



Windham Economic Development Committee (WEDC) Minutes
Friday, August 11th, 2023
Community Development Department
Approved on September 8, 2023

Call to order 7:34 am.

Present: Mark Samsel (BOS Rep), Gary Garfield, Dale Valvo (Chair), Claire Macoul, Paul Brozo, Theo Moser, Matthew Swoboda, Mitch Jacoby, Jacob Cross (Planning Board), Kristi St. Laurent

Also attending: Alex Mello (Community Development Dept)

Appointment of alternates for absent members: Theo Moser for Full Member vacant seat

Review of minutes from July: changes requested to bold headings in Reports Motion to approve with those changes proposed by Gary Garfield, seconded by Mark Samsel, carried 9-0-0.

Economic Development Update by Alex Mello, Community Development Director

- On 8/8/23 the ZBA granted conditional variance approval for Middlesex Glass Phase 1; next steps are State permits and Planning Board approvals. Note it is believed that both parcels are being purchased which would allow for follow on Phase 2 also (envisioned as retail)
- No other updates from projects noted at last meeting, other than sewer is being discussed for development including apartments at former site of Park Place Lanes
- Merrimack Bank open now, may be interested in additional sites

Liaison Reports:

Infrastructure Subcommittee: NHDOT has started Rte. 111 corridor study from Wall St to Ledge Rd. DOT met with BOS 8/7/23. This is fully funded to extent of \$553k. Schedule ~2yrs. Larger Rt 111 study from Kingston to Hollis planned for 5 years out.

Subcommittee members and Town Administrator met with Carol Morris of Morris Communications 8/10/23 to discuss Public Advisory Committee (PAC), envisaged at ~16 people, no alternates. Morris will put together ad. to solicit volunteers and make recc to BOS, expected to take 4-6wks to form committee. Those PAC members will be responsible for communicating to their group members. Also there will be a communications plan – press releases, High School meetings. In general Morris Communications will be primary and release at SNHPC level and Windham will cross reference them.

Note the prior corridor study completed in 2011 which will be used as partial starting point for this one, and to save time and money ideas already heavily discounted there will not be extensively studied again.

Dale Valvo thanked Mark Samsel for his work on this. Mark Samsel noted that after the study, the recommendations could get into the state Ten Year Plan (TYP)

Refer to previous study (<https://www.windhamnh.gov/200/NH-Route-111-Corridor-Wall-Street-Extens>) and 2023 Master Plan (<https://www.windhamnh.gov/333/Master-Plan>) for positions and actions regarding Rte. 111 traffic options.

Jacob Cross asked about scope of the traffic corridor study and per Mark Samsel it is potentially wide. Jacob Cross noted that in 2023 Master Plan there are up front transportation objectives on types of Rte. 111 updates (see page 26). Mark Samsel noted that the PAC will have to reconcile all inputs; the Master Plan does have a key role but not the only one. Per Jacob Cross, the Planning Board would likely support traffic light retiming; that could be worked on its own faster track. Gary Garfield noted that study purpose is to relieve traffic on Rt 111. If we do nothing, that risks impacts in the future (more congestion/accidents) and even NHDOT overriding action.

Paul Brozo has joined the Infrastructure Subcommittee. Thanks to Mike Oldenburg for his many years of support in an advisory capacity.

Communications Subcommittee: Subcommittee should be revived per Dale Valvo. There are no current members. Gary Garfield suggested we put out regular WEDC business factual summaries in the Windham Independent and social media to improve visibility. Claire Macoul questioned need for a Subcommittee unless

there is a big project we need to communicate about.

Paul Brozo asked if the Communications Subcommittee could be just one person; Dale Valvo agreed if others are able to help, as would probably happen. Claire Macoul gave some background on how it used to work. Discussion agreed that a streamlined process would be important, eg to get quick updates ready that Community Development vets before release. Dale Valvo will think about process. The Rte. 111 project is an important driver to get something established so people are aware what is going on.

Land Use Subcommittee: Kristi St. Laurent and the Subcommittee are continuing to look at the application of Form based Code.

BOS: Most of Mark Samsel's activity has been in support of Rte. 111 study. He also mentioned the recent Warde Senior Living proposed water line link up, and emphasized that the water line along Rt 111 should be interlinked with any road changes as opposed to considered later or separately.

Planning Board: Jacob Cross sees his role as liaison back and forth and would support off-site meeting too. Gary Garfield noted that the EDC would be keen to know their ideas on the Rte. 111 study.

Zoning amendments are in discussion at Planning Board. There can be confusion when/whether decisions should go to voters e.g. for zoning exception, and they want to clarify that. Zoning amendments will mainly focus on forest conservation and water protection, with wording changes being needed in opinion of Planning Board.

Old and New Business: None. Mark Samsel noted that Tuscan Village will be getting a Capital Grille which will raise the bar for the area.

Announcements: None

Motion to adjourn proposed at 8:40am by Gary Garfield, seconded by Theo Moser, carried unanimously.