

Town of Camden
Community & Economic Development Advisory Committee Minutes

Monday, December 30, 2013 at 5:00 PM
Washington St Conf Room, Camden Opera House

Attending: Deb Dodge (Chair), Martin Cates, Meg Quijano, Staci Coomer, Ellis Cohn, Kipp Wright, Lowrie Sargent, Brian Hodges, Jim Heard (guest), John Arnold (guest)

1. Approval of minutes from 11/25/2013 meeting – unanimous
2. Tannery roundtable update
 - Deb reviewed the Tannery roundtable discussion held with various subject matter experts on 12/18/2013. Themes from the meeting included:
 - i. Not an ideal location for commercial activity
 - ii. The VRAP on the parcel is realistically not a significant issue
 - iii. Looking at residential uses may be a better approach
 - Jim Heard referenced that a European model was also discussed which allows for mixed use (e.g. commercial downstairs, residence upstairs) as well as a mix of demographics within the same development. This would address workforce housing but also create a transitional model.
 - Deb included that the entire area in and around the Tannery site should be looked at and that we should connect with the Weymouths, which members agreed would be good to do.
 - Brian added that he connected with John Morris who suggested “tiny houses” be considered. Lowrie was concerned this might not support needed density. Ellis asked if we were trying to find a solution to address the outstanding debt for cleanup and, if so, it would require substantial value.
 - Meg suggested we speak with Lani at Megunticook Market as well. Brian and Deb will meet with the Weymouths. Brian will also schedule a meeting with John Scholz, John Morris, Deb, and himself.
3. Tax Increment Financing – *Brian, all* – 20 min
 - Credit Enhancement Agreement (CEA), policy
 - i. Brian reviewed a draft policy and clarified items as needed. In general, members liked the CEA policy created for new businesses. There were concerns raised about the policy for existing businesses creating too high of a threshold to meet. They requested this be looked at again and also suggested that case examples be created to help with ease in understanding.
 - Amended TIF
 - i. Brian reviewed the elements to be amended. CEDAC members offered the following suggestions:
 1. Include parking lots behind Knox Mill
 2. Add wi-fi for downtown

3. Ellis requested Brian craft language that would support public transit expenses so they could be reviewed.
 - Utilize Mid Coast Economic Development District to assist
 - i. In response to concerns about work schedule and potential of projects “piling up”, Brian suggested that staff from MCEDD could be utilized on a contractual basis. He spoke to their ability and skill sets.
 - ii. CEDAC supported the idea provided there were funds in the budget.
4. Discuss goals – all – 30 min
 - Due to time constraints, there were no reports for these items.
 - Leadership to keep Downtown Master Plan moving forward – *Meg/Pete*
 - Partner with Opera House cmte; economic impact analysis – *Peter*
 - Develop entrepreneurial, incubator space – *Brian*
 - Building inventory; assess upper floor space in Downtown – *Lowrie/Meg*
 - Market Camden to target audiences – *Deb, Brian*
 - i. Attract high-tech, internet based companies; infrastructure in place?
 - ii. Explore more opportunities for recreational/active tourism
5. Public comment /questions – none
6. Adjourn

NOTE: Downtown Network Board will meet Monday 01/13/2014 3:30PM
The next CEDAC meeting is Monday 01/27/2014 5:30PM