

ASHLAND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

MEETING MINUTES

October 26, 2015

6:30 pm

Ashland Fire Station

Steering Committee Members Present

Susan MacLeod, Steve Felton (BOS ex-officio), Absent: Benoit Lamontagne, Cheryl Cox (Planning Board ex-officio)

Ad Hoc Committee Members Present

Jae Demers, Eli Badger (Housing Standards Board), David Toth (Water & Sewer Commissioner), Kathleen DeWolfe (Conservation Commission), Lee Nichols, Superintendent (Ashland Electric Department)

Others present

Fran Newton, Norm DeWolfe, Mardean Badger

The meeting was called to order at 6:34 pm by Chairperson MacLeod. There wasn't a quorum, but those present decided to make brief reports.

Committee Updates

Marketing Committee met on Tuesday, October 20th at Dot's. Present were Fran, Jae, Cheryl, Kathleen, Lee, Mark Liebert from AARA, Sherrie Downing, and Sue Longley from Community Council. Discussion focused on how the AEDC could facilitate getting businesses to engage in *Christmas Night in Ashland*. Sue gave a history of the event that had started as a business-run event. Now that the Community Council organizes it, many businesses contribute funds, goods or services. Sherrie Downing spearheads the lighting effort, and AARA has taken charge of handling the funds. The AEDC committee's intent was not to ask for funds or an organized effort from the businesses, but that they decorate windows and/or put up some lights to add to the festive atmosphere downtown. Jae suggested that businesses outside the downtown area could fill the empty storefront windows with banner ads for \$20 or more that is donated towards lights and decorations. She has followed through on this and so far \$800 (\$500 from Jeremy Hiltz) has been raised. The windows in former the Corner Shoppe (now to be expanded Lisa's Training) is one location for these banners. Good work Jae. Next Meeting: Nov. 8 at the CMan.

GIS: Steve is arranging a meeting with Michelle Roberts and the Town Administrator, (Nov. 12 am to be confirmed) for status report and discussion on next steps for involving departments for what their information layers should contain and the training for them to access those layers.

Asset Maps: Susan brought in the maps with business information on them. The GIS layer of this information sent from LRPC should be reviewed for updating.

Northern Community Investment Corporation (NCIC) Luncheon: Fran and Susan attended this event on October 8 to network and get ideas from some of the 300 people in attendance.

Consensus was that it was too busy to make significant contacts and their way of operating as a separate non-profit was different from how we can as a Town committee.

The Booster Club: Lee had no progress to report other than working with Beno to pursue two grants that could cover the total cost of the project. Lee will meet with architect Tom Samyn to get a plan started. All agreed that the Booster Club and ball fields are important assets and improvements there would be a showcase of progress.

Other

Brownfields phase 2 of mill area status: An engineer has been contacted and will be meeting with Town officials to follow through on this phase.

Ashland Transportation Technical Advisory Committee (ATTAC) is meeting this Wednesday to discuss the recommendation for North Ashland Road for which a safety assessment will be done and the parking issue that needs to be included in the overall plan for downtown.

The Water & Sewer Department has learned that Ashland has a “virtually unlimited supply of water” and is putting together a grant to investigate a cost effective plan to reduce sodium chloride levels to improve the water quality. The Commissioners have been working diligently on finding grants to fix and upgrade the infrastructure to support economic development.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:05 pm.

The next meeting will be held on **Monday, November 23, 2015 at 6:30 pm** at the Ashland Fire Station, ***unless notified otherwise.***

Minutes submitted by Susan MacLeod