



**Town of Camden
Minutes of the Meeting of the
Community & Economic Development
Advisory Committee**

**October 6, 2014
4:30pm**

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

GUESTS: Don White, Select Board Liaison

ABSENT: Paul Cavalli, Staci Coomer, Meg Quijano, Kipp Wright

1. Call to Order

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

2. Tannery Vote November 4th

Pat Finnigan reviewed the importance of CEDAC's role in helping voters make an informed decision on the future of the Tannery site. She outlined the estimated costs of constructing a park on the site and handed out details of various park scenarios.

Pat then summarized facts about the Tannery site including the history of the Town's involvement. For cleaning up the site, the total project cost had been \$1,092,000 of which \$836,000 had been funded by a Town bond passed in 2005 and \$200,000 had been funded by a Federal grant. The annual debt service on the bond since 2005 has been \$61,000 per year, a payment that would continue through 2025.

The group provided input on the public information sheets along with a possible statement from CEDAC. Wording of proposed changes included the following: *"We are working on a development plan to take to the neighborhood and the community that would incorporate compatible business/commercial uses, designed in a neighborhood scale that would incorporate the Riverwalk, and which would enhance the neighborhood and the community. We would like that process to continue."*

The concept of a balanced approach was discussed. Arnold noted that with public sensitivity to "big business," an option emphasizing a balanced mixed use may have been the most popular if included with the other two as a third choice. Pat said that since nothing could technically change regarding handling of the site before the June Town Meeting, this may provide a breathing space where community conversation can continue. White noted that this conversation after the vote takes place would be central to reaching a collectively beneficial solution.

Deb Dodge expressed concern that money spent toward developing a park would take away funds that would have been available for completing the Riverwalk. She noted that the public won't feel the vote is advisory in nature but will perceive it as a definite answer regarding the use of the site.

White and Cohn discussed an option that since the Town doesn't want to build and own another park, those who wish a park could buy it and develop it.

Finnigan described somewhat of a lack of trust, along with a we/them environment that crops up as a perception of some citizens. She emphasized CEDAC's role in helping the public understand that beneficial guiding principles are in place and that CEDAC and the Select Board have worked hard searching for balanced outcomes. Finnigan said these weeks provide an opportunity for residents to understand that CEDAC is on the community's side and to build more trust in the elected officials to make good decisions on the behalf of Camden.

Deb Dodge made a motion that CEDAC write a letter regarding the Tannery vote to the Select Board, and that a draft would be circulated to CEDAC members for input. Meg Quijano seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

3. MCEDD Update

Robin said that MCEDD is going before the County to request its annual financial contribution prior to the start of the County's budgeting process. MCEDD is asking for support from the communities it serves for the funding it receives from the County.

Deb Dodge made a motion that CEDAC write a letter to Knox County supporting the their continued support of MCEDD. Ellis Cohn seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

4. Public Comment/questions on agenda items

There were no public comments.

5. Adjourn

Next Meeting

The next CEDAC meeting will be held October 27.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Brace
Recording Secretary