

MINUTES

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

Southern NH University
Gilford, New Hampshire

September 24, 2008

Committee Members Present:

Bill Beyer, Meredith Village Savings Bank	Carol Pierce, Laconia Human Relations Committee
Jennifer Boulanger, BCEDC	Denise Sharlow, Franklin Business & Industrial Development
Mark Edelstein, NH Community Technical College	Mark Scarano, GCEDC
Moe Lafreniere, The Common Man	Jack Terrill, Lakes Region United Way
Rusty McLear, Hampshire Hospitality Holdings	Dick Waitt, LRPC
Gerry O'Neil, Private Sector representative	Chris Williams, Williams Architects

Others:

Carol Cantin, NH Department of Employment Security
Red Hutchinson, LRGHealthcare
Jim Daley, NH Electric Coop
Frank Knott, ViTal Economy Alliance
Chip Underhill, FairPoint Communications
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 July 23, 2008 CEDS Strategy Committee meeting were then accepted as written by a unanimous vote of the committee.

B. Beyer then asked the committee for their thoughts on a process to seek additional participants into the CEDS process, and noted that there has been strong participation in the Housing subcommittee by a number of people that are not CEDS committee members. He then further noted that as the CEDS committee moves forward it must continue with more private sector than public sector representation among committee members. He also noted that a diversity of experience and interests is important as well. He asked the members of the CEDS committee to think about the topic and perhaps bring the names of two or three potential CEDS committee participants to the next CEDS meeting. Mark Scarano noted how the

CEDS process can be complicated, and perhaps a better job can be done of explaining the duties of the members of the CEDS committee - possibly through the preparation of a booklet that describes the history of the CEDS and the obligations of participants. B. Beyer said that he liked the recommendation, and also suggested that a meeting be held with potential new members to discuss the CEDS process. Jennifer Boulanger noted that the next edition of the CEDS newsletter could serve the purpose of the booklet. Kimon Koulet then noted that presently there are 13 private sector and 12 private sector representatives on the CEDS committee, and the CEDS is a private sector-driven process.

B. Beyer then reminded the CEDS committee members that he will be seeking a replacement in his position of CEDS Committee chair following the next meeting of the committee.

CEDS Status Report

K. Koulet began the CEDS status report by thanking the CEDS Committee members for the resourcefulness of the overall committee and the individual subcommittees. He then reviewed with the CEDS committee the recent notification by Senator Sununu and EDA Deputy Assistant Secretary for Economic Development Ben Erulkar of a Year 3 grant to continue work on the Lakes Region CEDS. He further noted that if we continue to do good work we can expect some measure of support from EDA. This is the third year of a three year process to develop an initial CEDS, so in addition to working to populate the CEDS committee and subcommittees, we will also need to identify the options that are available to continue the CEDS process. The Year 3 funding is available through July 2009, after that we may need to reposition ourselves to qualify for other EDA funding or be innovative to find other ways of performing the work of the CEDS. He said that it does not necessarily mean there will be a need for additional funding, but he is sure that it will require the continued work of the CEDS committee and its subcommittees.

Project Scoring Revisited

J. Boulanger began the discussion of the project scoring by noting that a subcommittee had recently completed the evaluations of the eighteen proposed projects CEDS projects. She referred to the Project Evaluation Form (*Attachment 1*) that had been distributed at the meeting. Of the eighteen projects, two forms have not yet been completed, but the project evaluation subcommittee felt strongly that they should be included in the overall evaluation and the CEDS document. The two projects are the WOW Trail and the Gunstock Expansion and Redevelopment. The completed project proposal forms are expected soon. Michael Tardiff stated that he had recently spoken with a representative of the Eastern Lakes Housing Coalition and they were hoping to also have a project included in the process if the CEDS committee felt that was appropriate. J. Boulanger noted that the project evaluation committee felt comfortable in including the two, and possible three, projects in the CEDS process because we had not declined any projects in the process and we were seeking the include the projects in the CEDS document. The project forms can be found online at lakesrpc.org/ceds/projects.

J. Boulanger then summarized the scoring process that the project evaluation subcommittee followed. The answers to two basic questions were sought for each project - (1) Are they EDA eligible, and (2) Do they meet the the Lakes Region CEDS goals. Those two questions were answered, and then the projects were scored based upon the remaining evaluation criteria. Gerry O'Neil then described the Project Priority Scoring (A or B) as whether or not the project addresses the core of the CEDS goals as defined by the CEDS committee.

J. Boulanger then reviewed the specifics of the rankings for a number of projects as shown in the Project Evaluation Form, beginning with a review of the scoring and weighting process. K. Koulet pointed out that in the Town of Northfield's NH 140 Sewer project proposal it had been noted that the project was

dependent on a developer showing interest in the zone where the sewer project would be located - he asked if there was a developer on board. He noted that if they do have a developer in place the project readiness would be short-term instead of intermediate as shown on the project evaluation form. M. Tardiff responded that the committee had not completed follow up questions in that manner, and he had scored the project readiness based upon the project forms submitted. He said that the committee could follow up with the project proponents regarding project readiness if the CEDS committee wished.

It was suggested that focus during the meeting be placed upon those projects that received an A project priority score. A question was asked about the EDA eligibility designation on the project evaluation form. K. Koulet stated that if a project received a Y, it was deemed to be EDA eligible based upon the EDA's criteria, and an N denoted that the project was not EDA eligible, although in the Lake Region some projects that are non-EDA eligible may receive a higher overall rank if they meet the region's community and regional criteria and CEDS goals. J. Boulanger stated that it was important to both have projects that meet the region's goals as well as have EDA eligible projects that the region supports.

J. Boulanger then summarized the scoring process for several projects that received an A Project Priority score, including the Winnepesaukee Watershed Mgt. Plan, the New Economy Technology Plan, and the Schools to Manufacturing Partnership. K. Koulet quickly reviewed the process that had been followed to date to evaluate project proposals, noting that the effort had sought to highlight projects that capture the overall vision and goals that had been designated by the CEDS committee. This CEDS committee has said that they will look at all projects, whether that are EDA funding eligible or not. He further noted that it will be important to recognize and highlight those projects in the CEDS report that are EDA eligible, notably the Northfield NH 140 Sewer Project. The committee needs to decide if the project evaluation process and results reflect the consensus of the committee and can be approved for inclusion in the initial CEDS document. He further noted that the CEDS would be updated annually.

J. Boulanger referred back to the cluster analysis and SWOT analysis, and pointed out that the committee had deemed it important that projects meet the Lakes Region's goals. If a project addresses the regional goals and objectives as defined in the CEDS, the project should be supported. G. O'Neil suggested that the CEDS committee could perhaps provide a service in the future that assists projects proponents when they seek funding outside of EDA.

K. Koulet asked if the CEDS committee would formally decide on their acceptance of the project evaluation methodology and the outcomes that it produced. He noted that three additional project forms may still be added to the project list. A motion was made by Chris Williams and seconded by Rusty McLear to approve the project evaluation methodology and scoring, and include the scoring of the potential additional project if the scoring is undertaken using the same methodology. The motion passed unanimously.

Regional Expectations Chapter

M. Tardiff referred to the draft Regional Expectations Chapter (*Attachment 3*), which is another building block of the overall CEDS document. The draft chapter includes the goals and objectives of each subcommittee reorganized in such a way that the formatting is similar for each subcommittee. He asked the members of the subcommittees to review the goals and objectives and to expect to hear from CNHRPC staff regarding any possible updates. The chapter will also include a summary of the work completed by each subcommittee since they were formed last summer.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Next Meeting

The next meeting date of the CEDS committee is October 29 at 4pm at Southern NH University.

FairPoint Communication/ViTal Economy

Frank Knott of ViTal Economy and FairPoint Communications, provided an update to the CEDS committee on the FairPoint Community and Economic Development (CED) Program Plan. He noted that he understood that the CEDS committee was interested in several tools, including the regional economic model being developed in the three state region and the FairPoint broadband demand aggregation tool entitled.

K. Knott then summarized the CED Program Plan, highlighting the regional discovery stage that the group is currently undertaking, including approximately 1,200 interviews with communities and groups in the three states of northern New England. He then reviewed the FairPoint Communications New Hampshire Broadband Plan as well as the regional economic model being developed by ViTal Economy, and provided an overview of the FairPoint online demand aggregation tool at www.iwantmybroadbandfromfairpoint.com.