

**City of Portsmouth**  
**Economic Development Commission**  
**Meeting Minutes**

December 14, 2001

Conference Room A

7:30 AM

**Present:** Tom Ferrini, John Hynes, Scott Pafford, Steve Alie, Paul Harvey Sr., Dana Levenson, Cliff Taylor, Everett Eaton, City Manager John Bohenko

**Absent:** Mark Simpson

**Others:** Nancy Carmer

In the absence of Chairman Simpson, Commissioner Ferrini served as chair of the meeting.

**Meeting Minutes**

Commissioner Taylor moved and Commissioner Hynes seconded the motion to approve the minutes of November 2, 2001 as written. The motion passed unanimously.

**EDC Action Plan**

Ms. Carmer distributed the current action plan for modification. Acting Chairman Ferrini facilitated a discussion of which items in the plan have been accomplished, which items need to be updated and which items need to be added. There was consensus among the members that the partnership with the chamber has been successful and should be continued. In addition, the Commission should continue the public private partnerships for infrastructure improvements in the central business district (with Vaughan Mall a priority) and to Exit 7. Also, there should be a focus on the second parking garage and the next phase of the Northern Tier revitalization. Commissioner Alie moved and Commissioner Pafford seconded the motion to revise the Action Plan for 2002 as discussed. The motion passed unanimously with Commissioner Hynes abstaining.

**Review of Urban Revitalization Tools**

City Manager Bohenko stated that a compilation of financial tools for urban revitalization was included in phase I of the Northern Tier Feasibility Study. Since that time, the Claremont school funding legislation impacted the Tax Increment Financing (TIF) tool for funding the types of public improvements contemplated in the Northern Tier Project. Ms. Carmer has researched the TIF enabling legislation and provided copies of the law to the Commission and explained the difference in the TIF financing pre- and post-Claremont legislation. She also described other financing opportunities including Community Development Financing Authority funding and the US Department of Housing and Urban Development Section 108 program for economic development. At the next meeting the EDC will discuss a potential TIF district and the invite a

representative from a community that has TIF experience to share their experience with the EDC.

### **Vaughan Mall Improvements**

Landscape Architects Melina/Hyland has been contracted to provide conceptual design services for the Vaughan Mall project. A joint meeting for input with the EDC and the property owners will be scheduled for early February 2001.

### **Other Business**

*Lonza Employee Housing Survey* - Lonza Biologics is undertaking a 275,000 square foot addition to its Pease Tradeport facility. It anticipates hiring 400 new employees once the addition is complete. The City and the Chamber of Commerce are working with Lonza's human resources staff to conduct a pilot survey on housing and commuting patterns. The one-page survey will be answered online by Lonza employees and, if successful, will be used to gather similar data from other companies.

*Cultural Plan Update* – The draft Cultural Plan, which recognizes the value that local arts and cultural organizations contribute to Portsmouth's economic vitality, was the subject of a public hearing before the City Council on December 3, 2001. The City Council referred it to the planning board for incorporation into the City's Master Plan. The planning board will take up the recommendation at a special meeting on January 3, 2001. Commissioner Eaton noted that Kathy Mullens of the Greater Portsmouth Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors raised some questions at their last meeting about the Cultural Plan goal of creating a quasi-public cultural agency. The concern involves competition for funding.

*RFP for Second Parking Garage* – The City Manager said that he has purposely slowed down the RFP process to allow the City Council to be advised of the conceptual options and information gathered to date on the Worth parking lot. The City Manager proposed a work session with the City Council on January 28, 2002.

*Miscellaneous* - A brief discussion followed regarding:

- new vacancies in the downtown,
- the relocation of Bottomline Technologies to Pease Tradeport as targeted (May 2002), the expansion of Aprisma,
- and the downsizing of some firms such as Celestica.

### **Public Comment Period**

No members of the public wished to comment. The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy M. Carmer

Community Development Program Manager