Town of Greenfield, NH

7 Sawmill Road, Greenfield, NH 03047
ph: (603) 547-3442
fx: (603) 547-3004

Economic Development Advisory Committee Amended Minutes 06-16-2014

Economic Development Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes/Broadband Info Meeting
Recorded by Sharon Rossi
June 16, 2014

Members present: AWood, NNickerson, PRenaud, JMoran

Also Attending: Sue Corcoran, Project Manager, NH Broadband Mapping & Planning Program
Carol Miller, DRED, Director of Broadband Technology
Andre Garron, UNH Cooperative Extension Specialist, Regional Economic Development
Steve Waleryszak, Southwest Region Planning Commission
Jerry Hunter, CMRC, Vice President of Information Technology

7:00 p.m. Meeting Opened
Discussion on Broadband with UNH Cooperative Extension Panel

PRenaud said we have an older population in town so they will have residential issues for internet, not business usage. This would probably affect the type of responses to a broadband survey. AWood said he sees the residential side of usage of the internet as where we would breed businesses.

The bond issue is included in the survey and the EDAC committee felt that the word "bond" would immediately connotate a negative response. It was suggested that question should read "*are you willing to use municipal funds to get better service via tax increase?"* This question is very important to the survey validity. Questions related to business need to be added to the survey.

- Need wording that will show that having the internet as being viable and for business. The bonding issues have to be delineated to be clear about the business usage. PRenaud wants wording that doesn't have bond listed.
- Need to have a good handle on who telecommutes from home. Question for the survey: How many days per week do you telecommute.
- Need to get the information to creatively finance broadband. The State has added the term "municipal funding, or pursuing grants" in getting funds to the broadband into town.
- JHunter offered using increments to pay more for internet. State survey showed that 85% didn't want to pay more for their internet service. Question for the survey: Are you will to spend more to get better service.
- Also the choice of more options should be listed on the survey along with better service.

JMoran asked is anyone talking to the Feds about the internet speeds. CMiller said that the information they have is at least a year old. She said Congress is considering a transportation infrastructure bill which includes broadband. CMiller also stated that the FCC will soon likely increase the minimum download speed to 10 Mb/s as considered adequately served.

PRenaud asked SWaleryszak if they, SWRPC, did the regional survey. He replied, "No, UNH statisticians put the survey together." He also said that Upper Valley was added into the survey. SCorcoran asked, "Is there any way to get a hold of kids in town to do a phone survey?" JHunter offered perhaps someone who is working towards an Eagle Scout or Boy Scout troop could work on the delivery of the survey. PRenaud said MBorden would be the person to talk to about this. SWaleryszak asked if there is a portion of town folks who support municipal funds. If so, then focus on that group and try and get them to spread the word. It was suggested that a phone call is more informative and any questions can be answered quickly vs. sending e-mail communications.

It was agreed that on the survey the term 'Education' needs to be just education, no further elaboration. Questions considered on the survey:

1 & 2 combined to read: How do you characterize yourself? Resident or business owner.

#3 keep as is

#4 eliminate the question

#5 & 6 combined by adding two columns saying: current and future
The following question should be added to 5 & 6. "What would you like to be able to do with internet? The response here will show the need and the want of the town folks.
#7 change to "How much are you willing to pay more for better service, more options. $0, $10 to $50 or, more."

#8 keep

#9 amend this question: "If you were to buy or sell a home, how important is internet service to you?"

#10 keep

All demographic information is listed on the last page with an option to list address (with 'for mapping purposes' disclaimer).

Add comment field at the end of the form. Contact number will be PRenaud's home number.

PRenaud will update the survey for our next meeting on July 21. PRenaud said the EDAC committee will need to vote on the final draft of the survey and delivery method. PRenaud will make calls to see who he can get involved in the delivery methods, i.e., scouts. This survey will probably be out in August and when the UNH committee returns in September, we will have the survey data compiled by 9/15.

JMoran asked if we are fulfilling some of the stipulations for grants. We have a good start, but the federal grants (USDA) are still asking for evidence of public meetings, survey data, and articles in newspapers. Those are different examples of community outreach. SWaleryszak said, "All this information is located at UNH." PRenaud has the information as to who has broadband in town, office, etc. GES needs to be done. JMoran is doing a webinar on federal USDA grant applications on July 2.

After a lengthy discussion it was decided not to add a question about cable. Once the data from the survey is compiled, then the cable issue will be different. CMiller gave a letter to PRenaud that will be useful on shared costs for broadband.

PRenaud commented on his attendance at a Comcast meeting with CMiller. For an amount of $2000 to Precision Valley, who contracts with Comcast, they would do a complete survey of the town to determine an accurate proposal for build-out costs. It was noted that the price is $42K per mile. Comcast is willing to come in to build a portion of the town based on need. AWood would like to know what the caveats are in the contract before it was signed. We really want to understand the contract before it is signed. CMiller will send the boilerplate of a contract to PRenaud for perusal.

SCorcoran has documentation from another town and it will help EDAC to decide on what to send out with this survey. Speed test is documentation that grants are looking for. She suggested setting a goal of perhaps 25% for the speed test and combining this with the survey. JMoran feels that we need to profile ourselves.

SWaleryszak said the speed test will link to every house in this town and that information will help with the grant application. Perhaps SWaleryszak can accompany PRenaud to a Select Board meeting as a support for getting the speed test link on the town website.

SCorcoran said she would attend the July 21 meeting. PRenaud wants to talk about some of the economic development concepts that were presented at the SWRPC/UNH Cooperative Extension meeting in Keene in May 2013 with Charlie French and Molly Donovan titled "Let's Talk Broadband,". AGarron will come in August to do the economic development presentation.

SCorcoran said by September, we'll probably want to start working on the actual action plan, and a review of the telecommunications ordinance. It was noted that the Economic Development chapter of the Master Plan will be done by SWRPC.

JMoran said the USDA grant will be the best shot in getting a grant; however, it will be extremely difficult to hit all the marks required on the application. We will be competing with every other community that is requesting money for broadband.

PRenaud thank the UNH personnel for coming and wished them well for the summer.

8:37 p.m. Community Development Finance Authority (CDFA) Workshop

PRenaud and JMoran talked about the CDFA workshop they attended in Concord on June 4th. PRenaud explained the different types of projects considered and processes of obtaining grants and loans for community development projects. There are grants or

loans available for economic development, housing, public infrastructure, facilities, and planning grants for proposed projects. He noted the CDFA gives higher priority to block grants and loans for economic development and real estate directly related to economic development and to block grants for buildings. The caveat for all these programs is that the ultimate beneficiaries must be mostly low and middle income (LMI) people.
Any ED grants or loans that would be awarded to the sponsoring town would be subgranted to an Economic Development Entity, such as the Monadnock Development Corp., which would administer the grant or loan to a business or builder. There must be a stipulation that at least 60% of jobs created or retained would be for LMIs.

Housing grants are available for LMI owners that rent to LMI people. Grants are available for acquisition, rehabilitation, and various modifications to existing buildings and grounds as long as a minimum of 51% of tenants are LMI. Both PRenaud and JMoran were provided with thumb drives of the CDFA presentation and all other relevant forms and information concerning CDFA programs.

9:05 p.m. Charrette Discussion

PRenaud advised the EDAC that a small group, 10 people, attended the community conversation held on June 7th. The attendees included NNickerson and PRenaud and three other Planning Board members. One item agreed upon by all at that meeting was a steering committee is needed. PRenaud noted that this was required by PlanNH as part of the terms of the charrette. AHeck has volunteered to be the chair of the steering committee. It was noted that the steering committee should be separate from Planning Board or Town Administrator's direction. We need to hear from the townsfolk as to what they really want. NNickerson said "As for the last charrette, we are still paying on it as we ran out of money." It was noted that RMarshall had an idea to bus the charrette personnel around town to better see what the town is really like.

PRenaud also noted that the promotion for the charrette thus far as an economic development charrette has been inaccurate and misleading because it should be promoted as a "Community Design Charrette", as stated on the PlanNH website. He noted the website states that a charrette is to consider social, environmental, economic and government as four distinct but inextricably linked sectors of the community. PRenaud stated these concerns at the June 7th meeting. NNickerson said, "We need to take an upside approach to the charrette, but let it be known that it wasn't born at EDAC." As Greenfield citizens, the EDAC committee members will be in conversation with townspeople about the charrette but may let it be known that EDAC isn't directly promoting the charrette. PRenaud said he supports the idea of a charrette as a means of gathering public input on the type of town center residents would like, but feels it needs proper promotion, open charrette planning meetings and accurate information disseminated to the town.

JMoran said, "The idea of the charrette, the promoting of the charrette, and the planning of the charrette was not the EDAC's idea. None of our meeting minutes shows any discussion about the charrette, but it was promoted as an EDAC related community discussion in May."

9:25 p.m. Internet Survey Promotion

JMoran said we need to educate our folks about what the ramifications of their world will be like if a fast internet was in place. It's an educational resource. An informational piece or a series of articles for the newsletter should be written before the survey is done addressing the goals of the EDAC. Education, security, medical tracking are all ways to use the internet. "Don't go by the snapshot of your town today, but where will technology take you in five years." This will get you better input from an educated consumer. PRenaud said at the next meeting we will put together what we want to say in the articles. JMoran offered such as: What we are writing, why we are writing and what our goals are as a committee. This is an educational venue which will get us better results for our survey. PRenaud will talk to the Greenfield reporter for the newspaper and see how we can get a series in the newspaper about the EDAC committee and broadband.

9:35 p.m. Other Matters

PRenaud said he mentioned a while back about writing a letter to the Coville heirs if they perhaps would like to sell their property. These locations are in the newly created industrial zones. He was planning to draft such a letter this summer to be reviewed by the committee. He was also wondering if he should approach JHaithcock about rezoning his lot next to the GMitchell warehouses. Committee said no for now.

PRenaud said beyond the broadband subject, we are postponing the trade show. There are too many big projects going on in town right now. So this will be put on the back burner. PRenaud is trying to get some new faces on this committee to help us with the survey and to keep it viable going forward. He wants to discuss at next couple of meetings, "What is our purpose beyond broadband? What kind of community do we want?" NNickerson commented the survey may stop us in our tracks or point us in a new direction.

9:50 p.m. Amending Minutes

PRenaud asked if there were any corrections to last month's minutes. None were voiced. NNickerson motioned to accept the minutes as is. PRenaud seconded. Vote unanimous in favor.

9:55 p.m. **Adjournment**

NNickerson motioned to adjourn. JMoran seconded. Vote unanimous in favor.