



Town of Camden
Minutes of the Meeting of the
Camden Economic Development Advisory Committee
January 28, 2013
5:30pm

PRESENT: Chairperson Peter Gross, Pete Brown, Martin Cates, Deb Dodge, Development Director Brian Hodges

ABSENT: Rick Bates, Ellis Cohn, Staci Coomer, Meg Quijano, Lowrie Sargent, Kipp Wright

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:30pm.

2. Approval of Minutes from November 26, 2012

Pete Brown made a motion to approve the minutes of the November 26, 2012 meeting as presented. The motion was seconded by Deb Dodge. It was unanimously approved.

3. Development Director's Report

a) Regional Transportation Project

Brian Hodges spoke about the regional transportation effort being undertaken by the Midcoast Transit Committee. He said that a subcommittee had developed an RFP for contracting a consultant to determine transportation needs of the mid-coast and to make a recommendation to the committee. Hodges said the committee has \$60,000 available for this project.

Hodges told the group that it had been decided that the bid would be awarded to the firm of Nelson/Nygaard. He said that the Midcoast Transit Committee is currently negotiating a contract with this company. Hodges also noted that Donald White is the acting chair of the group. The timeframe for the study would span 12 months, he said, so that the activity changes that occur throughout all four seasons can be studied and included in the report.

b) Opera House

Hodges reported that the financial needs and capacities of the Opera House are being assessed with the goal of having the facility become self-sufficient like the Snow Bowl. Hodges said that he had asked a colleague from the University of Maine at Orono to perform a student – professor analysis on the Opera House to assist in this assessment.

Pete Brown noted that it would be beneficial to the Town and to its citizens to publicize all the good work that's being done by the development office. Methods of publicity were discussed. Ideas included the following: posting storyboards in the area of the Town Office to display examples of outreach and articles as they are published; providing copies of these articles in the Town Office for distribution to the public; and creating a section on the website linking to stories about Camden. In addition, Hodges said that for informational purposes he would supply his

weekly work report to the committee to keep everyone informed about the projects that are going on. With the upcoming budget committee process, the group agreed that a few members of CEDAC should be present during deliberations to support the value that's being created for the Town by the Development Director and to articulate recent accomplishments.

4. Riverwalk and Public Landing Project

Hodges reported that 11 submissions had been received for the study and design project involving the Riverwalk and Public Landing. He said that the subcommittee had worked on a tight timeline, with February 1st as the target date to complete scoring and February 4th to rate all the firms for the bid award. Hodges reported that the next phase would involve interviews to be held the week of February 11th, with the goal of making a recommendation to the Select Board at their February 19th meeting.

The work group for the Riverwalk and Public Landing planning and design project had been formed by representatives from various Town Committees, Hodges said, including Parks and Recreation, the Harbor Committee, the Conservation Commission, the Knox Mill Condominium Complex, the Camden Downtown Business Group, the Downtown Network Board, and CEDAC. Peter Gross suggested that the Megunticook Watershed Association also be invited to have a representative serve on the work group for this project, as well as the Camden Public Library. Members of the committee discussed potential additional candidates who might be interested in serving on the work group.

5. Branding/Marketing/Advertising

a) Midcoast Magnet Regional Branding Project

Deb Dodge described a Midcoast Magnet meeting she had attended on December 10th where the group launched its regional branding effort to be funded in part by a grant they had received. Dodge reported that Midcoast Magnet hopes to develop an umbrella brand for our region that municipalities, businesses, and other entities could use in promotions. Dodge's full summary of the Midcoast Magnet meeting is enclosed.

a) Downtown Network Board Endorsement

Hodges noted that one of the top priorities stemming from the Downtown Master Plan had been to launch a branding/marketing/advertising effort for the Town of Camden. The Select Board had approved the list of recommended priorities during a meeting the previous month, he added. Subsequently, the Downtown Network Board had endorsed proceeding with the proposed marketing and branding project. Hodges reported that at their most recent meeting, the Downtown Network Board had voted unanimously to recommend dedicating TIF money in the amount of \$30,000 toward this effort.

6. TIF Funds Recommendation – Feb. 19th Select Board meeting

Pete Brown made a motion that CEDAC support the branding/marketing effort for the Town of Camden and recommend to the Select Board that \$30,000 of TIF funding be dedicated to this project. Deb Dodge seconded the motion. It was unanimously approved.

There was discussion on the purpose of TIF funds. It was noted that TIF money is not available to balance the budget and cannot be used for support items that would normally be covered by the

Town's general fund.

Members of the CEDAC were encouraged to attend the Select Board meeting on February 19th where three items relevant to the committee's work would be addressed: (1) the Public Landing/Riverwalk project, (2) the Branding/Marketing project, and (3) an item relating to the Camden Affordable Housing Organization.

There was discussion around how affordable housing in Camden is an important priority for CEDAC. Hodges told the group that he had been working with Joanne Campbell to talk about her organization's work and next steps. The item on the February 19th agenda would be asking the Select Board to support an application by Camden Affordable Housing for a CDBG grant to support completion of the Lupine Terrance project.

7. Public Comment/Questions on Agenda Items

Martin Cates told CEDAC that the Camden Select Board had met recently with the Rockport Select Board to talk over how they might work together in the future. He said that it was very productive and that they hope to hold this meeting every couple of months.

Hodges noted that a two-town project with Rockport to construct a sidewalk from Leonard's clothing store in Rockport (just beyond Maritime Farms) to the existing Camden sidewalk which ends at Camden St was being considered by the Maine Dept of Transportation for funding. This would provide a safe means of egress for those using the Concord Trailways bus service, as well as residents of both towns.

8. There was some talk on business incubators, as well as the Knox Mill TIF that had not yet been established.

9. Next Meeting

The next meeting of CEDAC will be held on February 25, 2013 at 5:30pm.

Adjourn

Deb Dodge made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Pete Brown seconded this motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Brace
Recording Secretary

Recap Midcoast Magnet Regional Brand Kickoff Meeting December 10, 2012

With the help from a grant from the Sewall organization The Midcoast Magnet group organized this kick off meeting to start the process of creating a strong regional brand. Magnet considers their region to be Know and Waldo counties.

Their mission is to attract, connect and retain professionals in the midcoast, and they have found it daunting without such a brand. They retained a professional facilitator to guide the process.

There were 30 in attendance from Belfast to Port Clyde, from the business community, arts organizations, municipalities, land trusts.

The goal was to create consensus on what the key elements of regional brand were, and how to achieve it.

The meeting started out doing a lot of brainstorming on what each of us loved about the Midcoast, what made this region unique.

It was agreed that whatever the brand would be, it would need to distinguish the region from the rest of Maine, New England and everywhere else.

It needed to have two elements: What we valued and what to tell others. It should be an umbrella brand that allows for the different institutions and communities to use it and tailor it to their specific audiences.

After long discussion about what distinguishes this region, finally the question was asked who was the audience? The target of the brand. Was it business, if so were we talking about small, large (in light of space constraints), or tourism?

Up to this point the meeting had been feeling like we had the cart before the horse, but all the brainstorming did get everyone's juices flowing.

We had a presentation of some research done on other regional branding efforts by Mary Dale Abernathy and 2 others from Maine Leadership Academy. The Berkshires, King County, WA (Destination heritage) but the most interesting was Roanoke Virginia;

Roanoke basically realized that they had been "chasing smokestacks" for 21 years, and unsuccessfully. They spent 3-4 years working on rebranding Roanoke, they looked at what their assets were, what were the hidden assets? They concluded it needed to be very focused.

They wanted to create business opportunities for young people; attract companies that supported the brand, and to attract companies that wanted to be associated with the people Roanoke wanted to attract. They realized their brand was the outdoors. Roanoke Outside.com has two major elements, living in Roanoke and doing business there. Take a look.

We then moved onto create a vision for the process, define the objectives of the process, the steps that would be taken to create the brand:

The vision became:

Develop nurture and refine a brand for the region of Knox and Waldo counties that reflects the top values of our people and the best experiences of our region (what is unique and special about living and working here) in a manner that attracts people to stay and settle in this region and contribute to our ~~creative~~ economy.

The group drafted objectives to support the process:

Draft Objectives –

- 1) Identify and institutionalize the leadership and networks necessary to successfully guide and sustain the project.
- 2) Establish a critical mass of buy-in and enthusiasm among community leaders and members (not buy -in from everybody –you can spend a lot of money and effort chasing the last bit of buy-in, and working with community leaders first because you do not have unlimited budgets).
- 3) Articulate statement that reflects what people of the region most value about the region (And here I encourage you to put pencils to papers, write down value statements that you can rely on)
- 4) Establish a brand that reflects community values and unique experiences, reflected through images, words, sounds, smells, and other means.
- 5) Establish measures of success and a process for evaluation and refinement into the future.

There were 11 specific steps outlined to achieve the objectives:

The very next step if for Midcoast Magnet to create a steering committee to move the process forward.

Other details:

Next Steps Leading Ideas

1. Establish some simple Values Statements
2. Take the statements out to the communities and get agreement
3. Something like the Camden Economic Development Project – getting good buy-in about values from the start
4. THEN develop the brand from those value statements
5. Formally document the vision and objectives for this exercise
 - o Also articulates how people can participate
6. Gather community values
7. Learn more about Roanoke’s survey
 - o Consider something similar here?
8. Name the region
9. Engage others in this conversation
 - a. Community stakeholder analysis
 - i. Who
 - ii. How to reach – probably a system of a “outreach tree”
 - b. Need to be aggressive in reaching out to people and engaging them
 - c. Identify leaders and the leadership structure
10. Identify localities within the region
11. “Multi-sectoral problem solving” might attract resources

Region’s distinguishing characteristics:

Community

- Midcoast Maine – a place to love
- “Opportunity” an open-ness to new ideas plus infrastructure to support
- “Cutting edge” whether organic farming, tech (pop tech) arts, boat-building
- People from here, people from away
- Fun and sophisticated
- The way it feels when you take a hike, hear a concert, see a peregrine falcon
- A way of life
- A community where everyone can participate and is needed
- Create. Recreate. Connect. The community of Midcoast Maine welcomes you
- Engaged connected citizens

Small town

- Small town vibe
- Small town life with world class opportunities
- Midcoast Maine – small towns big experience
- Small town life with world class amenities
- Real people small towns warm welcomes
- World class life in small town Maine

Art/Creativity/Cultural

- Art at a professional level
- World class events – Juice, Camden Conference, Pop Tech, Windjammer Festival, Common Ground Fair
- Maine’s creative coast
- World class cultural capacity – Farnsworth, CMCA, art galleries, artistic heritage
- A place for artists
- Creativity and Culture abounds (abundant)
- Eclectic/variety
- “Funky” creative, independent, nature oriented, community oriented
- Wildlife and wild life
- Near access to metro and islands/rural, virtual workforce
- Great shopping (relatively speaking)
- A virtuous circle of nature, art, culture and commerce
- Educational opportunities
- Surprising intellectual capacity Juice/CMC, Pop Tech, Camden Conference, etc.
- Where the world meets Maine
- Is there a distinction? “Heart” of midcoast
- Easy to be “local”
- Authentic
- Midcoast Maine “Genuine by nature”
- Hard working, farming, fishing, manufacturing
- Downtowns/sense of place
- Rich traditions
- Preservation, heritage
- Where culture and nature connect
- Midcoast Maine: where nature and culture meet
- “Backwoods geniuses”
- Accessible culture
- Excellent place to raise kids
- Wonderful place to raise a family...good business climate, schools, beautiful place to create and recreate
- It’s safe
- Culture kindness community
- Curling
- “Connectedness” small enough so you can work/play in different spheres and run into same people, create community

Variety

- Landscape quality – mountains, lakes, ocean, gardens, forest, beaches, we’ve got it all!
- If you are bored here you are dead
- Unlimited choices
- Endless discovery
- Lifelong learning opportunities

Nature

- The way it looks, scenic landscape, historic buildings, expansive bay
- Water access
- Mountains meet the sea
- On the water/off the water, boating and sailing culture
- Way of life, beautiful geography
- World-class scenery/setting
- The range of geographies: the sea, the mountains, the farms, the downtowns, the villages
- Outdoor experience for all people (ages, abilities)

Natural beauty, world class culture, interested and interesting people