

**Town of Seymour
Economic Development Commission**

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**Minutes
Tuesday, July 3, 2012 – 6:30 PM
Flaherty Room – Seymour Town Hall**

Members present: Jon Szuch, Rosalie Averill, Ted Holly, Michael Horbal, Marietta Sabetta and Kathleen Conroy-Cass.

Members absent: Ron Balabon

Also present: Fred Messore, Economic Development Director, Maryanne DeTullio, Recording Secretary

ITEM #1 Call Meeting to Order

Meeting called to order at 6:35 p.m. by Chairman Jon Szuch.

ITEM #2 Pledge of Allegiance

Pledge of Allegiance led by Chairman Jon Szuch.

ITEM #3 First Selectman Comments

First Selectman Kurt Miller was not present.

ITEM #4 Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes – May 1, 2012 Meeting.

Mrs. Averill moved to approve the minutes of the June 5, 2012 meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Holly and carried 4-0 with Mr. Horbal abstaining.

Item #5 Economic Development Director's Report – Fred Messore

Mr. Messore stated that due to time constraints with tonight's meeting and the fact that he has been without a compute for the last few weeks, he will prepare his report and e-mail it to the members.

Mr. Horbal moved to add to the agenda report from Planimetrics. The motion was seconded by Mr. Holly and carried unanimously (5-0).

Glenn Chalder, Planimetrics presented draft copies of the Downtown Action Strategy Plan for Seymour. He stated that he felt that they were able to gather a lot of information from the public meeting. He stated that some of the data from the MEDP, which was done in 2007, is out of date and the economy has changed this that time. He stated that they tried to create a report that provides an action plan for Seymour. He stated that everyone needs to get moving in a positive direction. He reviewed the report with the Commissioners and stated that he would like to take comments and then present final report.

Mrs. Averill asked if the EDC should endorse the Plan and Mr. Horbal agreed that it should be endorsed. Mr. Chalder stated that the Commission could discuss the report and endorse it tonight or get comments from other boards and commissions in town and get endorse it after those comments are incorporated into the Plan.

Mrs. Conroy-Cass stated that she was disappointed that no business owners from the downtown area were at the public meeting. Mr. Chalder stated that another meeting with just the business owners could be arranged and the report presented to them. Mr. Szuch stated that the final report could be on the EDC website. Mr. Horbal asked who else received the draft report and Mr. Chalder stated that the First Selectman and Bob Looker received copies.

The Commissioners reviewed the report and Mr. Chalder stated that one of their recommendations would be to get a downtown committee formed. Mrs. Conroy-Cass stated that she sends out a monthly newsletter and tries to let people know what is going on. Mr. Chalder stated that the town needs to be involved in this project.

Mr. Chalder stated that the beginning of the report summarizes ideas from different people on what could be done with the downtown area. He felt that you should focus on what we have in Seymour and make that stronger. The Commissioners reviewed the Top Ten List which was included in the report. Mr. Chalder stated that the parking has always been an issue and they felt that there is sufficient parking but it needs to get turn over and not have cars parked in the spaces all day long. He also stated that they looked at the zoning regulations for the downtown and those needed to be revised so that it would be more appealing for businesses to come into town. Mr. Chalder stated that there are several billboards in Seymour that could be used to advertise Seymour and those could be switched to digital type billboards. He also stated that the Town should take advantage of the fish walk and the falls and get people into that area.

Mrs. Averill stated that there has been some discussion about moving the town hall away from the downtown area. Mr. Chalder stated that there was also some talk of moving the railroad station as it does not really benefit the downtown area. Mrs. Conroy-Cass felt that the train station could be used as an asset for downtown.

Mr. Chalder stated that they felt that the Commission should try and recruit new activities and capitalize on the location. He stated that they have identifies three levels of activities. Mr. Messoro stated that it is important to have an adopted downtown plan in order to apply for certain grants. Mr. Szuch stated that aesthetics and cleanliness of the area are very important and they are things that can easily be done.

Mr. Horbal asked what Mr. Chalder felt should be changed in the zoning regulations. Mr. Chalder stated that he did not know what is the right approach to take but talk to Planning and Zoning about the action plan and get input from them. Mr. Messoro stated that they are in the process of updating the plan of conservation and development. He felt that they should focus on more urban zoning for the downtown and eliminate setbacks and allow for outdoor dining. Mr. Horbal stated that P&Z is open to input from the EDC and he felt that it would be better to give them specifics and the reasons for the recommendations. Mr. Messoro stated that VCOG will be working on the update with P&Z and we could tell them about the ideas for the downtown.

Mrs. Averill moved that the Downtown Action Strategy Plan submitted by Planimetrics be endorsed by the Economic Development Commission. The motion was seconded by Ms. Sabetta and carried unanimously (5-0).

Mrs. Averill stated that there are different uses for downtown that are going to appeal to different segments of Town. Mrs. Conroy-Cass felt that copies should be given to the business owners. Mr. Szuch felt that every board should get copies of the plan.

Discussion was finalized on the Downtown Action Strategy Plan. A pdf file will be prepared and a DVD will be burned of the work product created.

ITEM #6: Public Comments

There was no public comment.

ITEM #7: EDC Chairman's Report

Mr. Szuch discussed the budget balance. The new budget was discussed along with the Broad Street Park Memorial in memory of Commissioner Joseph Cass. Bricks will be inscribed to memorialize Mr. Cass in lieu of a park bench to meet the amount budgeted. Mr. Szuch said we must decide on how the meetings will be scheduled. Ms. Averill said we should meet in August to move the Downtown Action Strategy plan along until it is implemented. Ms. Conroy-Cass agreed that we must follow through with the plan. Mr. Szuch stated that Mr. Messore can facilitate the use of the plan by the land use boards and the Commission can take a step back. Mr. Horbal stated that he believed we should meet in August and September and go to bi-monthly meetings. Ms. Averill stated that the meeting schedules can evolve according to need. Mr. Messore asked if there were any rules ordained by by-laws as to meeting schedules. Mr. Szuch stated that there was not. Mr. Messore will not be available in August. Ms. Sabetta stated that a meeting in September and a meeting in November would allow Mr. Messore to attend and provide for a follow up before the end of the year.

A motion was made by Ms. Sabetta to cancel the August meeting and have the Chair schedule any special meetings that were needed. The motion was seconded by Ms. Averill and carried unanimously (5/0).

Mr. Messore will periodically email the commissioners updated information to keep them current with the progress of the implementation of the Downtown Action Strategy Plan.

ITEM #8: Old Business

Mr. Messore said that the bid was awarded on signage at the Selectmen's meeting. Two bids had been received. Mr. Messore was asked to oversee Adopt-A-Spot. He will put the process in place going forward and develop a protocol.

ITEM #9: New Business

Mr. Messore stated that David Elder from VCOG may address the Commission. Mr. Messore's computer was stolen from his office. A new one will be obtained shortly. Mr. Horbal stated that Tony Mavuli plans on the opening of The 1757 Tavern on Roosevelt Drive in early August.

ITEM # 10 Correspondence

There was no new correspondence.

ITEM #11: Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made by Marietta Sabetta, seconded by Mr. Horbal and carried unanimously (5-0).

The meeting was adjourned at 8:34 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:

Maryanne DeTullio – Recording Secretary – Items #1-5

Marietta Sabetta – Commissioner – Items # 6-11