

MINUTES

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

Maple Room, Woodside Building
227 Ledges Drive, Taylor Home
Laconia, New Hampshire

January 30, 2008

Committee Members Present:

Bill Beyer, Meredith Village Savings Bank	Moe Lafreniere, The Common Man
Jennifer Boulanger, BCEDC	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
Gary Groleau, NH Ball Bearing	Denise Sharlow, Franklin Business & Industrial Development
John Howe, The Citizen of Laconia	Jack Terrill, Lakes Region United Way
Theresa Lamson, Greater Laconia-Weirs Beach Chamber of Commerce	Chris Williams, Williams Architects
Henry Lipman, LRGH	Dick Waitt, LRPC
Rusty McLear, Hampshire Hospitality Holdings	

Others:

Carol Cantin, NH Department of Employment Security
Glen Coppleman, CDFA
Kimon Koulet, LRPC
Michael Tardiff, LRPC
Other interested parties

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Bill Beyer at 4:15pm. The minutes of the December 5, 2007 CEDS Strategy Committee meeting were then accepted as written by a unanimous vote of the committee.

CEDS Communication Follow-Up

Jennifer Boulanger delivered an update on the draft CEDS newsletter (see Attachment 1) that has been developed by the Collaboration & Communication subcommittee. Following several positive comments regarding the newsletter, J. Boulanger discussed the options for distributing the newsletter, including email and postal mail. She noted that other efforts at outreach should

include interacting with local newspapers and developing public forums throughout the region, and asked if the committee supported this approach to outreach. B. Beyer noted that the topic of outreach to individual communities was important to discuss, as it had been noted previously that the coordination of outreach to communities by the different subcommittees was imperative.

Communication with local newspapers was then discussed. Kim Koulet brought up the point of reaching out to the Laconia Citizen Editorial Board. B. Beyer suggested that a group including Mark Edelstein, J. Boulanger and B. Beyer contact John Howe to discuss how the process could work and a schedule could be developed.

It was decided that the newsletter would be distributed by a combination of mail and email, and the Collaboration & Communication subcommittee would work to review the various email and mailing lists available in an effort to avoid multiple mailings to the same address. It was also noted that several organizations could simply email the .pdf version of the newsletter to their members.

It was also noted that an initial version of the project website was online at www.lakesrpc.org/ceds. K. Koulet asked for comments from the CEDS committee members by early the next week prior to making the website public.

B. Beyer then asked Chris Williams to give the group an update on the issue of creating a seventh CEDS subcommittee around the topic of Energy. C. Williams noted that he had brought together a group of people who work on the issues of energy and sustainability. The group includes Mike O'Leary – Plant Mgr. at the Bridgewater Power Plant, Norman Cloutier – involved in organic food distribution, Steve Caney from MIT who also serves on the Center Harbor Energy Committee, Steve Whitman – a planner from Plymouth State University with an interest in sustainability, Thad Guldbrandsen from the Center for Rural Partnerships, and Rick Demark. He also noted that he had asked Gerry O'Neil if he would like to participate.

He said that the group could help when looking at issues affecting the CEDS through the lens of sustainability. Following a short discussion, it was decided by unanimous vote that a seventh CEDS subcommittee would be formed, titled Energy and Sustainability, with C. Williams as the chairman.

CEDS Subcommittee Reports

B. Beyer introduced the agenda item of subcommittee reports. He asked the subcommittee chairs to discuss where the subcommittees are in their process and where they need to go in that process. He also pointed out that subcommittees needed to be thinking about if and when they would need to become involved in the CEDS public outreach process, and any such discussions should be communicated to J. Boulanger and included in their respective subcommittee minutes. He noted that the Collaboration & Communication subcommittee had already presented its report.

Carol Cantin gave an update on *Building Employees*. She noted that the group had not met since the last CEDS committee meeting, but wanted to note that the Adult Success program was growing and that she had discussed with M. Edelstein and Gary Groleau the idea of holding a

forum with representatives of schools and local manufacturers on March 5 to discuss local educational needs. M. Edelstein said the group was attempting to develop a mechanism for clear communication between the schools that are providing workers and local manufacturers.

Henry Lipman provided an update on the work of the *New Economy* subcommittee. He said the committee had been challenged to further discuss the definition of new economy. Through discussions they had modified the definition they had previously been using “*Commerce through digitization applying a broader regional focus*” to a more refined “*Regional economic development made possible through a well-connected, state of the art, information technology infrastructure. The expansion and improvement of this internet-based network will encourage a highly diverse blend of micro and macro businesses and professional activity among current and future residents, business and industries. Digital commerce will use the Lakes Region IT matrix to tap into national and worldwide markets, breaking distance barriers for economic endeavors and job creation.*” He noted that the subcommittee had recently met again, and would like to pull together a focus group of representatives of businesses that rely on the regions IT network to assess the region’s situation in comparison to similar areas, and prepare a baseline assessment of where the region stands. J. Howe pointed out it was important to identify success stories in the region. H. Lipman said a key issue was that of network redundancy in the region, with metropolitan areas having a much greater level of network redundancy than that found in the Lakes Region. Several cases where internet outages in the region affected local businesses were noted. Moe Lafreniere stated that Sara Jayne Steen, the new President of Plymouth State University, agreed to participate sit in on some of the committee’s meetings.

Linda Normandin presented an update on the activities of the *Work Here, Live Here – Housing* subcommittee. The committee held a forum with local contractors in December that confirmed several issues that had been discussed previously related to affordable housing in the region. She noted that the contractors had concerns regarding the ability to undertake cluster housing, local minimum frontage requirements, and road standards. L. Normandin noted that the committee had completed its information gathering process and was now working to formalize their action plan.

K. Koulet asked if representatives of the subcommittee would like to participate in the February 25 LRPC meeting in Ossipee on inclusionary zoning. Jack Terrill noted that this was a good opportunity to work with the Eastern Lakes Housing Coalition.

An update on the *Social Capital* subcommittee was presented by Debbie Frawley-Drake. She stated that the group could measure their success based upon the awareness of the idea of social capital in the region and how it could be embedded in the work of the CEDS committee. Theresa Lamson asked how social capital was being defined by the subcommittee. J. Terrill described it as the fabric that pulls people together, encouraging interaction vs. pulling people apart. Discussion of how the “social contract” that people used to have has become more fragmented in recent times, and the advent of social networking on the internet has superseded local interaction for many.

Gerry O’Neil provided an update on the *Natural Environment & Cultural Heritage* subcommittee. He noted that the subcommittee had not met since the last CEDS committee meeting, but the current work of the committee centered on the refinement of the stakeholder list

they had prepared earlier. The group was looking forward to the distribution of the newsletter to help with their outreach to the numerous groups in the region.

CEDS Document

B. Beyer asked K. Koulet to discuss the CEDS Status Report (see Attachment 2). K. Koulet began by referring to the requirement related to Goals and Objectives, Defining Regional Expectations, and asked the individual subcommittees to review the goals and objectives defined last summer that are related to their work to determine if there need to be any changes so the modifications could be incorporated into the CEDS document.

K. Koulet then reviewed the status report, emphasizing the key dates in the report. He noted that an important task was the development of the section on Strategic Projects, Programs and Activities that has a target for completion on June 30. To assist in the development of this section he referred to several handouts (Attachment 3) related to Sample Evaluation Criteria, EDA Investment Policy Guidelines, and a draft project submittal form. Following a discussion of the handouts, it was decided that the Communication & Collaboration subcommittee would review the materials and revise if necessary at their next meeting.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

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Next Meeting

It was then agreed that the next meeting of the CEDS Strategy Committee would be held on Wednesday, February 27 beginning at 4:00 pm. The meeting location will be announced.