

**MINUTES OF THE  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION**

December 6, 2013

Conference Room A

7:30 a.m.

**Members Present:** Everett Eaton, Chairman; Christine Dwyer, Dana Levenson, Ron Zolla, Eric Gregg Bob Marchewka, Jack Thorsen, John Pratt

**Excused:** John Bosen, Philip Cohen, Josh Cyr, City Manager John P. Bohenko

**City Staff:** Nancy Carmer

Chairman Eaton opened the meeting at 7:39 a.m.

**Approval of draft meeting minutes of November 1, 2013**

Commissioner Pratt moved and City Councilor Dwyer seconded a motion to approve the draft meeting minutes of November 1, 2013 as written. The motion carried unanimously.

**Presentation: Business Resiliency and Climate Adaptation**

Peter Britz, City of Portsmouth Environmental Planner gave a presentation summarizing an analysis done on the future impacts of sea level rise and the storm surge of the Portsmouth area including modeling. He showed slides depicting the future impact of storm surge events and sea level rise in waterfront areas and described future planning efforts for resiliency preparedness.

Roger Stephenson, Outreach Consultant, Union of Concerned Scientists provided information on the impact of recent storm events upon small business. He quoted a 2005 study by the Hampton NH Fire Chief on business preparedness planning. The study concluded that, with the exception of the hospitals and utilities, very few businesses have adequate resiliency planning. Mr. Stephenson quoted another study by the Hartford Insurance Company which showed that after Hurricane Sandy many of the businesses which closed for a week or more never recovered and went out of business. Following the presentation, a discussion ensued on the opportunities for the City to conduct business continuity workshops such as Nashua, NH is planning which the EDC encouraged doing and may be able to assist with implementation.

**Other Business**

*Market Street Gateway Project – Public Input Meeting*

Ms. Carmer reminded the EDC that the first public input meeting on the Market St. Gateway Project will be Dec. 10, 2013, 6:30 pm in the Levenson Room at the Public Library. At the meeting, city staff and its consultants RSG, Inc., and Richardson and Associates will present draft plans in keeping with the initial project goal to create an attractive, safe and inviting gateway to the City's historic downtown with landscaped medians, waterfront parks and pedestrian scale lighting. The plan also incorporates strategies that comply with the City's recently adopted Complete Streets Policy, Walk Friendly Communities Policy, and Bike Friendly Communities Policy. For those unable to attend, the December 10, 2013 public meeting will be recorded and rebroadcast later on Channel 22 and the City of Portsmouth website.

*2013 EDC Year in Review and 2014 EDC Action Plan Priorities*

Copies of the summary of EDC activity for 2013 and the 2014 EDC Action Plan Priorities were distributed for review. The Commission discussed the priorities and agreed that they should be included into the comprehensive Action Plan and voted on in January.

*Master Plan EDC Input Session- establish date for January 2014*

The consensus for a meeting with the Master Plan consultant was to incorporate it into the regular January 3<sup>rd</sup> EDC meeting and have the meeting run a bit longer than usual to accommodate the consultant.

**Public Comment**

David Choate was present and made the following comments:

- RE : Resiliency planning: Home and commercial property buyers need to be diligent when reviewing flood maps as some will now change as a result of storm surge and sea level rise planning. Costs of flood insurance will likely increase.
- RE: Development: The current climate regarding public response to development proposals is contentious and sometimes comments are driven by inaccurate information. It is important for the City to provide factual information and the positive impact project has on the tax rate so that the public is informed when commenting on project proposals.
- The suggestion was made to invite the new Mayor to an upcoming EDC meeting.

**Confirm Next Meeting: Friday, January 3, 2013**

The meeting adjourned at 9:14 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Nancy Carmer  
Economic Development Program Manager