

Economic Development Commission
Tuesday, January 25, 2011- 7:00 p.m.
Canterbury Municipal Building, 1 Municipal Drive

MINUTES*

I. Call to order

A.Tillinghast called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. R. Curtis made a motion to amend the agenda to add New Business, Item A. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

II. Roll call

Members present: A. Tillinghast, R. Curtis, A. Mierzejewski, J. Tucker, H. Tuttle, C. Wellinghausen

Members absent: J. Sheridan, L. Northrop

Others present: B. Sear, S. Sadlowski, T. Marano, M. Belmont, E. Swanson, S. Benson, C. Sear, L. Pecoraro

III. Minutes- November 30, 2010

The minutes passed unanimously.

IV. Public Participation

A. Tom Marano, Northeast Utilities Business Development Director

A. Tillinghast introduced T. Marano, the business Development Director of Northeast Utilities. He wanted T. Marano to meet with members of the town's commissions and boards to discuss the best way to promote economic development in town. A. Tillinghast reviewed all the EDC achievements over the last year.

Those present introduced themselves and discussed what they would like to see from economic development in Canterbury. Most present stated that they would like to see local businesses promoted more; more home based businesses; increased revenue; they wanted the town's resources utilized more to aid in economic development; more community involvement. They discussed the need to keep the rural community character while promoting businesses.

Those present discussed what the EDC could do this year, to assist in reaching some of these goals. These included holding a farmers market in the town hall parking lot; planning for senior housing; plans for a recreation center; the continuation of effectively communicating EDC ideas and recommendations to other town boards; encourage small farmers; the promotion of Route 169; attracting visitors to the Prudence Crandall Museum; increase tourism by promoting trails and kayaking; continue to encourage home business and agriculture in town; feasibility study of sharing an EDC director with neighboring towns; conservation of open land.

R. Curtis stated he would like the EDC to draft a proposal to State Representative Christopher Coutu and/or State Senator Don Williams for tax abatements for green tourism business in the Last Green Valley. Other ideas included making the town buildings more eco-friendly, such as using solar power. S. Sadlowski stated he would like to see a job/business center within the library. B. Sear stated that he would like to develop a marketing program to brand the town. C. Sear stated that she would like the EDC to research what grants were available for long range planning. J. Tucker suggested the Commission look into hiring a grant writer. A. Mierzejewski stated she would like the EDC website expanded to create more interaction with the community. C. Wellinghausen stated that he would like to see the Quinebaug promoted more.

A. Tillinghast stated he would like to see the Commission hold training sessions in conjunction with other town resources for town businesses on finances, marketing etc. J. Fritzsche stated she would like to see Canterbury advertised for tourism in Yankee magazine. S. Sadlowski suggested the Commission work with the agricultural study group to help promote farm day. He suggested that maybe it could be a farm/business day. A. Tillinghast stated that he would like to further research an incubator in Canterbury. The Commission discussed holding an annual fall event, such as a fall festival. C. Sear asked the EDC support the library's efforts to expand their space. R. Curtis suggested establishing a student entrepreneur program between Canterbury students and the local businesses. R. Curtis stated he felt the Commission should develop a business attraction program. He stated that expanding the tax base was in the EDC mission statement, and he felt existing businesses should be located and pay their share of taxes.

L. Pecoraro and R. Curtis expressed his concern with the EDC supporting the agricultural study group for the town recently rejected it as a commission.

T. Marano then listed the items and discussed which ideas could be consolidated. The Commission would discuss continue to discuss the potential projects. T. Marano stated that he would attend the next meeting.

The Commission changed the meeting date to Monday, February 21st.

V. Old Business

A. Reaction from Boards and Commission members

Those present felt the workshop went well. The Commission continued to discuss how to best advertise business space for rent. They continued to discuss EDC having its own website. J. Tucker stated that maybe the Commission could look into grants for website design.

The Commission continued to discuss supporting the agricultural study group becoming a Commission.

B. Discuss potential for a regional meeting of area ED Commissions

A. Tillinghast is attending the Brooklyn Economic Development Commission next month to discuss what the Canterbury EDC is working on and to get ideas from them. He stated that the Canterbury EDC could host a joint meeting of area Commission.

C. Discuss 3rd edition of Business Directory

The Commission discussed what they would be requesting for a budget for the 2011-2012 budget.

VI. New Business

a. Land Sale Committee

R. Curtis made a motion that the Chairman send a letter to the Selectmen requesting the ordinance for the Land Sale Committee to be amended to include representation from the Economic Development Commission. H. Tuttle seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

VII. Adjournment

The Commission adjourned at 9:16 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Melissa E. Gil
Land Use Secretary

*As recorded

Cc: EDC members; Town Clerk; EDC file