



Town of Camden
Minutes of the Meeting of the
Community & Economic Development
Advisory Committee
January 26, 2015
4:30pm

PRESENT: Chairperson Robin McIntosh, John Arnold, Martin Cates, Paul Cavalli, Ellis Cohn, Deb Dodge, Meg Quijano, Lowrie Sargent, Jamie Weymouth, Town Manager Pat Finnigan.

GUESTS: Rick Knight, Owl & Turtle Bookshop

Excused: Staci Coomer

1. **Call to Order**

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

2. **Approval of Board Minutes**

John Arnold made a motion to approve the minutes of the October 27, 2014 meeting as presented. The motion was seconded by Paul Cavalli. It was unanimously approved.

3. **Local Business Introduction**

Rick Knight, new owner of the Owl & Turtle Bookshop, spoke to the committee. Rick and Elaine Knight are prior owners of the Ducktrap Motel.

4. **Rentals in Homes**

Lowrie Sargent spoke about residents and summer people renting rooms in their houses to guests and gave information on the regulations that pertain to the issue.

5. **CEDAC Administrative Business**

Robin McIntosh asked if the proposed attendance expectations and outline of committee member responsibilities met the group's approval. The guidelines were accepted as presented.

Candidates for the role of Vice Chair were discussed. Regular members who could serve in this role include John Arnold, Deb Dodge, Ellis Cohn or Meg Quijano. The mission and vision were also reviewed.

6. **Downtown Network Board update**

Deb Dodge gave an overview of progress in restructuring the Downtown Network Board to follow the Main Street Community structure of the Maine Downtown Center, with the pillars of Promotion, Design and Economic Restructuring making up committees of the overall board. She described how the group consisting of herself, Oscar Verest and Pat Finnigan had come up with suggested guidelines including number of members for each committee, desired skill sets and sectors to draw from to represent a broad cross-section of the community. Deb said they're looking for suggestions of people to recruit to populate the committees. She noted that members of CEDAC should be thinking about whether they'd like to serve on the Downtown Network Board as liaison to the Economic Restructuring Committee, or as a member of the committee itself.

7. **Tannery Update**

John Arnold and Martin Cates gave an update on forming a community group to address next steps for the Tannery property. Martin reviewed the Select Board's proposal for skill sets and backgrounds for members of the group and noted that the process would be led by a facilitator.

Robin McIntosh spoke about the Brownfields application.

Meg Quijano asked what the Select Board took away from the public vote on the Tannery. Martin said he would have liked to see a more decisive vote, and that through the upcoming process they'll be taking a close look at the guiding principles to determine if they represent what the community wants.

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

Suggestions were made for new Camden businesses to invite to the next CEDAC meeting. Karen Brace suggested Redzone. John Arnold suggested Maine Foodie Tours and Robin McIntosh gave a description of Maine Foodie Tours.

Ellis Cohn spoke about economic development implications of the Middle School vote, noting that it's a large investment in the community. Involvement by CEDAC was discussed. Deb pointed out that a new school could draw young families to Camden, while higher taxes may detract from people moving here.

9. **Further information on previous agenda items**

Pat Finnigan gave an update on the Economic and Community Development Director position, saying there has been interest in the position and that there will be a lot of good people to choose from. She said she has a draft ad ready and that she understands the concern about filling the position.

Pat commented on the stakeholder group being formed for the Tannery. She said that the process that's being followed is the same as the highly effective process that had resulted in the Downtown Master Plan.

Pat also gave an update on the Opera House where movies and community supported music will become ongoing programs. She noted that events were being held at the Opera House during Winterfest week.

Robin McIntosh asked about the Opera House economic impact study and suggested that the large town events be a part of the study.

Previous CEDAC goals were reviewed including entrepreneurial space, use of second floors in downtown buildings, and high-speed internet.

The group further discussed CEDAC's potential involvement in the middle school issue. Members expressed that it would have been good to have more time to work on the issue prior to a public vote. Deb pointed out that a no vote would not mean the community doesn't want a new school but that this may not be the right proposal.

John Arnold made a motion that CEDAC support development of education in the community since it is vital to economic and community development. Deb Dodge seconded the motion.

Some members felt they would not be comfortable supporting this motion due to the fact that the definition of the committee is advisory in nature. Meg pointed out that if CEDAC were to be involved, action should have been taken several months ago. Deb pointed out that we may have an opportunity to discuss with the school administration the economic benefits of a new school on Camden, noting that with the pending vote we assume that tax implications would cause a negative impact.

John Arnold withdrew his motion and Deb Dodge withdrew her second to the motion.

Ellis Cohn noted that the group seemed to agree that the school is an important issue. Lowrie Sargent noted that if the vote is no, involvement of other members of the community in the process should be encouraged.

10. Adjourn

John Arnold made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Deb Dodge seconded this motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Brace
Recording Secretary