

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Regular Meeting

Town Hall

16 School Street

Allenstown, New Hampshire 03275

May 8, 2019

The May 8, 2019 meeting of the Economic Development Committee was called to order by Chairman Mike Frascinella at 6:36 pm. He called for the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Roll Call**

Jeffrey Venegas, Mike Frascinella, Chad Pelissier (arrived late)

Allenstown staff: Derik Goodine, Town Administrator

Other present: Craig Tufts, Central NH Regional Planning Commission; Debbie Brisco, NH Horse Council; Armand Verville, Kris Raymond, Brian Goss

**New Business**

- **Suncook Valley Trails Plan:** Central NH Regional Planning Commission, represented by Craig Tufts, to present and discuss the Allenstown section of this proposed trail.

Mr. Tufts stated that they have been studying the trails in New Hampshire, and the Suncook Valley corridor stood out. Development of trails is a popular community project for quality of life and economic development. Trails through Concord, Hopkinton, Warner and Bradford run along the old railroad beds, which are popular locations for trails. Maybe there are people who would like to run with this in the Suncook Valley.

Ms. Raymond: The trails we have were from the charrette.

Mr. Goodine said this is the lower part, going toward Hooksett, not the Suncook River.

Mr. Tufts said he would like to ask the people in attendance to explain their interest in trail development.

Ms. Brisco said she is an advocate for horses on trails; there is a great economic value to this.

Mr. Verville said his interest is the Bear Brook State Park area where there are already 60 to 70 miles of snowmobile trails. The Town of Allenstown has little say about the development within the State Park.

Ms. Raymond said she is a heavy user of the Andover Rail trail and would like to have trails closer to home.

Mr. Goss stated that he is an Allenstown resident and is here out of curiosity.

Mr. Goodine said that when he lived and worked in Maine, he was involved in a lot of trail development.

Mr. Tufts stated that the Northern Rail Trail is one long, continuous trail which was developed with little effort, since the State was able to purchase the railroad beds. In this corridor, the trails are not continuous because some people don't want a trail on their property. He said he is looking to develop a list of good ideas and concepts. Along the corridor going toward Hooksett, there is one property owner to work with. This owner appears to be willing to sell the needed land and is not looking for a lot of money. This would be in the China Mill area. Pembroke is looking at development of the corridor from Memorial Field to White Sands.

Mr. Goss asked about getting across the river. Could a footbridge be built? How do we connect to Bear Brook?

Mr. Tufts responded, saying this is the biggest challenge. It could be built over time in small sections.

Ms. Brisco stated that wide shoulders are important. She added that the trail overlay map is a vision of what could be.

Mr. Tufts said Allenstown could work with Pembroke and Hooksett using a trail overlay map. In Pembroke a developer is willing to donate an easement for a trail in hopes that this will increase the value of the homes he builds. Regarding allowed uses besides hiking and biking, people are accepting of snowmobiles in the winter, but opinions about ATVs are mixed.

Mr. Venegas asked who would help to maintain the trails.

Mr. Tufts said that non-profit groups often assist; they sometimes obtain grants. They work in partnerships with the towns. In terms of cost, bridges tend to be the most expensive improvements needed. In some cases, bridges no longer in use from other locations can be transported to a new site. The state's department of Cultural and Natural Resources has a Recreational Trails program which might be a funding source. There is also federal transportation money, but federal funding can be complicated.

Mr. Goodine suggested that the National Guard might take on the task of building a bridge.

Chair Frascinella suggested that this could be done in phases, doing the easiest segments first, which might inspire local interest and involvement.

Mr. Tufts said that is exactly right. Allenstown could work north toward Pembroke and south toward Hooksett.

Mr. Goodine said they would want the trails to come to town for the economic benefit.

Ms. Brisco said the trails don't have to go right through town. If there are attractions, people will hike and then go into town. This reflects the concept of a trail town.

Mr. Tufts said the more connections, the better.

Mr. Venegas said that it helps if the trails have destinations like restaurants and ice cream stands. Perhaps local businesses could sponsor parts of the trails. Also, there are two rivers in the area and not a lot of development along them. Trails could lead to the rivers where kayaks might be rented.

Ms. Raymond said that the Amoskeag Rowing Club hosts a Regatta at Memorial Field every year in October. She also said that people who stay at Bear Brook often want to bike in the radius.

Mr. Venegas asked about the area around China Mill.

Mr. Goodine: There could be some ownership issues there. The hydroelectric association owns some of the area and the Allenstown Sewer Commission has an easement. The current developers of China Mills are looking for 79E tax breaks for ten years.

Mr. Tufts said he would write up his notes on this meeting and post them to the project website, which is <http://cnhrpc.org/suncook-valley-trails-plan/>. He will plan to meet with this group again in June or July, hopefully approving a plan at that time. He will bring maps. He is also scheduled to give a brief presentation to the Select Board on May 20, 2019.

Chair Frascinella asked if anyone knows how they might find people interested in helping Mr. Venegas resurrect the Parks & Rec Committee.

K. Raymond asked about the plans for a skate park. She said she thought the church was receptive to the idea.

Mr. Venegas said a lease had been suggested, and he emailed the church but has had no response. He said he would follow up on this. He said liability was their concern.

Chair Frascinella said that Mr. Venegas could ask them to come in to discuss the idea.

Ms. Raymond said that if the church agreed to attend a meeting, she would be there and bring several children. She said the children are very much interested in this. She asked if the equipment which needs to be refurbished had been pulled out of the Highway Department.

Mr. Venegas responded that it had not.

Ms. Raymond said that since the feasibility study had revealed the devastating news that they would have to divest of Allenstown Elementary in three to five years, they are now looking at various options.

Mr. Venegas said that he has been hoping to establish a community area for recreation, a farmers' market, a concert area and other activities to bring the community together. He said this area would be ideal because of the space and the downtown location.

### **Old Business**

- **Town Signs:** Deposits have been sent to the sign vendor and woodcarver. DOT Traffic Bureau has been contacted. Do we want floral plantings around each sign?

Chair Frascinella said that the deposit for the town signs had been mailed and the vendor says it will take about a month to create the signs. He said that the DOT would be examining the locations and setbacks for the signs. He said they hope to find a garden club or business willing to plant and maintain flowers around the signs. He said the woodcarver would be starting on the bears soon.

- **Plans for Grand Opening Ceremonies:** Updates on business openings

Chair Frascinella said that the businesses they are working with all have a way to go before they will be ready for opening. He said that the business from Quebec which recently looked at a warehouse in Allenstown is looking for a larger facility. Two locations on Chester Turnpike have been found, and the real estate agent involved will be looking at them.

- **Summer Concert at Town Hall:** Discuss where and when we can preview Mike McGeehan's band associates at a local gig. Food vendors and other possible activities still need to be determined.

Chair Frascinella asked Mr. Venegas to talk with Library Trustee Mike McGeehan to determine where and when they might be able to attend performances of these bands. He asked Mr. Goodine to obtain contact information for Ed Higgins regarding the preparation of food for the event.

- **Pole Banners:** Reports on the number and location of utility poles to decorate and prices from the vendors identified.

Chair Frascinella said that Ms. Higham agreed to check with vendors, and hopefully she will have some information at the next meeting. He asked Mr. Pelissier if he had counted the number of utility poles.

Mr. Pelissier said that he had emailed that information to Ms. Higham.

Chair Frascinella said that the theme of the welcome signs could be extended to the banners - Bear Brook and outdoor activities.

Mr. Goodine suggested developing a contest to have students name the six bears on the welcome signs.

Mr. Venegas said that was a great idea. He said that each school could name three bears. He will email the principals of the schools.

## **Other Business**

Chair Frascinella and Mr. Goodine shared observations and inspirations obtained from the Main Street Academy sessions they have been attending.

Chair Frascinella said it has been a good learning experience.

Chair Frascinella described how artists have painted murals on mill buildings in some communities.

Mr. Goodine said that in Keene, since they can't paint directly on the bricks, they use a paper fiber and glue background on which to paint and which can be steamed off without damaging the bricks. They raised \$250,000 for a project involving 300 well-known painters and a festival in June.

Chair Frascinella said he would like to see the Blueberry Express Steam Engine painted on a wall in Allenstown.

Chair Frascinella said that he had planned to ask about having Ms. Higham be the Select Board representative to EDC, with Mr. Carter serving as the alternate, so that they might have better representation from the BOS.

## **Review Previous Meeting Minutes**

Chair Frascinella said that there were no minutes to be reviewed.

## **Schedule the Next Meeting**

Chair Frascinella set May 22, 2019 as the date for the next meeting.

## **Adjournment**

Mr. Venegas made a motion to adjourn at 8:42. Mr. Pelissier seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

SIGNATURE PAGE  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE  
MAY 8, 2019



Michael Frascinella, Chairman

7/17/19

Date signed \_\_\_\_\_

Chad Pelissier, Member

Date signed 7-17-19

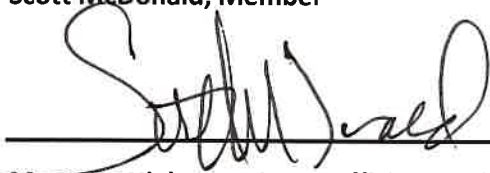


Jeffrey Venegas, Member

Date signed \_\_\_\_\_

Scott McDonald, Member

Date signed July 17, 2019



Maureen Higham, BOS Ex-Officio Member

Date signed 7/17/19

