties is on-going.

General Discussion

In relation to land available, an email was received by the AEDC email from Robert Epp owner of Top Glides (<http://topglides.net>) in early May requesting assistance in finding a suitable location for his e-commerce business. He lives in Ashland and has a storage facility in Holderness. He is looking for a 2500 square foot facility for storage in Ashland . He hasn't had any success after contacting several property owners. Lee Nichols offered to contact Andrew Lane in regard to property he has available.

Freudenberg-NOK Visit

Lee Nichols, Norm DeWolfe and Cheryl Cox visited Freudenberg on May 12. It was a very encouraging visit. See attached email for a summary of the visit.

Additional Business Visits and/or Topics

Lee and Norm had visited Rochester Shoe Tree earlier in May. That was also a very productive meeting. Lee Nichols will look into setting up a tour of the El Packo building.

Lee has also reached out to Alex Ray to perhaps meet with him at some point in the future.

Ashland Antiques is moving. The building recently sold and it is not known if that is the reason for the move.

Out of State Property Owners/Parking Issues

Most of the mill buildings, as well as others in town are owned by people living in other parts of NH or who live out of state. It would be beneficial to try to engage them in the discussion on use of the buildings and parking concerns.

There are parking concerns with single family houses being divided into apartments, creating additional parking needs. Parking by residents at the town hall is an issue, particularly in winter. It was suggested that the town put a moratorium on allowing single family properties being divided into apartments. The minimum size of 750 square feet for a dwelling unit may also need to be re-evaluated.

A site plan review is required for any increase in the number of residential units in a multi-family dwelling. The building inspector should be communicating this appropriately.

Parkway

A discussion took place about Parkway, a street near the intersection of Hill and Mill streets, and whether it is owned by the town or not. This is one area that could be utilized for parking. We should determine the ownership of this area.

EDA Grant Application

EDA grants require matching funds. Matching funds may include money already spent and the labor costs of working on a specific project. If the GIS project is to be part of EDA grant request, we will need to determine how much has already been “spent” on the GIS project.

All grants require a solid business plan. The main need for EDA grant is to get the resources to bring in a consultant with the expertise to develop a long term plan for what we would like to accomplish, as we define those goals. The things we need to consider:

- GIS mapping
- zoning and ordinance changes to ensure best use of land available
- parking issues
- Main Street clean up
- mill area rehab
- lower village
- West Street, Cedar Lane potential
- marketing Ashland as a place to live, work and play
- attractive signage

Steve Felton will put together a summary of what our goals are and schedule Glenn Copleman to come to the June meeting. The plan will be to at least begin completing the EDA grant application at this meeting.

Correspondence

Susan received a request from David Toth, asking that someone who is on the Planning Board and the AEDC to become a member of the town TAC, Transportation Advisory Committee. This will be discussed further at the next Planning Board meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:31 pm.

The next meeting will be held on Monday, **June 29, 2015 at 6:30 pm** at the Ashland Fire Station, ***unless notified otherwise.***

Minutes submitted by Cheryl Cox