

MINUTES

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

Southern NH University
Gilford, New Hampshire

July 23, 2008

Committee Members Present:

Bill Beyer, Meredith Village Savings Bank	Gary Groleau, NH Ball Bearing
Jennifer Boulanger, BCEDC	John Howe, The Citizen of Laconia
Rick DeMark, North Country RC&D	Henry Lipman, LRGH
Mark Edelstein, NH Community Technical College	Jack Terrill, Lakes Region United Way
Debbie Frawley-Drake, Lakes Region Linen	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 4:10pm. The minutes of the June 3, 2008 CEDS Strategy Committee meeting were then accepted as written by a unanimous vote of the committee.

CEDS Status Report

Bill Beyer introduced the topic of the CEDS Status Report, and referred to the updated schedule that had been distributed to the committee (see *Attachment 1*). He then noted the issues that have short term significance, specifically that there will be no CEDS Strategy committee meeting scheduled for August and the next committee meeting is scheduled for September 24. Kimon Koulet then summarized the key project milestones over the next several months. LRPC staff will be working to complete the Regional Expectations and Community and Private Sector sections of the CEDS document in August, and subcommittees are expected to continue to meet as necessary. In September, the scoring process for projects submitted for inclusion in the CEDS should be completed and considered by the CEDS Committee at its September 24 meeting. B. Beyer asked

how the individual subcommittee reports will be incorporated into the CEDS document, and used the Housing subcommittee as an example. The Housing committee plans to meet with communities to discuss workforce housing issues. This is not a program that needs funding, but it is a project that should be included in the CEDS document. He asked K. Koulet when work on a project like this should be completed to be incorporated in the CEDS. K. Koulet said that such projects should be completed in September for inclusion in the CEDS Plan of Action chapter. Michael Tardiff stated that LRPC staff already had a great deal of information from the individual committees related to their goals and potential projects, and he can work with the subcommittee chairs to fill in any gaps in the information to work on the various CEDS chapters. B. Beyer summarized the discussion by noting that the subcommittees should complete their summaries of what they have done, their goals, and any potential projects by September, with M. Tardiff available to assist the subcommittees as necessary.

K. Koulet continued a review of the CEDS timeline, noting that a complete draft of the CEDS is expected to be available for review by the CEDS committee in November, and following that, a 30 day public comment period will begin. It is hoped then that the document will be ready for acceptance by the CEDS committee by January 2009, and then ready for submission to EDA for approval.

Subcommittee Reports

B. Beyer began the discussion of subcommittee reports by asking if it was time for more public communications regarding the activities of the various subcommittees. Jennifer Boulanger said that she was ready to begin coordination of the next newsletter for publication in late October/early November.

Carol Cantin presented an update on the activities of the *Building Employees* subcommittee. She referred to the recent newspaper article in the Citizen that described their collaboration meetings that seek to link education and local businesses, and outlined the need to add members to the Building Employees subcommittee as there is much work to do. Recent topics that have been discussed by the subcommittee include potential grants and possible future training facilities. B. Beyer noted that the subcommittee is transitioning from “planning to doing,” and he hopes that other subcommittees can follow their lead. B. Beyer asked if the subcommittee has a contact list to assist in distributing the newsletter to begin seeking additional volunteers to assist the subcommittee. C. Cantin said that she has such a list, and further noted that there was an employer open house scheduled for August 23.

K. Koulet noted that the EDA’s CEDS regulation asks “What is the region doing purposefully directed towards higher wage job opportunities” and asked if the subcommittee could expand on that question. C. Cantin said that the current training activities should address the question. She also noted that publicity such as the newspaper article should assist all the subcommittees in growing their membership. B. Beyer asked the subcommittee chairs to provide a list by the next CEDS committee meeting of those talents that they may need on their subcommittees in the future as he or other members of the CEDS committee may have ideas of potential new members from the community.

Henry Lipman provided an update on the activities of the New Economy subcommittee. He described how the IT infrastructure assessment was completed, which revealed that the available infrastructure is more than originally thought. The subcommittee's current emphasis relates to how to distribute it and how do you look at aggregation opportunities. The subcommittee has developed a work plan with BCEDC, tentatively called the High Tech Round Table, that outlines a process on where to go next (see *Attachment 2*). It discusses how to take the infrastructure that the region has and distribute it better in an economically feasible manner through methods such as aggregation. One way to do this is through a clearinghouse hosted by an existing agency in the region, possibly the LRPC, which would allow both infrastructure needs and those with infrastructure plans that others could leverage. He noted that the group is seeking to recruit someone with a high-tech background to assist in the process, and noted that the report identifies three different models to better leverage infrastructure in the region, ranging from an inexpensive method of leapfrogging off of a neighbor's infrastructure to the development of a regional data center. He also said an analysis of the availability of risk-based capital to facilitate the distribution of infrastructure needs to be completed. J. Boulanger noted the need for additional participation of people outside the subcommittee to help move the process forward.

B. Beyer noted that while the subcommittee has been examining needs for existing businesses, this opens up possibilities to work with prospective businesses as well. He pointed out that this is a good message for the CEDS website. H. Lipman pointed out that the process has pointed out that the region is in better shape with regard to its IT infrastructure than was thought before the assessment was undertaken.

Debbie Frawley-Drake reviewed the recent work of the Social Capital subcommittee. The group has met twice since the last CEDS meeting, and described how the issue of a "clearinghouse" has been the topic of much recent discussion. The group is working to develop a list of existing examples of social capital in the region as well as a list of those things that are not happening in the region. Another term being used more is "community engagement" and the group is starting to see the need for more volunteers due to the work that needs to be done. She also noted that the United Way has recently developed social-capital related criteria for reviewing projects under certain United Way funding categories.

The Natural Resources and Energy subcommittee update was provided by Rick DeMark. He noted that the subcommittee hopes that the principles developed by the subcommittee can be used by the CEDS committee as a lens to help guide development in the region. He noted that it is the intention of the subcommittee to better interact with the other subcommittees as they prepare their action plans. He noted that the subcommittee had presented a number of projects in May that still needed some work - the work will occur over the next month or so. The committee is also working to develop several new projects as well. A next step is to review the projects against the project scoring criteria.

R. DeMark then noted how he did not know what the best way to move forward on the interaction between the different subcommittees, as the Environment subcommittee feels it is important that the region moves forward in its development according to sustainable standards. He then noted the establishment of the Lakes Region Energy Alliance, comprised of local Energy committees, and it is hoped that the alliance can be used as a resource to the CEDS process, specifically related to energy.

Jack Terrill described how certain topics are tied directly to the work of other committees, and how it is important to tie together the different subcommittee principles. J. Boulanger noted that by through their attendance at CEDS Strategy Committee meetings the individual subcommittees are working to share their principles and projects. B. Beyer asked if the subcommittees are sharing the minutes of the CEDS meetings with other members of the subcommittees. H. Lipman stated that he feels the CEDS Strategy Committee acts as the integration committee. K. Koulet stated that integration is also possible through the project scoring criteria.

B. Beyer reviewed the work of the Live Here Work Here Housing subcommittee. He began by describing how the subcommittee was discussing the possible formation of a regional workforce housing coalition, as it is clear that a broader group to work on the topic of housing in the region is necessary. He then noted that the subcommittee was still reviewing which communities they would like to work with on the issue of workforce housing, the subcommittee has been coordinating with members of the legislature with regard to workforce housing, and the subcommittee has been working with the workforce housing coalition in the Lebanon area to learn as much as they can about moving workforce housing forward.

J. Boulanger presented an update on the work of the Collaboration subcommittee. The subcommittee met in June, and at that time felt they should wait for the next newsletter until this fall. The subcommittee has continued to meet with individual communities in the region, and members of the subcommittee have been assigned to coordinate with other subcommittees. The group does not have plans to meet in the near future as members are meeting with other committees at this time. The print media plan is underway, and the New Economy subcommittee will likely be the next subcommittee to take part following the success of the Social Capital subcommittee's article in the Citizen. She noted that she was working to coordinate another listening session with Fairpoint Communications. They are available to attend the September CEDS committee.

Project Scoring Revisited

K. Koulet distributed a revised project scoring sheet (see Attachment 3). He reminded the committee of the discussion at the last CEDS committee meeting of the questions of (1) whether the individual subcommittees would submit new projects, both planning and actual, for inclusion in the project list and (2) if the CEDS committee wishes to invite project applicants to make presentation regarding their projects, and (3) whether the scoring should be done by the entire CEDS committee or a subset of the committee that would then be passed to the entire CEDS committee for consideration in September.

B. Beyer stated that he assumed that the CEDS committee wanted all those who have submitted projects to be able to make a presentation if they wished. Following a discussion of the options for interviewing project proponents, a project scoring committee was formed consisting of B. Beyer and the subcommittee chairs with staff support from LRPC.

H. Lipman noted his concern about the nature and breadth of projects that had been submitted to this point. J. Boulanger noted that some of the subcommittees may have possible projects, but they have not yet been fully developed and were not ready for the original May 9 deadline. K.

Koulet pointed out that he expects the number of projects to grow in the future as awareness grows in the region of the CEDS process. He also noted that this is an opportunity to add planning projects to the project list over the next month. H. Lipman noted that the New Economy subcommittee's high tech plan could very easily be developed into a planning project, and he further asked that each subcommittee be charged with developing a planning project based upon the work they have been doing.

M. Tardiff then reviewed the updated scoring sheets, noting the draft weighting scheme that had been developed by LRPC staff.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

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Other Discussion

B. Beyer stated that he will be looking to transfer the job of CEDS committee chairman to another member of the CEDS committee by the October meeting. He asked committee members to consider the position and contact him if interested.

Next Meeting

The next meeting date of the CEDS committee is September 24 at 4pm at a location to be determined.