

**MINUTES OF THE
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION**

January 7, 2014

Conference Room A

7:30 a.m.

Members Present: Everett Eaton, Chairman; Dana Levenson, Josh Cyr, Bob Marchewka,

Excused: Christine Dwyer, John Bosen, Philip Cohen, Ron Zolla, Eric Gregg, John Pratt

Absent: Jack Thorsen

City Staff: City Manager John P. Bohenko, Nancy Carmer, Economic Development Program Manager

Chairman Eaton opened the meeting at 7:41 a.m. and noted that, because there was not a quorum present, the meeting agenda would be abbreviated to include two items, 1) EDC talking points for the January 9th Joint Meeting with Planning Board, EDC and HDC on HarborCorp, Inc. project and, 2) Public Comment

EDC talking points for the January 9th Joint Meeting with Planning Board, EDC and HDC on HarborCorp, Inc. project

Draft talking points were distributed and discussed in preparation for the for the January 9th joint meeting with Planning Board, EDC and HDC on the HarborCorp, Inc. project. The City Manager advised the EDC that the Chairs of the Planning Board, HDC and EDC received a letter from 7 residents requesting the work session be postponed for a variety of reasons. The City Attorney reviewed the letter and opined that there is no legal reason to not hold the work session. The Planning Board scheduled the meeting and invited the other Commissions and the Chairman was contacted about the request in the letter and was resolute that he would like to move ahead with the meeting.

EDC members reiterated support for the conference center for filling the void left for large events when Yoken's conference center closed and for the indirect economic development impacts. They also discussed the concern that the project does not exacerbate the city's current parking deficit. Other discussion points included a desire for activity along the street façade of the structure, importance of preserving the uniqueness of Portsmouth and including local retail when possible, concern about the balance of uses in the downtown to the detriment of new office space, and apprehension about the size and massing of the proposed development. The consensus was to send the draft talking points to EDC members for review and comment.

Public Comment

David Choate was present and made the following comments:

- In response to the EDC comment about desiring local retailers versus franchise in new development, Mr. Choate offered that the cost of new development is often outside the lease budget of smaller, local retail. He gave the example of PortWalk with lease rates of \$35 per square foot NNN.
- The suggestion was made to invite the new Mayor to an upcoming EDC meeting.

Confirm Next Meeting: Friday, February 7, 2014

The meeting adjourned at 8:50 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Carmer

Economic Development Program Manager