

Arundel Economic Development Committee

Minutes

Sept 10, 2013 at 6:00 PM

Mildred L. Day School Library

600 Limerick Road

Members in Attendance: Ira Camp, John Bell, Jen Burrows, Linda Zuke, Sally Bates

Other Attendees: Todd Shea, Town Manager, Tad Redway, Town Planner, Jack Reitz

Call to Order: Chairman Camp called the meeting to order at 6:08 pm.

I. Approval of Minutes

Chairman Camp moved to approve the minutes of the meeting of 8/13/13. Ms. Zuke seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

II. Progress Reports

1. Arundel Heritage Day: Ms. Zuke reported that several events were planned for Arundel Heritage Day including 3 bands, a bake sale, a food truck and an ice cream vendor. Ms. Burrows offered to provide a set-up for coffee. Ms. Zuke noted that temporary electricity had been provided to the site. The Town Manager noted that there would also be a milking demonstration, a hay bale toss, horseshoes, a bean bag toss, and a spinning demonstration.

2. Zip Code: The Town Manager reported that the Town's application for a new zip code had been denied by the Postal Service. He read aloud the letter which he had received from the USPS which stated that the denial was based on additional costs to the Post Office of \$4,000.00 for initial start up and \$15,000.00 annually for increased operating costs. The letter indicated that an appeal of the decision could be filed within 45 days. Mr. Shea stated that the Board of Selectmen would support an appeal provided that no legal fees would be incurred, and that he had contacted the office of Senator Angus King to inquire about the feasibility of filing an appeal. He stated that he would notify the EDC when he heard back from Senator King's office.

Ms. Zuke stated that she would like to know why the operating costs would increase so dramatically, and Mr. Bell suggested that the Town Manager request justification of the increased costs from the USPS while waiting for a reply from Senator King's office. Mr. Shea said that he would request that information from the Post Office.

3. Business Vacancy Information: The Town Manager stated that the letter requesting real estate listings would go out to local realtors this week.

III. New Business

1. Champagne Energy: The Town Manager reported that Champagne Energy had broken

ground on a new office building in Arundel at the North end of US Route 1.

2. Route 1 Development: Ms. Zuke noted that the company which has proposed development of summer cottages on Route 1 would like to make a presentation to the EDC at the October meeting. The committee members were in unanimous agreement.

3. Transparency: Ms. Zuke suggested that more EDC information be posted on the Facebook page in the interest of keeping the public informed of the EDC's progress. It was noted that the public was welcome at any EDC meeting but concerns were raised about publishing draft or interim reports until the material was finalized.

4. Comp Plan Review: The Town Planner noted that the Comp Plan Review Committee was reviewing the proposed DB1 and DB2 zones. He stated that it would be beneficial if the Marketing and Branding study were completed to provide guidance to the Comp Plan Review Committee. Mr. Redway expressed his concern that there would need to be close coordination between the EDC and the Comp Plan Review Committee.

5. Website Re-write: Ms. Zuke enquired if anyone had heard back from Donna Buttarazzi regarding re-writing some of the web pages. Mr. Bell stated that he had not heard from Ms. Buttarazzi. He also stated that if a re-write of the website were to be undertaken, there should be some guidance from the Town Manager as to who would be authorized to access the administrative side of the website. Mr. Shea stated that he would research how to keep track of who was making changes to the website and get back to the committee.

6. Economic Development Council of Maine: The Town Manager informed the committee that he had submitted an application for membership in the Economic Development Council of Maine for the EDC.

IV. Arundel Marketing & Branding Study

Mr. Bell suggested that before discussing the items submitted by TCG in the Implementation Plan, that the committee discuss whether they were satisfied with the TCG report. Mr. Bell stated that he felt the report relied too heavily on agriculture, and noted that according to the US Census Bureau agricultural employment had been steadily declining in Arundel and was now essentially insignificant in the overall employment picture.

The Town Planner notified the committee that he did not believe that conclusions reached in the TCG report were supported by data, and had notified TCG of this around 1 July but had received no response. The Town Manager stated that he also had reservations about the report, and that he would like a written evaluation of the report from each committee member before proceeding further with the study. After a lengthy discussion during which a number of reservations about the Implementation Plan were aired, it was agreed that each committee member would notify the Town Manager and the Town Planner in writing of any problems they had with the report within the next week, and that staff would compile these comments and forward them to TCG with a request for a response within seven days.

When asked for comments from the public, Mr. Reitz suggested that the committee approach the marketing study from a bottom line perspective. He proposed that the EDC set a goal of taxes raised from commercial sources as a percentage of taxes raised from residential sources, and then try to determine what type of businesses could be attracted to meet that goal, given the limitations of utilities within the town. Mr. Redway noted that from this perspective, some residential uses such as schools or elderly housing, which require relatively few services from the town, could still be beneficial for Arundel.

V. Adjournment

Chairman Camp moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Ms. Zuke, and the meeting was adjourned at 7:33 pm.

I hereby certify that the above is a true and accurate record of the Economic Development Committee meeting of September 10, 2013.

John Bell, Secretary