

## MINUTES

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

Southern NH University  
Gilford, New Hampshire

March 26, 2008

#### Committee Members Present:

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| Bill Beyer, Meredith Village Savings Bank                          | Henry Lipman, LRGH                          |
| Jennifer Boulanger, BCEDC  | Linda Normandin, Laconia Savings            |
| Mark Edelstein, NH Community Technical College                     | Gerry O'Neil, Private Sector representative |
| Debbie Frawley-Drake, Lakes Region Linen                           | Jack Terrill, Lakes Region United Way       |
| Gary Groleau, NH Ball Bearing                                      | Chris Williams, Williams Architects         |
| John Howe, The Citizen of Laconia                                  | Dick Waitt, LRPC                            |
| Theresa Lamson, Greater Laconia-Weirs Beach<br>Chamber of Commerce |   |

#### Others:

Carol Cantin, NH Department of Employment Security  
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 4:10pm. The minutes of the February 27, 2008 CEDS Strategy Committee meeting were then accepted as written by a unanimous vote of the committee.

#### Project Facilitation and Evaluation Criteria

Kimon Koulet referred to the Lakes Region CEDS Evaluation Criteria and Project Submittal form. He noted that the draft evaluation criteria and submittal form were the results of the discussion at last month's CEDS Committee meeting and the Collaboration subcommittee meeting held the previous week as well as work by LRPC staff since that meeting. He also said it was necessary for the Committee to decide how best to market the process to municipalities and organizations in the region.

In the review of the project submittal form, K. Koulet noted the need to add a statement that EDA funding would generally not exceed 50% of a project's total cost. A question was posed regarding

the different tracks that project proponents could follow (EDA funding or non-EDA funding) and where this should be addressed in the project submittal form. Michael Tardiff pointed out that the topic could be included in the cover letter as well as the form.

K. Koulet said the draft evaluation criteria reflect the concepts described in the EDA's project eligibility "Special Need" criteria that outlines how projects can be eligible for EDA funding if an area does not meet the EDA's unemployment rate or per capita income thresholds for project eligibility. As the Lakes Region does not meet those criteria as a whole, one or more of the "Special Need" criteria must be addressed. He also noted that the subcommittee goals and EDA's Investment Guidelines had been included in the form, and those filling out the form would be asked how their project relates to both the CEDS goals and EDA investment guidelines. The criteria will be distributed with the project forms. The packet would be distributed to interested parties with a cover letter signed by B. Beyer.

The outreach process was then discussed, with general agreement that the best approach would be to have as many face-to-face meetings as possible with potential applicants. At these meetings the overall CEDS process as well as the project submittal process could be described. However, given time and volunteer constraints, K. Koulet said a variation of this approach is to send out the project solicitation form and other materials to the 30 communities, stating that if they were not heard from in a certain amount of time a representative of the CEDS committee would follow up with them, however, if a community or organization did respond to the letter a meeting would be unnecessary. Those present decided that this would be the appropriate process to follow as a number of communities would not need face-to-face meetings to move forward.

B. Beyer asked if some of the sub-committees were considering scheduling meetings with communities regarding their specific topics. Following some discussion on the topic of outreach meetings, it was recommended that some of the CEDS subcommittee goals should be topics on the agenda of a future LRPC Commission meeting.

To conclude the discussion of the form and evaluation criteria, revisions of the goal statements for several of the sub-committees for inclusion in the project solicitation form were discussed. M. Tardiff will work with representatives of both the New Economy and Building Employees subcommittees to have the revised language incorporated into the form. B. Beyer referred to the necessity for subcommittees to continue to refine their goals to work towards actionable steps much like the New Economy subcommittee has done. After a short discussion it was clear that while several subcommittees had begun to narrow down their scope, other subcommittees had not yet started to do this.

Following a question regarding when the letter and form should be distributed, K. Koulet said that he hoped to be able to distribute, at a minimum, the form and evaluation criteria at the BCEDC annual meeting scheduled for the next day, which would allow for responses to be received in six weeks. Jennifer Boulanger then described the various methods of getting the word out about the project solicitation process, including send the letters out, public notices or ads in local newspapers, and face-to-face meetings.

Henry Lipman suggested that the form and evaluation criteria with revisions as a result of the meeting's discussion be approved and then distributed at the BCEDC meeting on 3/27, with a cover letter to be subsequently prepared. Those present unanimously supported this suggestion. .

## Committee Updates

Linda Normandin reviewed the activities of the *Live Here Work Here, Housing* subcommittee, including their recent meeting with Ben Frost from the NH Housing Finance Authority and George Regan from the New Hampshire Workforce Housing Council to discuss the possible creation of a Lakes Region Housing Coalition. She noted that she was going to be contacting representatives of the Upper Valley and Seacoast housing coalitions in the near future to seek their advice.

Gerry O'Neil provided an update on the activities of the *Natural Environment and Energy* subcommittee. He noted that Thad Gulbrandsen of the Center for Rural Partnerships at Plymouth State University was interested in taking a number of issues that the subcommittee has been discussing and developing a presentation for the overall CEDS committee. He also noted the strong potential for a Winnepesaukee watershed project specifically related to water sampling.

Carol Cantin reviewed the recent work of the *Building Employees* subcommittee, which met the previous week. She described an upcoming (4/16) collaboration meeting between local employers and educators regarding necessary soft and hard skills for the workforce and transferable technology.

Henry Lipman discussed the work of the *New Economy* subcommittee. He said the next step for the subcommittee was to bring together end users with the broadband providers in the region. He noted that a key issue is of the "predictability" of uptime for broadband services in the region. He concluded by stating that there are certain holes in the region's broadband infrastructure, and bringing together users with providers was the first step in fixing those holes.

Debbie Frawley Drake described the recent meeting between representatives of the *Social Capital and Cultural Heritage* subcommittee with Lew Feldstein of the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation regarding social capital. She noted that he had recommended that they look at the methods the City of Portsmouth had used related to social capital, including holding listening sessions and getting the community involved in the process.

She then described a recent subcommittee meeting, with another scheduled soon, with local representatives who had been charged to prepare an inventory of what is happening in their local community related to promoting social capital. Jack Terrill then updated the committee on the work in Portsmouth regarding social capital by a group entitled Portsmouth Listens. He also noted that Portsmouth had just adopted a new inclusionary housing ordinance, and that the two topics were very much related.

J. Boulanger quickly described the activities of the Collaboration and Communication subcommittee related to the recent distribution of the CEDS newsletter and work on the project solicitation form and evaluation criteria. She said that the next step for the subcommittee would be reaching out to the print media.

B. Beyer described how he would be attending the BCEDC annual meeting and making a presentation on the work of the CEDS committee and the individual subcommittees the following day, and that he would look to any CEDS committee members in attendance to describe the activities of their subcommittees in detail. In addition, he said that there would be opportunities to

solicit participation in the work of the CEDS subcommittees from those in attendance at the BCEDC meeting.

### **Lakes Region CEDS Relationship to State and Other Local Workforce Initiatives - LRPC**

K. Koulet introduced the topic of the how the Lakes Region CEDS relates to other planning processes in the region and state as a whole. M. Tardiff presented the draft section entitled *Related Local, Regional and State Planning Processes*, (see *Attachment 1*) noting that this is a required section for the overall CEDS document to be completed this summer. The draft section includes a discussion of the activities of the New Hampshire Workforce Housing Council, a compilation of the LRPC's regional goals adopted in 2006, a summary of the 2004 Lakes Region Housing Needs Assessment, and a summary of key issues related to economic development and housing issues contained in each of the region's local master plan documents. He asked the CEDS committee members to review the section and provide him with any edits or comments regarding activities or planning processes that may have been omitted in the draft.

### **Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

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### **Other Discussion**

There was no other discussion

### **Next Meeting**

It was then agreed that the next meeting of the CEDS Strategy Committee would be held on Wednesday, May 7 beginning at 4:00 pm.