

MINUTES OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
EXECUTIVE CONFERENCE ROOM
January 26, 2016 – 4:00 P.M.

Committee Members Present: Councilor Jonathan McCallion, Chair
Councilor Martin Dumont, Vice-Chair
Councilor David Witham
Councilor Dale Sprague

Administration/Staff Present: City Manager, Bob Belmore
Director of Planning & Community Dev., Dave Sharples
Economic Development Manager, Christine Souter
City Clerk, Trish Harris

Other: Councilor Denis Messier

Councilor McCallion called the meeting to order at 4:06 p.m.

APPROVE MEETING MINUTES.

Councilor Dumont moved to approve the minutes of the December 21, 2015 meeting. The motion was seconded by Councilor Sprague and passed, 3-0. Witham abstained.

STATE LAW NHRSA 162-K:6 ON TIF. SPONSOR RESOLUTION TO ADOPT NH RSA 162-K:6, TAX INCREMENT DISTRICT (TIF).

The committee agreed to sponsor a resolution to adopt the RSA for TIF. City Manager Belmore said this binds us to nothing, the next step would be to hire a consultant and to define an actual TIF area. This needs a public hearing and there is a 15 days wait period before Council can vote on it, so it would not be voted on until the March 7th meeting, with a public hearing on Feb. 16.

Councilor Witham made a motion for the committee to sponsor the resolution, Councilor Dumont seconded, and the vote was unanimous.

REVIEW “DRAFT” AGREEMENT FOR THE DEVELOPMENT & SALE OF FORMER POLICE STATION SITE AT 5 MAIN STREET.

City Manager Belmore said that in developing the proposed lease agreement staff used the Sober Sisters lease as a template. Both parties who offered are interested in a lease-purchase agreement.

There was discussion that 18 months is the longest they want the lease to go for that project. The buyer can close earlier, but the City wants to be sure the buyer will complete what they said they were going to complete. Monthly rent will increase from \$700 to \$5,000 after 18 months.

City Manager Belmore said they looked at the taxes to determine the monthly payment. Proposed \$700 a month for rent based on the property's present assessed value with a penalty clause for late payment.

Councilor Witham asked if the insurance was sufficient. City Manager Belmore said they would check with the City Attorney and the City's insurer.

There was discussion about the need for a redevelopment plan. It needs to be something that the committee, council, and city is comfortable with.

Councilor Sprague said we need to decide which party will bring this site redevelopment to the finish line. Have a timeline to present a redevelopment plan to the city, maybe 3 months, after they enter into the agreement. Would like to see some language as to what cannot be put there, pawn shop, tattoo shop. The City owns the property; we have the right to place a deed restriction in the deed.

The Committee discussed that the agreement needs to include language regarding the gas line being installed from the parking lot to the building and also that a waterline is brought into the building to accommodate a sprinkler system.

Councilor Dumont said he thinks 3 months is too long. Director Sharples said it would be tough to get the proposal from architect with less than 30 days.

City Manager Belmore said the Council will have final approval of the final concept for the property and the "easement" to use a portion of the park.

Director Sharples said the deed comes with a 30' easement which was approved for the previous owners, MSB. They would not get the entire park. It is still City property. The potential buyers want outside space for tables and chairs. There was discussion that they add to the agreement that any outside use needs to have additional City approval.

Councilor Sprague said they need to be sure that this property will keep with the image of downtown. The City has recently put a lot of money in the downtown area.

Councilor Witham, seconded by Councilor Sprague, made a motion to to approve the language, with the additions, in the agreement. The motion passed 4-1.

The Committee agreed to meet again on Monday, February 1, 2016 at 10:00am. City staff was to get a new revision to the two interested parties and report back.

MISCELLANEOUS

There was discussion about Sunningdale. Councilor Sprague asked when they were going to improve the ballfields. Council_voted no COs until they do the improvements. Why did we let the developers, not do what they were supposed to do, and impact the teams? There are games in the spring.

Director Sharples responded by saying they were bonded and it would be completed in the spring.

There was discussion about reaching out to some of the businesses about the Mayor's Celebration. ED Manager Soutter has visited some. She talked to the PR person at Aclara. They are in transition, but plan on getting involved in the City in the future.

With GE Headquarters in Boston, it was discussed that there is a lot of GE memorabilia in our museum. A visit to Somersworth Museum should be part of their new employee orientation.

ADJOURNMENT.

Councilor Dumont moved to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Councilor Witham and passed, 4-0, to adjourn at 5:28 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Trish Harris, City Clerk