

MINUTES OF PUBLIC HEARING

APRIL 15, 2013 – 6:45 p.m.

COMMUNITY REVITALIZATION TAX RELIEF INCENTIVE APPLICATION FROM BRIAN CAPLE, MANAGER, GUNWALE PROPERTIES, LLC FOR PROPERTY LOCATED AT 44 MARKET STREET

Mayor Spencer opened the public hearing at 6:45 p.m.

Brian Caple said he is here to seek tax relief under the Community Revitalization Tax Relief Incentive Program for property located at 44 Market Street. This property is prominent in the downtown, and has been unused for the last 20 years and publicly inaccessible. He feels this is the type of property this law was written for. He purchased the property, and now they are in the process of revitalizing it and he is seeking tax relief for that.

Mr. Caple said the business they are proposing putting in there is Leaven Bread & Beer House. They will be replacing the whole front of the building and will completely redo the outside. They have had to do considerable structural work to the building as well. He has spent approximately \$8,000 on steel used to reinforce the building. He thinks this will be a centerpiece for downtown. It is in a very prominent location and can be seen from both directions. He feels it will attract people to the downtown. They are looking to have outdoor seating also. This will do a lot to promote the downtown area and will give it a feeling of community.

Mr. Caple passed around some pictures of what the proposed building will look like.

Councilor Witham thanked Mr. Caple for bringing forth the first application under this tax relief program. This is the type of project they had hoped to attract with the passage of this program. He asked Mr. Caple if the Council's planned investment in the downtown such as streetscape improvements, utilities, the bridge project, etc., was a part of his decision-making process regarding this project.

Mr. Caple said the commitment the Council has shown to revitalize the downtown had a huge impact on his decision to invest and put substantial renovation into this property. The whole atmosphere in Somersworth seems to be exciting and he has very high hopes for what is going on in the downtown area.

Councilor Soldati asked Mr. Caple to speak about the apartment above and what his plans are for that.

Mr. Caple replied there will be a 1400 square foot two-bedroom apartment. When they were doing demo on the building, they realized there were very high ceilings upstairs. The apartment will have a very open concept. The original entryway to the upstairs will be maintained, right off the street, into the living room which will be a wide-open area. There will be two bedrooms on the backside of the building. There will be really nice windows overlooking the river and the falls.

Councilor McCallion said it might be too early in the process, but he asked Mr. Caple about how many jobs he plans on creating in the downtown area.

Mr. Caple replied that one of the owners of the business that will be going in indicated that five to ten jobs would be created.

Mayor Spencer closed the public hearing.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane M. DuBois, City Clerk