

MINUTES

Lakes Region Comprehensive Economic Development Strategies (CEDS) Strategy Committee Meeting

Southern NH University
Gilford, New Hampshire

February 27, 2008

Committee Members Present:

Bill Beyer, Meredith Village Savings Bank	Moe Lafreniere, The Common Man
Rick DeMark, North Country RC&D	Linda Normandin, Private Sector representative
Mark Edelstein, NH Community Technical College	Gerry O'Neil, Private Sector representative
Debbie Frawley-Drake, Lakes Region Linen	Carol Pierce, Laconia Human Relations Committee
Theresa Lamson, Greater Laconia-Weirs Beach Chamber of Commerce	Mark Scarano, GCEDC
Henry Lipman, LRGH	Chris Williams, Williams Architects
Rusty McLear, Hampshire Hospitality Holdings	Dick Waitt, LRPC

Others:

Carol Cantin, NH Department of Employment Security
Kimon Koulet, LRPC
Adam Hlasny, LRPC
Michael Tardiff, LRPC

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Bill Beyer at 4:15pm. The minutes of the January 30, 2008 CEDS Strategy Committee meeting were then accepted as written by a unanimous vote of the committee.

Update on Communications Efforts

Theresa Lamson provided an update on CEDS communications activities. She noted the first newsletter had been completed, with 3,000 printed and 1,000 distributed to date. Members of the CEDS committee were asked to help distribute newsletters to those who were not on the distribution list.

T. Lamson then referred to the draft project solicitation form that has been developed by the Collaboration and Communication subcommittee and had been emailed to the overall CEDS

committee for review. Once the project solicitation form is finalized the CEDS committee can go back to each community to ask about specific projects they would like included in the CEDS document.

Committee Updates

B. Beyer stated that the agenda had been modified to move committee reports earlier in the meeting. Linda Normandin then provided an update on the *Live Here, Work Here - Housing* subcommittee activities. She referred to a matrix of recommended changes to the subcommittee's Goals, Objectives, Strategies and Resources that she handed out (*Attachment 1*). She stated that the matrix was based upon work the committee had done since the goals, objectives, strategies and resources had been developed last summer. Kimon Koulet pointed out that each of the subcommittees had been asked to go back and look at the goals, objectives and strategies developed last year by the overall CEDS committee, and this was a great example of that process. B. Beyer noted that it was acceptable for the individual subcommittees to narrow down their choices of things to address, and said that the housing subcommittee was trying to clarify their potential action items. L. Normandin noted that one of the potential action items could be working with a small community on workforce housing related issues, and that community could be used as a model for other small communities.

Carol Cantin discussed the activities of the *Building Employees* subcommittee. She said that there was a collaboration meeting between representatives of local manufacturers and schools scheduled for March 5. She said that the subcommittee planned to review their goals and objectives to attempt to narrow them down, and would likely use the matrix format prepared for the housing subcommittee. B. Beyer noted that MVSBS would like to have someone attend the March 5 collaboration meeting.

Gerry O'Neil provided an update on the work of the *Natural Environment and Cultural Heritage* subcommittee. The subcommittee met twice since the last overall CEDS committee meeting and the subcommittee had developed revised goals, which he noted were a work in progress. He also pointed out that the energy subcommittee's goals should more than likely be included as the environmental subcommittee's goals as well. He followed that point by noting that the subcommittee's work could be strictly devoted to that of the environment and energy, with the cultural side of the subcommittee's work possibly left to another subcommittee. B. Beyer commended the subcommittee for working to narrow down the subcommittee's focus. Following a discussion of where the cultural component of the subcommittee's work belonged, the topic of adding culture to the Social Capital subcommittee's charge was approved by the CEDS committee.

G. O'Neil then discussed the topic of the Lake Winnepesaukee Watershed Management Project, and the request that he had sent to the CEDS committee seeking support letters for the project. K. Koulet said that LRPC had received a number of letters in support of the project, and letters could be received through mid-April and still be helpful in the application for funding.

G. O'Neil then reviewed the revised subcommittee goals (*Attachment 2*). Rick DeMark noted that the second goal related to maintaining the region's built environment in an environmentally sustainable manner was where the subcommittee's objectives were most related to the energy

committee's goals. The example he used was the intersection of the environment, energy and housing, where the ability to process timber locally instead of transporting it to Canada would add value to the region's timber resources. There is currently no option for processing timber in the area.

Chris Williams provided an update on the work of the *Energy and Sustainability* subcommittee (see *Attachment 3*), starting with the point that it will be important for the energy subcommittee to work closely with the other subcommittees. He asked the other subcommittees to consider the topic of sustainability when reviewing their individual subcommittee goals and objectives. He noted that the subcommittee planned to use the goals prepared by the Center Harbor Energy committee as examples to begin their preparation of goals.

G. O'Neil stated that the environment subcommittee had also questioned how the topic of transportation affected the CEDS. K. Koulet responded that while the topic of transportation was not one of the main topics identified by the CEDS visioning process last year, it is a topic that is thoroughly addressed through the LRPC's regional transportation process. Furthermore, the topic of transportation should be treated in a manner similar to that of energy, where each subcommittee should consider how transportation factors into their goals, objectives and strategies.

Debbie Frawley-Drake updated the CEDS committee on the work of the *Cultivate Social Capital* subcommittee. She noted she and Jack Terrill were planning to meet with Lou Feldstein of the NH Charitable Foundation to seek advice on social capital education and the development of social capital impact assessments. She stated that the subcommittee was planning to use the matrix developed by the housing subcommittee to review their goals and objectives.

Henry Lipman reviewed the recent work of the *New Economy* subcommittee. He started his updated by noting that an event in mid-February where the IT infrastructure in the region had failed highlighted several key issues regarding IT infrastructure that the subcommittee had been discussing. He said the subcommittee had met with a number of regional high-end IT users, and planned to next meet with providers. Key issues that have been discussed to date include the predictability of service, bandwidth, and redundancy. He noted that many businesses in the region were affected by the network outage in February, and future investment in the region's IT infrastructure would be necessary. Rusty McLear noted that region's economy is being affected by those who chose to live here for the quality of life and can still work due to their connectivity. H. Lipman stated that the region's IT infrastructure also impacts public health and safety. R. Demark noted that the North Country CEDS process had discussed the IT infrastructure issue in great depth.

Outreach to Communities

B. Beyer thanked the subcommittees for their reports and moved into the discussion of outreach to communities. He noted that the BCEDC will be holding their annual meeting on March 27 and he will be looking for information from each subcommittee for his CEDS presentation. He also noted that each subcommittee needs to be thinking about whether or not they would need to meet with the municipalities in the near future.

He concluded his review of outreach by noting that several subcommittees may be looking at projects that would be seeking EDA funding, while others may be looking at projects that may not need or be eligible for EDA funding. He said the CEDS committee would eventually need feedback from the individual subcommittees regarding this topic.

Project Facilitation and Evaluation Criteria

K. Koulet referred to the handouts that had been distributed to the CEDS committee that outlined sample evaluation criteria for projects. He pointed out that those communities that are interested in receiving EDA funds for projects through the CEDS process would need to fill out the project forms. He also noted the need for the evaluation criteria to be based on, or linked to previously approved CEDS goals.

To stay on schedule, he briefly reviewed the need to solicit, evaluate, and prioritize the projects for inclusion in the CEDS document soon. The CEDS would then include a master list of projects that would go to the EDA for possible funding. He then proposed that each subcommittee look at the sample evaluation criteria and try to develop one or two criteria that are germane to that particular subcommittee and then forward those criteria to the collaboration subcommittee. The revised evaluation criteria could then be used as guidance by municipalities when they are preparing their project solicitation forms. If the subcommittees can revise the criteria, the overall CEDS committee could then review and approve the detailed evaluation criteria at the March CEDS meeting. T. Lamson noted that it was important that the subcommittees comment on the sample evaluation criteria before the collaboration subcommittee goes back to meet with the municipalities regarding potential projects and asks them detailed questions to help fill out the project forms. H. Lipman said that those seeking to submit projects could simply be asked how their projects relate to the CEDS initiatives regarding housing, the environment, etc.

K. Koulet proposed a meeting of a representative from each subcommittee and the collaboration subcommittee to work through the revision of the evaluation criteria. He asked for members of the CEDS committee to email any comments regarding the criteria to the collaboration subcommittee and asked them to schedule a meeting in the near future. He also noted that it would be important to include the topic of access to private capital as an evaluation criteria.

Rick DeMark noted his concern regarding the EDA requirements handout distributed to the committee, noting that he wanted to know what exactly the EDA requirements were. He said he hoped that the CEDS would use both EDA and locally generated evaluation criteria. Michael Tardiff stated that the form distributed was an example that had been used by another regional organization during the preparation of a CEDS, and LRPC staff would undertake research related to specific EDA requirements and project weighting criteria.

B. Beyer concluded the discussion by agreeing that a meeting of the committee chairs and the collaboration subcommittee was necessary and asked the subcommittee to schedule the meeting. He asked M. Tardiff to review the EDA requirements and weighting with those in attendance.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Next Meeting

It was then agreed that the next meeting of the CEDS Strategy Committee would be held on Wednesday, March 26 beginning at 4:00 pm at the Southern NH University large conference room.