

**MEETING MINUTES**  
**PORTSMOUTH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION**

May 4, 2007

City Hall Conference Room A

7:30 a.m.

Members Present: Dana Levenson, Chairman; Everett Eaton, Vice-Chairman; Ned Raynolds, Robin McIntosh, William Gladhill, Paul Harvey Sr., Michael Murray, John P. Bohenko; City Manager

Members Excused: Tom Ferrini, Edward Hayes, Cliff Taylor, Lisa DeStefano

Staff present: Nancy Carmer, Economic Development Program Manager

---

Chairman Levenson opened the meeting at 7:30 a.m.

**Minutes**

Commissioner Harvey made a motion to accept the minutes of April 6, 2007. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Raynolds and passed unanimously.

**Zoning Amendment Updates**

- City Council will hold 1<sup>st</sup> reading (5/7/07) on proposed zoning amendment for Non-Residential Planned Unit Development Overlay District in Office Research and Industrial Zones.

**Other Significant Development Approvals/Activity**

- HDC issued approvals for the following development proposals:
  1. 82-86 Congress St. (one-story addition over Bull Moose Records)
  2. 7 Islington St. and Bridge St. ( 3-4 story mixed use project)
  3. 68 State St. (4 story boutique hotel)
  4. Parade Mall Phase 2 (progressing through work sessions)
- Lonza has proposed an additional 250,000 square foot addition that when complete could create an additional 350 jobs and bring the facility's total square footage to 650,000.
- John Hancock Insurance plans to relocate its existing 65-person staff to the Pease Tradeport this fall and hire an additional 150-200 people by the end of the year. The company is looking to lease space at 164 Corporate Drive.

**EDC Reports and Updates**

- *Chamber Government Affairs Committee (GAC)* – William Gladhill reported that at the last meeting the committee heard from Richard Green, Executive Director of Pease International Tradeport. Topics discussed regarded the NH Port and bringing in container cargo, sheetrock from Halifax, Nova Scotia and locating the Maritime Museum at the Port.

- *Building Re-use Committee Activities*  
Mr. Bohenko reported that the Building Re-use Committee held a listening session on the re-use of the South Meeting House on 4/10/07. Approximately 40 residents of the South End neighborhood attended. There was strong support for retaining the building as an important historic city-owned meeting house with potential for partnering with the neighborhood on potential function space for lectures, concerts, rentals for small gatherings, etc. The Committee subsequently voted to hold off making a recommendation of re-use until further discussions with the Friends of the South End on the concept they have in mind.
- *Northern Tier Updates HarborCorp LLC Hotel and Conference Facility* – City Manager Bohenko stated that on May 1, 2007 the Technical Advisory Committee held its second public meeting to consider the design of the proposed hotel, garage and conference center following a series of work sessions. The public hearing was continued to May 8<sup>th</sup> to enable the applicant to provide additional information.
- *Islington St. Corridor RFP* – Ms. Carmer provided copies of the RFP for review. Members made suggested additions to the Scope of Work and to the project schedule. RFP will go out next week.
- *Other Business* - Ms. Carmer provided copies of the first quarter 2007 report on the commercial office market from Grubb & Ellis Coldstream Real Estate Advisors, Inc. The report notes that Portsmouth had a 7.6% office vacancy rate for the period, the lowest in the seacoast. This is driven by the attractive opportunities provided at Pease and in the city's central business district. By comparison, Rochester's office vacancy rate for the same period was 30.5%.

**Public Comment Period** – David Choate of Coldstream Real Estate Advisors advised the EDC that soon the New Hampshire Technical College will relocate its operation from Stratham to Pease Tradeport. The sale of this building will fund the \$11 million renovation to the existing facility at Pease. With over 35 acres of developable land and a 97,000 square foot building, the vacated Stratham space will be a significant redevelopment opportunity and will impact the Portsmouth real estate market.

Mr. Choate also reported that there is a move afoot to develop a “Faneuil Hall- type” project in a part of the Northern Tier. He suggested that some projects for EDC exploration are the Southgate Plaza redevelopment and Ralph's Trucks property. Lastly, he said there is a new bank forming in town. Bill Young is the key person in the development of the new lending institution that is slated to locate at 2 Harbour Place.

**Next Meeting Date** - June 1, 2007

Respectfully submitted,  
Nancy M. Carmer  
Economic Development Program Manager