



**TOWN OF
BROOKLINE, NEW HAMPSHIRE**

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**Brookline
Economic Development Advisory
Committee**

Tuesday August 14, 2012 meeting
6 pm – Brookline Auction Gallery

Attended the meeting:

Dana MacAllister, Planning Board Representative

Ron Pelletier, Planning Board Representative

Melanie Levesque, Resident

Susan Adams, Resident

Tad Putney, Town Administrator

Timothy Stetson, Intern

Valérie Maurer, Town Planner

Also Present:

Bill Parker, Milford Community Development Director

Dan Reidy, UNH Cooperative Extension, Community & Economic development and County Office Administrator

Charlie French, UNH Cooperative Extension, Program Team Leader, Community and Economic Development

Robin Katz, Resident

Ed Deely, Nashua Resident

6:10 pm – **Dana** invited **Bill Parker**, Milford Community Development Director, to the meeting to talk about the effort *to develop a long-range plan to guide Milford's economy*.

Bill distributed a packet containing the letter sent to business owners inviting them to a Roundtable, the report from the Roundtable and the recommendation to "*Foster Economic Development in Milford*" to the Selectmen and Planning Board.

Bill went over the documents and explained that the Milford Committee tried to get larger businesses to be part of the Committee, as well as younger entrepreneurs. Among participants at the Roundtable, about 15 volunteers offered their time. A couple of years later, recommendations were made focusing on Land Use, Town Services, Marketing and Communication and School District/Business/Municipal relationship.

Milford now has a Community Development Council including business owners that meets regularly and that has split in two groups focusing on -1. Improving the communication between departments and -2. Looking at zoning and land use and working with the Planning Board.

Bill explained that they are now going to work on a survey and probably will use the one that **Tim** put together for Brookline. The Community Development is looking at having Entry Ways, Gateways for the town and wants to identify what makes Milford a special town.

Tad asked if there was any key learning from the Roundtable. **Bill** said that they “selected” who to invite and opted not to send a general invitation to everyone; we personally invited people. We had builders, industrial people, restaurants, farmers and businesses such as Chappell Tractors, Ciardelli and Hitchiner attended. We were pleasantly surprised to see so much interest the Roundtable received and it was a very good listening session. We had food and it was a two-hour meeting.

Everyone thanked Bill for attending the meeting and for the valuable information he provided tonight.

6:40 pm – **Tad** introduced **Charlie French** and **Dan Reidy** from UNH Cooperative Extension. **Tad** said that he has been in contact with Charlie to see if Brookline could get assistance with the Business Forum that the Committee is planning for the fall.

Charlie said that UNH Cooperative Extension has a new program that focuses on civic engagement and dialogue. UNHCE provides technical support to businesses and industries as well as assistance to communities. For example, we look at the properties of the town and see what type of businesses would be interesting to target, based on the traffic and other components. We can help building the capacity of a community and leaders, help making informed decisions. **Dana** described the Brookline Economic Development Advisory Committee to Charlie and Dan which gave them more information on how the group is organized. **Tad** said that Economic Development is not going to reduce taxes as some people might think. Economic Development is employment opportunities and shopping opportunities.

Ed Deely said that in some areas, the building setback could be reduced to allow more flexibility to build more parking or larger building for new businesses. **Charlie** said that the goal is to get input from people but also engage them to participate, do the work. It should not be only the committee job.

Another topic brought was the grant the town received for the Mixed Use Zoning that was refused by the Selectmen.

Tad resumed the previous discussion, saying that the Committee needs to build a momentum. We need to know how to help and attract businesses, how to create job opportunities.

Charlie said that when you have people trained, they also need to be structured. **Tad** said that the Committee needs UNHCE to help to follow through.

Dana said that he would like to invite business people during the Forum versus residents who might be opposed to businesses in general. **Sue** said that the Committee needs to keep the Selectmen informed if we want to be successful.

The Committee agreed to do the following:

- Have business owners participating at the first Forum/Roundtable
- Send surveys to businesses

- Hold another Roundtable with a broader community.

Charlie explained that they had also some constraints and asked what timing the Committee had in mind to conduct the Roundtable. **Melanie** said that the goal was to have the session in the first half of November. **Charlie** suggested having the business only Roundtable and work on the surveys, then set up an educational presentation to the public. **Dan** asked what type of expectation the Committee wanted to create for the business owners by having the forum; the Committee needs to be clear.

One suggestion was to also hand the survey to business owners going to the town hall so they can provide input.

Charlie asked who would drive the information. **Tad** said that he would as he would be the liaison between other town Committees and Departments.

After **Melanie** asked, **Charlie** and **Dan** explained how their work is funded but there would be some cost to the town such as administrative tasks that are not covered by State/Federal grants.

Charlie said that the objective is to frame expectations from people you want to attend the Roundtable.

Tad said that he would be in touch with Charlie and Dan and would keep the Committee informed.

Because it was noted that John Carr has not attended any meeting yet, **Tad** said that he would talk to the Board of Selectmen and see who on the Board will attend the Committee's meetings if John is not available the nights we are meeting.

The Committee thanked Charlie and Dan for attending tonight's meeting and is looking forward to working together.

Next steps, next meeting

Survey – The Committee agreed on having a September 07, 2012 deadline for the surveys to be returned. **Tad** asked for his contact information to be added to the survey so people return it directly to him. **Tim** will call Businesses, collect emails and phone numbers and will email the complete, updated business list to the Committee. Once we have the information, surveys will be emails to businesses. This will be the most efficient/quick way to reach out to people and get input back from them.

The survey will also be put on the Website.

Next meeting will focus on the October Business Forum preparation and look at the answers to the survey that we will receive by then. Members will meet on Tuesday August 28th at 6:00 pm. The Committee thanked **Ron** for again offering to host the next meeting at his facility.

Dana asked if Committee wanted to look at its structure, nominate a Chair, etc. as stipulated in the Charter. It was decided to wait until after the Roundtable; we may have more participants after the forum. It was decided that the Roundtable would take place on Tuesday October 30, 2012.

Sue said that, as discussed at the last meeting, she contacted the owners of the vacant commercial property on Route 13 to see what stopped them from continuing with the proposed development. She talked to John Lorden who explained that, beside the bad economy, the main concerns he heard from potential tenants were the lack of sewers, the amount of traffic and they

want stop/street lights. They are still in contact with interested people but they all want an anchor store before starting anything in Brookline. **Sue** will continue to communicate with John Lorden. **Melanie** said that she would talk to TD Bank regarding the upcoming Forum.

Meeting adjourned at 8:25 pm

Next Meeting will be held on Tuesday August 28, 2012 at 6:00 pm at the Brookline Auction Gallery 34 Proctor Hill Road (Route 130, at the Hollis border).

Submitted by Valérie Maurer

Dates to remember:

Surveys are due back on September 07, 2012

Roundtable to be held on October 30, 2012