



CITY OF CONCORD

NEW HAMPSHIRE

City Hall • 41 Green Street • Concord, NH 03301 • tel. 603/225-8595 • fax 603/228-2701

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COUNCIL MINUTES JUNE 1, 2012 7:30 A.M.

The meeting convened at 7:35 A.M. in the City Council Chambers, 37 Green Street, Concord, NH.

PRESENT: Allen Bennett, Tim Bernier, Christopher Carley, Byron Champlin, Mark Coen, Peter Cook, Larry Gloekler, Stephen Heavener, Brad Hosmer, John Hoyt, Jan McClure (arrived at 7:45 A.M.), William Norton, Keith Nyhan, Connie Rosemont, Dan St. Hilaire, and Claudia Walker

ABSENT: Walter Chapin

STAFF: Carlos P. Baía, Deputy City Manager – Development
Matt Walsh, Assistant for Special Projects
Bev Rafferty, Administrative Assistant

GUEST: Scott Walker, Premiere Properties

1. MINUTES FROM THE MAY 4, 2012 MEETING

Allen Bennett made a motion to accept the minutes as submitted; seconded by Dan St. Hilaire; motion passed unanimously.

2. SCHOOL DISTRICT RE-ZONING REQUEST (Council referral)

Carlos Baía summarized the School District's re-zoning request for property located at 139 – 143 Old Turnpike Road. The current zoning line runs diagonally along a deep sanitary sewer easement that encumbers the property. The District has been attempting to sell this property for years and now has a potential interested buyer but the District asserts that a sale to this party or others is contingent on the industrial zone line being moved from its current location to the northern boundary line of the property.

Scott Walker, the realtor for the District, explained that the possible interested buyer has one concept of a 4,500 s.f. retail building with a showroom toward the front (east) of the land with a driveway to a 10,000 s.f. warehouse that would be located in the rear (west). Mr. Walker noted this is a very preliminary concept.

Mr. Baía explained that—with the exception of the impact on the adjacent residential neighborhood—staff's preliminary review of this request to date had not yielded any significant concerns. Prior to seeing the concept drawing provided by Mr. Walker, staff considered the possibility of the applicant only moving the zoning line so far as the foot of the grade change or the minimum the development might need in order to mitigate

the potential impact on the adjacent residences. However, once the limitations of the sanitary sewer easement became clear, it was evident that such an alternative might not be viable if the aim of the applicant is to develop the parcel.

Mark Coen inquired as to why the zoning line was put through the middle of the parcel. Mr. Baía explained that prior to the 2001 zoning ordinance and today's GIS it was not uncommon for zoning boundaries to deviate from property lines. Mr. Baía was not aware of the history of this specific parcel but based on the path of the zoning line, it seems that the line was drawn to follow the sanitary sewer easement.

Mr. Walker described the topographical challenges to the land and noted that once the encumbrances are excised, the potential buildable area totals less than half an acre.

It was asked if there had been any discussion with the neighbors. Mr. Walker stated that his party has met with Councilor Patten and he had not expressed a major concern. Mr. Walker conceded, however, that there are some people who may not like this proposal.

The assessment was discussed and it was noted that the property value should increase with this development. It was also noted that because the property is currently owned by the District, no taxes are currently being paid—a situation that would change once privately owned.

Keith Nyhan questioned the economic benefit of this re-zoning by noting that it could have a negative impact on the surrounding residences thereby off-setting some of the gain made by the potential industrial development.

Tim Bernier felt that it made sense to move the zoning line and motioned that EDAC recommend to City Council to relocate the zoning line to the property line; the motion was seconded by Bill Norton.

Keith Nyhan noted that from an economic development standpoint this re-zoning may have merit, but he explained that there is no guarantee as to what use will ultimately materialize on the property and he felt that the neighbors needed to be considered.

Mr. Walker stated that moving the line will allow the District to be able to move forward and put this land to use.

Mark Coen noted there are basically three things that the District can do: (1) leave things status quo; (2) move the residential line south and work with the residents; or (3) move the line north for an industrial zone as is being requested. Mr. Nyhan suggested a possible fourth option: sub-divide the property. Mr. Norton explained that such a sub-division would not be possible because the remaining back parcel would have no frontage and would thus not be allowed per City regulations.

After further discussion, the Chair asked for a vote on the motion. The vote was twelve (12) in favor of moving the industrial zone line to the northern property boundary; Dan St. Hilaire voted against the motion. Claudia Walker recused herself from voting citing her family's involvement with the School Board. The motion passed.

3. MANAGER'S PROPOSED FY 13 BUDGET OVERVIEW

Carlos Baía gave a brief overview of the FY '13 budget submitted by City Manager Aspell. He noted Concord was named the # 1 micropolitan economy in the U. S. by *Policom* for municipalities with populations under 50,000. He explained how *Policom* makes this decision.

Mr. Baía explained that based on the latest available data, Concord has the 5th lowest municipal tax rate of the thirteen cities in New Hampshire. He reviewed the planning and permitting revenues and informed EDAC that the General Fund budget is proposed to be \$51.6M and the City's total budget inclusive of all funds is expected to be \$86M. The municipal tax rate is proposed to increase 2.87%. Mark Coen wanted to make clear that this percentage is only on the municipal rate. The total tax rate increase for Concord property owners stemming from the City's actions, will be significantly less.

Mr. Baía noted that a considerable savings was due to the management of vacancies in the Police budget. From a capital project budget perspective, there will be new vehicles purchased for the Fire Department including two new ambulances and five operational vehicles.

Chairperson Carley inquired what impact the current interest rates will have on the city. Mr. Baía summarized the dramatic loss of interest revenue over the last several years. Mr. Walsh added that although the City has recently obtained low rates on its bond issues, the City is still carrying old debt with higher interest that cannot be refinanced in the same manner as that of a typical residential mortgage.

Tim Bernier felt that the public safety budgets seem to be hit each year. Mr. Baía disagreed and explained that the police department is simply managing its personnel vacancies and that the Fire Department is receiving nearly \$700,000 in new vehicles this year.

Larry Gloekler asked why—in light of the projected decrease in planning/permitting revenue—the Code division is not downsizing. Mr. Baía explained that with the exception of one or two years over the last decade, the Code division has annually generated more revenue than it expends. Mr. Baía also noted that the Community Development Department—which encompasses the Code and Planning divisions—was one of the departments that actually laid off an employee in the recent past as well as reduced hours for other occupied positions. This same department made substantive changes to the organization of Code to reduce the number of full-time staff thereby reducing expenditures.

Keith Nyhan left the meeting at 8:30 A.M.

William Norton left the meeting at 8:35 A.M.

4. CITY PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP HISTORY

Matt Walsh, Assistant for Special Projects, presented a PowerPoint presentation on some of the public-private partnerships in which the city has participated. The presentation was submitted for the record.

Mark Coen left the meeting at 8:45 A.M.

John Hoyt left the meeting at 8:55 A.M.

5. OTHER BUSINESS

July 6, 2012 EDAC meeting: Carlos Baía noted that the next regularly scheduled EDAC meeting is July 6th but due to the holiday on the 4th, would EDAC like to reschedule the meeting to July 13th. It was decided that would be best as some members will be unavailable on the 6th. Mr. Baía will try and arrange for EDAC to tour the Opportunity Corridor on July 13th.

6. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business and upon a motion duly made and seconded, the meeting adjourned at 9:10 A.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Beverly A. Rafferty
Administrative Assistant