

MINUTES

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

Southern NH University
Gilford, New Hampshire

June 3, 2008

Committee Members Present:

Bill Beyer, Meredith Village Savings Bank
Jennifer Boulanger, BCEDC
Debbie Frawley-Drake, Lakes Region Linen
Gary Groleau, NH Ball Bearing
Henry Lipman, LRGH
Linda Normandin, Private Sector rep.

Gerry O'Neil, Private Sector representative
Carol Pierce, Laconia Human Relations Committee
Mark Scarano, GCEDC
Chris Williams, Williams Architects
Dick Waitt, LRPC

Others:

Pam Szacik, 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 4:05pm. He noted the regrets of several committee members that had conflicts and could not attend the meeting. The minutes of the May 7, 2008 CEDS Strategy Committee meeting were then accepted as written by a unanimous vote of the committee.

Project Evaluation Process/Project Scoring Results

Kimon Koulet provided an overview of the steps that LRPC staff hoped to cover during the meeting regarding the project evaluation process, and referred to the scoring spreadsheet and project submittal forms that had been distributed to each committee member. He noted that the project evaluation criteria that had been previously approved by the committee were included in the 11 x 17 scoring sheet. He pointed out that the staff had not attempted to weight the criteria at this time, though weighting criteria is not uncommon. He thanked the Collaboration subcommittee for its work to seek responses to the project submittal form, and noted that five project submittal forms

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and three one-page project summaries had been submitted by the deadline, for a total of eight projects.

K. Koulet also said that projects were not distinguished between EDA funded, non-EDA funded, or planning or desired projects in either the project scoring sheet or when projects were solicited. This may have led to CEDS committee members or those proposing projects feeling that this is not the time to submit their particular project if it is not going to potentially seek EDA funding. He said that the committee may wish to address the question of whether or not the proposed projects should be divided into categories instead of being compiled together in the scoring sheet.

K. Koulet then noted that there were three key questions to be addressed: (1) whether the committee should consider weighting, (2) how infrastructure projects should be compared with planning or desired projects, and (3) does LRPC staff participate in the scoring process.

Chris Williams noted that when he was reviewing the projects and the scoring sheet he felt it would be beneficial for those submitting the projects to have a copy of the scoring sheet. Mark Scarano said that he like the idea of applicants attending a future CEDS committee meeting to talk about their respective projects.

K. Koulet gave the committee more detail regarding the idea of separating infrastructure projects from planning or desired projects, noting that other CEDS documents are mixed, some combine them and others keep them separate. Jennifer Boulanger stated that she approached this question by looking at whether or not a project was a short or long-term project, with planning projects classified as long-term.

Henry Lipman noted the work that the CEDS committee had completed to develop the key goal areas, and he felt that it was important to address these specific goal areas in the projects contained within the CEDS document, although he described how the New Economy subcommittee was not yet ready to propose a specific project to be included in the process. He also stated that as the CEDS is updated the committee should work to make sure that projects address the CEDS goals, and that the current projects fall short of addressing all of the CEDS goals that have been identified. Gerry O'Neil outlined the possibility of defining planning projects that could address some of the goals that do not have current projects associated with them. C. Williams noted that the Natural Environment and Energy subcommittee has a number of potential projects that are close to being to the point of definition. K. Koulet said that the discussion was moving to a topic he thought would be discussed later in the agenda, specifically whether or not the CEDS timeframe should be relaxed to allow for additional ideas to be developed, while still meeting a relatively tight timeframe for completing the CEDS. J. Boulanger stated that she felt the process was progressing nicely but perhaps not as quickly as had been hoped, and we had time to do a good job on the final steps. H. Lipman noted the need to come up with long-range planning to advance the region from an economic development standpoint, and he was concerned that the current projects did not do a good job of doing that. B. Beyer summarized the discussion by asking if it was felt that the CEDS process had not gone far enough to follow the original vision and goals and develop projects that have a broad-based regional impact. He said that once this is done, it would be easier to prioritize potential projects. He said that the topic of projects that require EDA funding and those that do not has come up repeatedly during the CEDS process, and the committee is somewhat split between the EDA eligible projects and those projects that

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could move forward without any EDA funding. H. Lipman asked if it was possible to wrap up Phase 1, to identify where the committee now stands with regard to projects, and then continue working to develop other projects. K. Koulet said EDA likes to see the broader range projects as well as EDA eligible projects in the CEDS, and that the committee needs to prepare annual updates to the CEDS, for review by EDA.

K. Koulet then reminded several of the subcommittees that there was still work to do in reviewing and updating their goals, objectives and strategies for the development of the regional expectations section of the CEDS. While some of the committees are far along in their work, several are still discussing their desired outcomes. He then asked if each of the subcommittees would be able to develop or help identify projects to address the specific goals of the CEDS, with additional time available.

B. Beyer summarized by stating that there are six subcommittees that are moving along at different speeds, and that several have made good progress in identifying strategies and outcomes. It is desired that all of the subcommittees have a defined, actionable plan. K. Koulet suggested that the EDA eligible projects are to be submitted by project proponents other than the CEDS committee, which will score them; yet the committee may be able to propose non-EDA eligible projects. He further emphasized the need for the subcommittees to have their strategies and goals included in the report, and the process to clarify those strategies and goals will more than likely result in planning projects that may be incorporated into the CEDS. Michael Tardiff noted the importance of a direct link between the CEDS goals and specific projects. B. Beyer described how several committees have outlined their desired outcomes, but if the deadline for the committees is extended to September to finalize their outcomes there will be an opportunity to include the results of their work in the CEDS. He said that we are still on target to complete the CEDS in the fall, perhaps still quicker than expected by EDA. B. Beyer noted that even with the modified schedule, existing projects still need to be assessed. H. Lipman noted the project assessment is only important to a community with an EDA eligible project if the CEDS is complete and approved.

CEDS Status Report

K. Koulet referred to the draft CEDS Status Report dated June 1, 2008 that was distributed earlier (Attachment 1). He noted that the draft timeframe was certainly open to discussion. He began with section regarding CEDS Goals and Objectives -- Defining Regional Expectations, noting that the proposed timeframe had been moved to June 15, but it was clear that more time would be needed for the committees to do their work. Regarding Section 4, Community and Private Sector Participation, M. Tardiff has the information necessary to complete that section. He then moved to Section 5, Strategic Projects, Programs and Activities. LRPC staff can provide assistance to each subcommittee so the discussion of projects can occur in September. That schedule would then lead to a discussion of the CEDS Action Plan at the October CEDS meeting, followed by a discussion of performance measures once all the projects are finalized. The schedule would then lead to the consideration of the CEDS by EDA later in the fall. B. Beyer noted the need for LRPC assistance in the process. M. Tardiff noted his availability to assist each of the subcommittees to move forward. B. Beyer asked if a template could be developed based upon some of the materials developed by the Housing subcommittee. M. Tardiff agreed that that was a good approach.

B. Beyer stated the importance of hearing from some or all of the project applicants as discussed earlier in the meeting. K. Koulet said that having all of the projects presented may take considerable time, and we may need to revisit our timeframe if it is decided to follow that process.

K. Koulet then went back to the scoring sheet, noting that he had gone through the scoring process and found some difficulty in several of the categories. M. Tardiff offered to have the LRPC staff develop a proposed weighting of the individual criteria for committee review. B. Beyer then summarized the next action steps as (1) the reiteration to each committee with regard to desired outcomes and potential assistance from LRPC staff, (2) a revision of the status report, (3) a discussion of how the applicants can be interviewed by the committee, and (4) the development of a proposed weighting scheme for consideration by the committee.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

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Other Discussion

There was no other discussion

Next Meeting

The next meeting date of the CEDS committee was left to be determined.