

ASHLAND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

MEETING MINUTES

January 25, 2016

6:30 pm

Ashland Fire Station

Steering Committee Members Present

Susan MacLeod, Cheryl Cox (Planning Board ex-officio), Steve Felton (BOS ex-officio), Benoit Lamontagne

Ad Hoc Committee Members Present

David Toth (Water & Sewer Commissioner), Kathleen DeWolfe (Conservation Commission), Jae Demers, Eli Badger (Housing Standards Board)

Ad Hoc Committee Members Absent

Lee Nichols, Superintendent (Ashland Electric Department)

Others present

Fran Newton, Anthony Adamsky and Max Corbett, co-owners of the Quince & Quail at 25 Main Street

The meeting was called to order at 6:32 pm by Chairperson MacLeod.

Northern Pass Intervenor Status

An overview was given of the status of the Northern Pass project and how the proposed route would affect Ashland by Susan MacLeod. Filing for intervenor status allows the town to intervene in the Site Evaluation Committee's review of the application for the 192-mile line, which includes placing several 85-100 foot towers in the Ashland town lagoon and town well areas. The SEC is a nine-member body established by State law to review applications from large energy facilities to site a project in New Hampshire. This review, to be conducted by the SEC and accepted interveners, will take place following the required public information sessions and public hearings on the Northern Pass project. The deadline to apply for intervenor status is Feb. 5.

Steve Felton and Susan MacLeod have written a letter on behalf of the BOS, the Planning Board and the Economic Development Committee to be submitted as part of the intervenor application process. Eli Badger has written a letter on behalf of the Water and Sewer Department. Kathleen DeWolfe reported that the Conservation Commission has written and submitted a separate letter. The hearings to be held by the SEC (sight evaluation committee) are expected to take place in March. Walter Durack has agreed to attend the hearing on behalf of the Conservation Commission and the town.

Marketing Sub-committee

The Marketing sub-committee will be focusing on efforts to purchase a new "Welcome to Ashland" sign. The hope is to have similar looking signs to point to the lower village and for Memorial Park. It was mentioned that there is a sign in storage that had years ago hung over what is now Route 3. It is very large and would be more of a historical item that could be used at

some point. The plan is to continue to engage the businesses in community events. The 2016 celebration of the Rueben Whitten story, “the year without a summer” is an opportunity to involve local businesses. The Garden Club has been making plans for the celebration and the Marketing sub-committee could assist. Jae Demers, and others shared ideas for a town wide celebration that could take place in the summer months. Ideas for events such as an art walk, a “first Friday” event

General Discussion

On overview of what the EDC has been doing was given for the benefit of Mr. Adamsky and Mr. Corbett. A general discussion about empty storefronts, asking rental prices and ideas how to bring new businesses into town took place. A discussion about issues and concerns related to the mill building that the town is seeking the Brownfields grant for also took place.

New Sub-committee

Steve Felton, on behalf of the BOS, asked that a grants sub-committee be formed as part of economic development. The first task for the group would be to develop a clear plan of action for the mill building for which the town was seeking the Brownfields grant. A well defined plan that outlines the assessment, cleanup and future plans for the building is required to be considered for grant money.

Eli Badger volunteered for the new committee. Other members are Steve Felton, Mardean Badger and Heather Thibodeau.

ATAC

The town received a complaint about safety concerns on N. Ashland Road. As discussed by David Toth, the Ashland Transportation Advisory Committee (ATAC) is looking into it and researching actions to correct the concerns.

Meeting Minutes

Steve Felton made a motion to accept the meeting minutes of November 23 and the motion was seconded by Beno Lamontagne. The motion passed. The minutes from December 28 did not require a formal approval as there was not a quorum at the meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:02 pm.

The next meeting will be held on **Monday, February 22 at 6:30 pm** at the Ashland Fire Station, ***unless notified otherwise.***

Minutes submitted by Cheryl Cox