

Jaffrey Economic Development Council
Draft Minutes 09/18/19

9:00 am Town Office

Present: Peter Chamberlain, Chair, Cathy Furze, Sam Hackler, Ed Merrell, Stephanie Porter, Bill Schofield

Staff: Jo Anne Carr, Director

1. Max Mitchell has resigned from the Chamber of Commerce and as such will no longer be able to serve in that capacity on the EDC. We thank Max for his time and service to the Town and wish him the best in his future endeavors.

We will reach out to the Chamber for another member to stand in to represent their interests.

2. Evaluate Consolidated Communications Service Area map

Jo Anne has obtained the service area data from Consolidated Communications which indicates access to (not necessarily delivery) speeds up to 80Mbps in some areas – not downtown. This is a GIS based map now linked to the town assessing data so we can pinpoint parcels and ownership.

A memo from Carol Miller who is with the NH Division of Economic Development inviting interested community members to a Digital Equity Summit at St Anselm College in Manchester on October 28 & 29. The 2 day workshop is focusing on municipalities pursuing broadband projects and the current NH Broadband Investment Initiative to fund projects.

The EDC felt that follow-up should be made with the Select Board to pursue a proper, technical study to determine real time access and availability.

3. Update on the WW Cross Workshop

The Final workgroup meeting is set for September 26, members have been reaching out to stakeholders and a draft report will be available for the EDC by the October meeting for review and comment. Ultimately the draft will go to the Select Board for their consideration of a redevelopment plan for the site.

4. Update on Traffic Project

As the final Public Hearing on the Route 202/124 traffic project is scheduled for October 2, discussion turned to concerns relating to pedestrian safety, and potential short-term and long-term impacts to downtown businesses. After positions were made regarding the safety of pedestrian crossing the 5-way intersection, where cars and people violate the lights (jaywalking, and cars not yielding to pedestrians); and the safety of pedestrians using a rapid flashing beacons (where cars and pedestrians may not cooperate), it was decided to disagree.

More discussion focused on what the impacts both short and long term would be to downtown businesses. There is no doubt that there could be impacts to business during construction. The EDC, Chamber and TEAM Jaffrey should be aware of potential issues with construction scheduling, dust control, noise and access for customers. In the longer term, ensuring that passing traffic does not miss downtown is critical. It was agreed that good signage, lighting, adequate parking are all contributors to a thriving business climate. It will be up to the EDC, Chamber and TEAM Jaffrey to ensure these needs are met in the final design phase of the project

should it be approved.

Ultimately, while there is not unanimous support for the downtown traffic project, it was agreed that as the project has been before them for many years there is majority support for the traffic improvements as proposed for the Public Hearing October 2, 2019.

5. Other Business

In other matters, Stephanie raised the issue of properties in the downtown not being maintained, poorly kept, and the number of vacant storefronts. To that point, Jo Anne reported that the state had approved the designation of Downtown as an Economic Revitalization Zone. New business, business expansion and new hires can be used for tax credits against business profits tax.

Stephanie and Jo Anne will put together a breakfast meeting of downtown businesses to alert them of the opportunity and meet with the appropriate state staff.

Next Meeting Date: October 16, 2019 @ 9:00 AM