



TOWN OF
BROOKLINE, NEW HAMPSHIRE

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Brookline
Economic Development Advisory
Committee

Monday January 14, 2013 meeting
6:30 pm – Brookline Town Hall

Attended the meeting:

Dana MacAllister, Planning Board Co-Chair
Ron Pelletier, Planning Board
John Carr, Selectmen Representative
Tad Putney, Town Administrator
Susan Adams, Resident

Melanie Levesque, Resident
Gale Taylor, Resident
Donna Marsh, Resident
Valérie Maurer, Town Planner

Also in attendance: **Rich Vertullo**, Recreation Committee and **Dr. Margaret Monachelli**, Brookline Veterinary Hospital

Rich Vertullo, Recreation Committee

The Committee thanked Rich for attending tonight's meeting. The discussion was mainly focused on the Old Home Days organized each year in July/August. **Rich** explained that some Committee members' term expires in March and they are not planning on running again. That leaves only him to take care of everything right now. **Rich** said that it is more and more difficult to find residents to be on Committees but an alternative would be to have people volunteer for one project, not committing for 3 years.

Rich said that right now, he would like to get an Old Home Day Committee, try to isolate the event, find a group of people who would try to mirror what Hollis does. The goal is to bring vendors in. Rich already booked the Carnival to make sure they would be here in the summer. He had to make the decision early even if nothing else is planned yet.

There is a \$50 fee for setting up and promote their business. If vendors are selling goods, the fee is a percentage of their sales.

Sue said that one of the Economic Development's members could be the liaison and meet with the (recreation) Committee to try to make this happen. **Rich** said that people have great ideas but we need people to follow through.

Valerie suggested putting a survey together to ask residents what they would like to see / have at the Old Home Days, besides what was done before. **Melanie** said that she did not recall seeing advertizing asking for help. **Ron** said that in Hollis, as soon as their Old Home Days are over, they start working right away on the next; it is a long process and a lot of planning. **Rich** said that we need to reach out and he has been working on it.

Sue said that she would like to volunteer to be the liaison with the Recreation Committee.

Margaret Monachelli, Brookline Veterinary Hospital

Tad thanked Margaret for taking the time to meet with us tonight. It is important for the Committee to get feedback from Brookline Business Owners and our goal is to meet one on one with them and see what we can do to help to promote their business. **Margaret** introduced her business and the reasons she chose Brookline. After **Tad** asked about her concerns, challenges, **Margaret** said that her experience with the Town / Town Departments was very positive and easy. She felt very welcome by the Planning Board as well as her neighbors. One thing that could be improved is the sign ordinance because she was limited with the dimension, but because she is on a corner lot, she was able to put a larger sign visible from Route 13, although, she could not add lights because of the lighting restriction in the regulations and her large sign was not designed to have lights mounted on it.

Dana said that the Planning Board has been discussing reviewing the sign ordinance for a while and is planning on amending it for March 2014. **Valerie** said that she has worked on proposed new wording and the Board will discuss this on Thursday night.

Margaret said that she gets the feeling from other people that we do not know what type of business the town wants. We need to set goals. **Valerie** explained that during the past few years, several surveys, forums, town meetings were organized and town residents were asked to express their preference on the type of business they would like to see. One thing many people want is to be able to do their shopping in town. **Melanie** concurred and added that what people would like is to have a walkable town center and not to have to drive out of town each time they need something.

The discussion continued on what Margaret did to promote her business. She had cards made offering 50% off the first visit that were distributed to all Brookline residents. This worked quite well. Also, she had some of her former clients who followed her here. She put her first add in *The Brookliner* recently. **Margaret** said that having businesses listed on the town website would help as well.

Margaret also expressed some interest in joining the Committee as a Business Owner. **Valerie** will add Margaret to the distribution list when sending agendas, etc.

Gale Taylor – Draft Article to be published.

Gale handed the press release she has drafted for everyone to review. Discussion took place on whether or not publishing it in local newspaper. It might be a little bit late after the roundtable that took place in October. Maybe modify it to promote what the Group has been working on since then. Also, it would be a good idea to add ideas about the surveys' results (type of businesses, what people in town want, etc.). **Tad** asked Gale to email him the press release and he will update it, and then email it back to everyone for review. Everyone thanked Gale for working on this.

Time Table

Tad went through the to-do list with the group:

- Economic Development page / new website – **Tad** and **Valerie** are working on it. New website should be up and running sometimes in February
- Incentive for business development – **Tad** is looking into it
- Sign Ordinance – as discussed, **Valerie** and **Ron** are following up. Next P.B. meeting on Thursday night. **Valerie** said that still thinks that involving business owners would be valuable.

- Invite business owners, individually, to our meetings – **Melanie** will contact Danielle Beaudette and Spiros Gerekos for January 28 meeting. **Tad** also talked to Don Hoard interested to attend and has flexibility for any meeting.
- Packets to new residents – At next meeting **Melanie** will bring what the Women's Club currently has and see what we can add to it.
- Business Award Program – On hold for now.
- Packets for Businesses – **Valerie** has been working on it and emailed all members with first draft. Information about Schools and population data will be added.
- Recreation Commission – **Sue** has earlier on during the meeting volunteered to be the liaison with the Group.
- Identify Ombudsman – **Dana** will talk to Darrell Philpot, Selectmen.
- Garden Club, town beautification (flowers / signs) – **Melanie** will talk to them.
- Meeting with the Selectmen – **Tad** will see if February 19 works
- Survey Residents – On hold for now. Look at previous surveys' results first.
- Identify regional/state resources – **Melanie** is looking into it.
- 4th of July Parade – Encourage businesses to have floats, banners, etc... Maybe have a separate contest (from the Lions Club) – To be further discussed. EDAG also could have one float
- New Item: NH 2013 Business Expo – Date is October 17, 2013.

The Action Items / Deliverable spread sheet will be updated and forwarded to all members.

Souhegan Valley Chamber of Commerce / 2013 Business Expo – Update. **Valerie** said that she filled out the paperwork for the Town to become a Member of the Chamber of Commerce and to participate at the Business Expo in the October.

Next Meeting

Next meeting will be held on Monday January 28, 2013 at 6:30 pm at the Town Hall – **Valerie** will email the agenda to business owners who attended the Roundtable in October.

Meeting adjourned at 8:25 pm

Submitted by Valérie Maurer