



1 **TOWN OF NORTH HAMPTON, NEW HAMPSHIRE**
2 **NORTH HAMPTON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

3 **SEPTEMBER 26, 2019 5:00 PM**

4 **NORTH HAMPTON TOWN HALL**

5 ***DRAFT MINUTES***

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8 EDC MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman Richard Luff, Vice-Chair Jeff Hillier, Jonathan Pinette, Glenn Martin,
9 Select Board Rep Kathleen Kilgore, Heritage Commission Rep Nancy Monaghan, Planning Board Rep Phillip
10 E. Wilson, Renee Locke, Leszek Stachow, David Cicalone

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12 EXCUSED: Gary Stevens
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14 **AGENDA**

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16 Chairman Richard Luff called the September 26, 2019 Economic Development Committee Meeting to
17 order at 5:00 pm, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

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19 Chairman Luff said this meeting was a review session to bring new members up to date.
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21 **Review of Major Projects**

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23 **Results of Town Survey** – Nancy Monaghan

24 Ms. Monaghan said the Committee needed to find out what the citizens of North Hampton wanted, and
25 a survey was contracted out to UNH. She reviewed the results of the survey and said the number one
26 priority of citizens was to reduce taxes (68%). She said they put high priority on preserving the rural
27 character of the Town, wanted more small businesses and restaurants on Route 1, and favored the Rail
28 Trail, increased recreational opportunities for residents, and the preservation of historic buildings. She
29 said 73% of citizens felt maintaining the rural character of North Hampton was more important than
30 economic development
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38 Ms. Monaghan said the survey was also sent out to businesses and they agreed with residents on many
39 things, favoring small locally-owned businesses, restaurants, medical facilities and the Rail Trail. She said
40 both agreed that the top 2 things about North Hampton were the ocean environment and the rural
41 atmosphere, and both agreed on preserving the aquifer, wetlands, forests, and historic buildings in the
42 Town. She said the long-term priority for businesses was that economic development was more important
43 than preserving the rural climate of North Hampton, and felt giving tax breaks, having fewer regulations,
44 and cleaning up Route 1 were ways to make North Hampton more attractive to businesses.

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46 Mr. Wilson said there was a difference between rural character and rural characteristics, and said the
47 vision for a Village Center was an attempt to try to preserve rural characteristics while doing more to
48 promote the kind of economic development residents wanted.

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50 **Village Statement and Village Center Concept – Phil Wilson**
51 Mr. Wilson said the purpose of the Village Center Concept was to articulate a reasonable, aggressive 10-
52 year goal for economic development initiatives in North Hampton, integrating residents' desires and
53 preferences. He said it provides a set of principles for planning that agrees with the Town Master Plan
54 Vision and lays the foundation for an Economic Development Chapter in the Master Plan.

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56 Mr. Wilson said the sources were the EDC resident survey and review of prior surveys, sewer feasibility
57 study, buildout analysis to assess tax effects, the UNH Business Engagement & Retention study, and the
58 Visioning Session with EDC members facilitated by Rockingham Planning Commission (RPC). He said the
59 sewer study came up with a compact system to serve a certain area and the buildout study needed to be
60 refined.

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62 Mr. Wilson said the Village Center concept was a commitment to develop and execute a plan with the
63 collaboration of all "stakeholders", and to review zoning ordinances and subdivision regulations for
64 necessary amendments. He said the Village Center in North Hampton has clear criteria for parking and
65 provisions for pedestrians and site planning, and said mixed use is allowed under certain conditions in the
66 IBR only. He said the Vision Statement was composed based on valid surveys, in-house studies by
67 members, and the experience, wisdom and judgment of EDC members

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69 **Business Retention Survey Results – Kathleen Kilgore**
70 Ms. Kilgore said after the Town-wide survey was completed, UNH Cooperative was contacted about
71 moving forward with Economic Development and re-engaging the Economic Development Committee in
72 North Hampton. She said they contacted the UNH Business Engagement & Retention Program, and Jim
73 Better was able to get UNH to partner with the Town and have the \$2,500 fee waived. She said this got
74 them out into the business community establishing a rapport with businesses.

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76 Ms. Kilgore said they interviewed about 20 different businesses with questions developed by UNH which
77 led to an open dialog so the Committee could understand their concerns. She said this became the basis
78 for the Committee's Fishbone Diagram put together by Mr. Wilson, which was their guiding document.
79 She said she hoped they could re-engage some of the people interviewed as it was an important part of
80 the Economic Development of North Hampton moving forward, and said she was excited about the
81 potential of the Rail Trail for businesses.

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Route 1 Landowner Contact List Review – Glenn Martin

Mr. Martin said the Inventory Sub-Committee assigned approximately 98 contacts per person to obtain contact information. He said they eventually settled on the Village District, but data was also collected for properties north and south of the area. He said there were 57 lots which they increased to include rear lots off Lafayette Road, and lots on the Atlantic Avenue side and on South Road. He said invitations were written and sent out to property owners, and said some residential areas were included in the IBR zone.

Chairman Luff asked if the document would be used by the Town for other things. Ms. Kilgore recommended that it be kept up quarterly and said NHBA would help them stay relevant with updated information. Mr. Wilson felt the document should be integrated into Town Administration as a process and they should inquire about who could be responsible for updating.

Chairman Luff asked how the specific district of Hobbs Road to Cedar Road was defined. Ms. Monaghan said it was originally Cedar to Atlantic Avenue and then extended to Hobbs. Mr. Martin said it would make a difference to property owners on the opposite side of the street if zoning changes were made. Mr. Wilson said the selection of the area was purely judgmental as the Committee wanted a “doable” proposition, and said businesses on each end would benefit.

Discuss Incomplete Objectives

Plan to fill Empty Storefronts

Ms. Monaghan said it was originally the idea of Jim Better to go to the Select Board for appropriation to hire a consultant or a person for part-time position to work toward filling empty storefronts. Ms. Kilgore said Town Administrator Kaenrath was a key point person to economic development in his former position in Maine and would probably have a lot to add to the conversation. Mr. Wilson asked to what extent it was the Town’s responsibility and said they needed to decide what they were really talking about.

Ms. Monaghan said nobody wants to see empty storefronts and said part of the conversation was to identify what business people want in North Hampton and get it. Mr. Martin said they previously had an economic person on the staff who represented all commercial owners and had a hand on the pulse of what was going on in the community. He said he was not averse to seeing what grouping with Hampton for Economic Development would do and asked the invitation to John Nyhan to be put back on the agenda.

Business Retention Program

Ms. Kilgore said there had been comments about broadband and internet service in North Hampton. She felt they should stay in connection with existing Businesses and provide them with a copy of the report of this program. Chairman Luff said the responsibility of the Town is to create the baseline for attracting businesses to come to North Hampton, but the Committee is not charged with implementation. He said Ms. Kilgore is saying they that the Committee needs to follow up to get business feedback and buy-in for this project. Ms. Kilgore said she would draft a cover letter to send with copies of the Business Retention Survey.

125 Mr. Wilson said he agreed they needed to follow up on the Business Retention Survey, and said they
126 should try to find 3 improvements that would help businesses thrive. He said his first two would be to
127 increase broadband and lower it costs and do something to improve poor cellphone service.
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129 Mr. Martin said it was important going forward that as many EDC members as possible be present at for
130 their next meetings, said he would distribute the stakeholder list to all members. Chairman Luff asked Ms.
131 Kilgore to email the last mail list to the Committee. Mr. Martin also asked for a copy of the letter that
132 went out to property owners.
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134 **Tax Impact of Fully Developed Route 1**

135 Ms. Monaghan said Joe Bernardo originally did an analysis of the tax impact of developing every vacant
136 lot of a certain size on Route 1, specifically what that would do for residents, and said the answer was very
137 little. She said the Committee did not see how they could do an Economic Development Plan that would
138 reduce taxes, and since then a review of that study was done by Mr. Ferraro. Mr. Wilson said in the gross
139 assessed value, Mr. Bernardo had left out the School rate which understated the amount of revenue that
140 would be received. He said it would require further refinement as neither analysis took into account that
141 starting development would increase municipal costs.
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143 Mr. Stachow said he was asked to look into infrastructure needs for business development, focusing on
144 sewer, to see if that would facilitate business development. He said a lot of interviews took place with
145 water and wastewater districts nearby and with experts in the field to look at some of the problems the
146 Town would face moving in the direction of sewer infrastructure, both to protect Town aquifers and look
147 at how business development might help promote that, and felt investigating the issue was worth
148 pursuing. He said the Department of Environmental Services in Concord had also offered to explore
149 possibilities with the Town and how the State might be of assistance.
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151 Ms. Monaghan said at some point the Committee needs to have the sewer discussion and settle it. Mr.
152 Stachow said they needed to use resources available to be better informed, and Mr. Wilson recommended
153 the Committee invite a member of DES to come and talk with them. Mr. Pinette mentioned an article
154 about tidewater rising and the towns and municipalities that were at risk who do not have town sewer.
155 He said they may want to utilize this study about the safety of aquifers and water systems.
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157 Mr. Stachow said in that report DES mentioned North Conway needing to switch very quickly to sewer.
158 Mr. Wilson said they did not have septic inspection or a pumping regimen, which was recommended by
159 Underwood Engineers for North Hampton in 1995 and never acted on. He said with the Coastal Hazard
160 Mitigation Study the unique problem for North Hampton would be the astronomical cost to provide sewer
161 that serves the flooding side of Town.
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163 **Approval of Minutes of September 4, 2019**

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165 **Motion:** To Approve the minutes of the Economic Development Committee Meeting of September 4,
166 2019.

167 **Motioned:** Mr. Pinette

168 **Seconded:** Mr. Stachow

169 **Vote:** Motion approved 9-0 (Mr. Hillier had already left the meeting.)

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Any other Item that May Legally come before the Committee

Next Meeting: The next regular Economic Development Committee Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, November 6, 2019 at 5:00 pm.

Adjournment

Chairman Luff adjourned the meeting at 6:34 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Denmark, Recording Secretary

DRAFT