



**Community & Economic Development
Advisory Committee meeting minutes
June 23, 2014 5:00pm**

PRESENT: Chairperson Deb Dodge, John Arnold, Pete Brown, Martin Cates, Staci Coomer, Robin McIntosh, Lowrie Sargent, Development Director Brian Hodges **ABSENT:** Ellis Cohn, Meg Quijano, Kipp Wright
GUESTS: Don White, Select Board and Tom Wilhite

1. **Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 5:00pm.

2. **Approval of Board Minutes**

Pete Brown made a motion to approve the minutes of the last meeting as presented. The motion was seconded by Deb Dodge. It was unanimously approved.

3. **Tom Wilhite - National Oz Museum**

Tom Wilhite of Camden spoke to CEDAC members about plans to open a National Oz Museum in Camden. He and co-owner Willard Carroll own an extensive collection that was shared with the public at a recent Farnsworth exhibit. In total, there are about 10,000 pieces in the collection. He said their plan is to have a private museum that would be open part-time as well as programming through a non-profit entity. Development of the museum would be a 2-3-year project. Also, an original one-hour opera is planned to premiere in Camden at some point in the future called "The Road to Oz". It would be specifically created to premiere on the Camden Opera House stage.

4. **CEDAC Administrative Business**

a) Meeting Schedule

The group decided to move the meeting time to 4:30pm.

b) Nomination for Downtown Network Board Co-Chair

Members recommended Deb Dodge to the post of CEDAC's Co-Chair for the DNB. She will be Co-Chairing with Oscar Verest from the Camden Downtown Business Group. Note: CEDAC reps are needed for Maine Downtown Center site visit on June 25th at 9am.

Taken out of order: under CEDAC Goals, Item **a) Tactical Urbanism**

Pete Brown said that they'd added three members to the group and that their next project would be to work on "Harbor Way," the new name for the alleyway next to Cappy's. The benches at the two locations on Chestnut Street seem to be full often, he reported, and the crosswalk is now one third shorter in length. They had received both positive and negative feedback regarding the first two sites. Lowrie suggested that it would be helpful to track the comments and send them to Brian. It was mentioned that an educational component would be helpful, such as a small description posted at the sites to describe the intentions of tactical urbanism. The description should explain that no parking was lost due to the installations.

Under Public Comment, Pete Brown (who had to leave early) commented on redevelopment issues at the Snow Bowl. Martin Cates filled the group in on the latest efforts to control erosion following a heavy rainstorm.

c) Revisit CEDAC Directive

The original CEDAC Directive was reviewed. Lowrie encouraged a smaller committee rather than a bigger one and said it is important to select members who are dedicated with sufficient interest. He will send the Planning Board's attendance policy to Deb for reference.

Martin noted that it was intended for the committee to be comprised of representatives from financial, real estate, development, other pertinent business experiences, and art/culture, and that these areas should be kept in mind when recruiting committee members. Deb said that since the name of the committee includes "community," she would like to see some focus on residential quality of life.

Lowrie commented on how the school system seems independent from the rest of the town and that decisions are made without much involvement or input from other town leaders. He said it would be helpful to have projections for student population that looked forward several years. Robin noted the relationship between an excellent education system and economic development.

Changes were suggested for Section 2 of the directive, "Duties of Committee". The second point under #2 would include "Establish a working relationship with the CSD and MSAD."

There was discussion on clarifying the term "economic development" by broadening it to include community development and business development, with an overall focus on building stronger communities. This would include a residential / quality of life component. Robin suggested that the phrase "looking at change responsibly" be added to the language.

5. **Review CEDAC Goals**

John Arnold gave an update on the Tannery Working Group. He reported that MCEDD's Senior Program Manager Audra Caler-Bell had attended their May 30th meeting. He said that she had recommended that another Phase I Brownfields assessment be conducted with the potential for Phase II depending on the results of the Phase I. She had said this would bring us up to date on current environmental restrictions on the site. A grant program through MCEDD could potentially cover the costs, John added.

John said that another priority for the Work Group is to conduct meetings with developers to get a sense for whether any changes from the Planning Board would be advisable.

Lowrie asked if it would be possible to get the question on the November ballot. Don White said the Select Board would have to have a proposal by September 1st to make this happen. There was some discussion as to whether or not voters need to approve a sale if it were not part of the Land for Jobs program. Deb will look into this.

Other CEDAC goals that were reviewed included entrepreneurial space and marketing. Deb said it would be good to publicize the benefits of the new TIF to property and building owners. Brian discussed available space at Tibbetts as possible entrepreneurial space since the new owner is consolidating from four to two buildings.

Deb reported briefly on CDBG Marketing Committee projects around the "Experience Camden" brand.

Deb also said that CEDAC members should be recruited and to send ideas to Brian.

6. **Public Comment/questions on agenda items**

There were no public comments.

7. **Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned at 6:45.

Next Meeting

The next CEDAC meeting will be held July 28th at 4:30pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Brace
Recording Secretary