

Town of Fairfield

Office of Community & Economic Development

Minutes of Economic Development Commission Meeting

May 12, 2011

The Economic Development Commission of the Town of Fairfield held a meeting on May 12, 2011 at 8:00 a.m. in the Old Town Hall Conference Room.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Peter Penczer, Chairman; Sally Ward; Chris LaSala; Maureen Abrahamson, Bruce Manasevit; Abbas Nadim

ALSO PRESENT: Mark Barnhart, Director of Community and Economic Development; Don Peterson; Lisa Joaquim

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order at 8:07 a.m.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of March 10, 2011 were approved.

Commerce Drive Planning Study

Mr. Barnhart said that those attending the public hearing on the zoning changes spoke favorably about the plan. The TP&Z consequently approved the amendments. Later this month, they will meet to establish boundaries for the proposed zone.

Train Station Project

Mr. Barnhart said there is some difficulty in getting cooperation from UI to bury utilities under the access road. Some additional PCB's have been found and that problem has been resolved. Remediation work is continuing on schedule. The state anticipates an opening as early as mid-October 2011.

Mr. Barnhart said Black Rock Realty is in the process of obtaining permits for the concourse building. It is anticipated that footings will be poured and, if a prospective tenant signs soon, further work will commence. Mr. Manasevit asked if this work would impede commuter parking on the site. Mr. Barnhart said there might be some disruption but that he expects the developer to work with the state and town so there would be as little inconvenience for travelers as possible.

Mr. Barnhart said Whole Foods was given permission to have a job fair in Old Town Hall and that it was well managed and attended. The store is expected to open June 3.

The intern from the University of New Hampshire will start work in the department in early June. As envisioned currently, she will work on developing a matrix to be used by the EDC in determining what development to support (how sustainable are they?) and to provide outreach to other groups in town vis a vis sustainability. Dr. Nadim offered to lead a workshop to help small businesses develop a sustainability plan for themselves. Mr. Barnhart asked Dr. Nadim to send him a 1-page summary of the proposed workshop.

OTHER BUSINESS

Ms. Abrahamson asked if there were new tenants for the Border's space. Mr. Barnhart said he understood the developers would like to have tenants that would expand the café area and bring in complimentary businesses. He said there have been many inquiries about the space.

The status of the Community Theater was discussed. Mr. Penczer said there were some plans but they were not substantial enough to be discussed yet.

The meeting adjourned at 8:55 a.m.

The next meeting is June 2, 2011.

Respectfully submitted:

Gretchen Goethner