



Town of Camden
Community & Economic Development Advisory Committee
August 25, 2014
4:30pm

Minutes

PRESENT: Chairperson Deb Dodge, John Arnold, Pete Brown, Martin Cates, Paul Cavalli, Staci Coomer, Robin McIntosh, Meg Quijano, Lowrie Sargent, Jamie Weymouth, Town Manager Pat Finnigan and Development Director Brian Hodges.

GUESTS: Don White

ABSENT: Ellis Cohn

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 4:30pm.

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 Robin McIntosh. It was unanimously approved.

3. Tannery and NEMHS

John Arnold gave a summary of the community meeting concerning North East Mobile Health's proposed purchase of the Tannery property. He said the principle concerns of neighbors had been safety and noise. John detailed points from NEMHS's presentation along with their transport contract with the Mainecare program, an aspect of their current service that is likely to expand. John said NEMHS doesn't foresee an expansion of emergency responses in this area. Current emergency trips account for 3 per day mostly between the hours of 11:00am and 2pm, he said.

Meg Quijano said that some of the neighbors are in favor of making the Tannery site into a park. Pete Brown noted that currently 21% of Camden land is recreational parks or public land. Robin McIntosh said she didn't think parents would want to take their children to play in a Brownfield site.

Deb Dodge asked if CEDAC felt comfortable taking a stand on the proposed purchase by NEMHS.

John Arnold made a motion that CEDAC support the NEMHS proposal to purchase the Tannery site from the Town through the continuation of the purchase and sale process. Pete Brown seconded the motion. It was approved unanimously by members on hand: Dodge, Brown, Quijano, McIntosh and Arnold.

John offered to take CEDAC's recommendation to the Select Board at their next meeting. Brian said it will be very important for those citizens in favor of NEMHS's relocation to the Tannery site to be on hand at the meeting since the ambulance company has for the most part only heard negative reactions from citizens so far.

4. CEDAC Administrative Business

a) Elect a Chair and Vice-Chair

Deb Dodge was asked to continue as Chair with Pete Brown as Vice-Chair. Both respectfully declined.

Pete Brown made a motion that Robin McIntosh be elected as Chair. John Arnold seconded the motion. It was approved by a vote of 4-0-1 (McIntosh abstaining).

Lowrie Sargent noted that there's no provision for Vice Chair in CEDAC's organizing documents. This question will be taken up at the next meeting.

b) Brian's departure

Deb thanked Brian for his hard work. Pat Finnigan said she will be the temporary replacement to fill the void and that a successor would be found. She asked for input on the position. Martin Cates suggested that an assistant be found for Pat.

Brian detailed the transition plan for his upcoming weeks and assured members that the ongoing projects would not be dropped.

Additionally, John commended Deb and Pete for their work heading up CEDAC.

c) Proposed edits to Directive

Under the section of the Directive on goals, #5 was combined with #2 so that goal #5 would be deleted and the phrasing under #2 would read, "community development to enhance the community's inherent character, sustainability and quality of life for Camden residents." Also, #3c was deleted. It was noted that the next step would be to send the recommended changes to the Select Board.

Lowrie asked whether the group was planning to change the number of members serving on CEDAC. The group consensus was to keep the number at 7 members with 2 alternates at this time.

d) Mission and Vision statements

The mission and vision statements were edited. The words "and region" were added to the mission following the words "to enhance the vitality of the local community". In the vision statement, after the words "develop and support," the next phrase of the sentence was edited to read "a multi-generational community in which young and creative..."

The Economic Vision for Camden written in 2009 by CEDAC was reviewed. Concepts of smart growth and fostering a multi-generational demographic were discussed, and it was decided that word-smithing the vision statement would proceed outside the committee for consideration at the next meeting.

e) Attendance Policy options

The group considered options for an attendance policy including asking that members attend at least 2/3 (eight) of the meetings per year. It was decided that since this would be treated as a general guideline it wouldn't need to be approved by the Select Board. If there were a problem with attendance, the Chair would speak with the member to determine their interest. The group talked about formally outlining expectations including the estimated time commitment and distributing them when people apply to join CEDAC.

5. Update on convening educators, students and businesses

Robin gave an update on a gathering of educators that would take place in Rockland on September 17th. The event will address the skills gap along with the number of workers in the pool, she said, and would discuss the cultural piece of success in the workplace.

6. Downtown Network Board sub-group “Camden After Dark”

Lowrie Sargent said that he, Don White and Paul Cavalli were working on ideas to liven up the evening scene in Camden. Ideas so far include:

- a regular schedule of movies at the Opera House
- simulcast opera and ballet performances
- larger events like the recent Noel Paul Stookey concert 3-4 times per year
- finding a way to serve snacks and liquor in conjunction with local restaurants
- publicizing a season-long program so residents and visitors can plan ahead.

Paul noted that the Opera House space is large and we’d have to find a way to make sure people feel comfortable when it’s not completely full. He also spoke about the “hip” factor that’s evident in some larger cities. Paul added that it may be possible to gain input from people who live here who’ve been in the movie industry. Don noted that school vacation weeks could be opportunities for programming for young people. The group intends to pull in Ken Gross from the Library who’s expressed interest in putting together an Opera House film series.

Pat was asked about the Opera House report which she said is still not done.

7. Public Comment/questions

There were a few questions about the mailing Brian had worked on explaining TIFs to local developers and property owners. Brian said that he’d distributed to 15 developers and would send around copies of the package.

Robin noted that she had scheduled a meeting with the Camden Conference to continue looking into ways CEDAC can support Camden’s major town events.

8. Adjourn

Next Meeting

The next CEDAC meeting will be held September 22, 2014 at 4:30pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Brace
Recording Secretary