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Town of Shaftsbury

Municipal Offices at Cole Hall

Meeting Minutes

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Economic Development Committee (EDC)

Date of Meeting: October 8, 2024 in person at Cole Hall and remotely via Zoom

Members Present: Rick Bennett (chair), Marita Cockburn, John Verocchi, and via Zoom, Andrea Bacchi. Also present was Operations Coordinator, Jen Holley and guest Elizabeth Buckley.

1. Call to order

The meeting came to order at 4:30 p.m.

2. Minutes

Tabled

3. Conflict of interest

No one reported a conflict of interest with anything on the agenda.

4. Updates

Survey Ms. Bacchi reported that she hasn't been able to post the survey she's been developing but hopes to do so sometime this month. Mr. Verocchi noted that October is an extremely busy month for businesses so the delay may not be important. Mr. Bennett noted that he hopes to get the business directory up on the website by January 1.

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDs)

Mr. Bennett reported he'd attended the Manchester meeting recently. He shared a summary of goals from the organization. The EDC might in the future have a project to submit to CEDs. He said he thinks the BCRC study results will be available this month.

Presentation to the Select Board

Mr. Bennett reported he'd attended a Select Board meeting to update them on the EDC's activities.

Community Center Development Committee CCDC

Mr. Bennett reported that the Community Center Development Committee has asked the EDC to help them raise funds for the Center, perhaps as much as \$500,000. Ms. Bacchi said the EDC needs help from the CCDC to build a marketing plan. The EDC will need to do some research first. Otherwise it would be like a business starting a business without a business plan. What things will the CC provide? Who is their audience? Is there a rendering of the proposed building? Mr. Bennett suggested having a look at the current issue of the Vermont News Guide and a piece on the Bennington Museum's development plans. Mr. Bennett suggested that committee members keep the request from the CCDC in mind. Ms. Cockburn noted that North

Bennington was successful securing donations for bricks that went into the fountain. Ms. Bacchi noted that the Energy Committee will be concerned that the CC uses the best practices recommended by the Energy Committee. That could change the cost. Mr. Bennett said the future owner of Shaftsbury Solar is another likely candidate for funding, as is Peckham Industries.

Site updates

Mr. Bennett said he is unclear as to whether the Stanley Tool site is a Superfund site. He said the former Hillbrook Motel is a rental project. Ms. Cockburn said she thought two units have been rented. One is limited to low income renters.

5. Other business

Next meeting will be held Tuesday, November 12. Perhaps the report from BCRC will be available then.

Mr. Verocchi said he attended the meeting with Vtrans re the new culvert on Route 7 and their plans to reroute traffic to Route 7A. He said Vtrans is still trying to figure out the logistics. He noted that it could be a temporary boon to local businesses. Ms. Bacchi said it would be great if we could showcase businesses on 7A during that period. Mr. Bennett wondered about placing a kiosk on the Scott's auto corner. The committee discussed how to draw visitor attention to the "fact" of Shaftsbury. What about a map of the town with attractions illustrated?

Mr. Bennett will report via email on his visit to the CCDC.

It was agreed that committee bios would be desirable. By October 20.

Ms. Bacchi moved to adjourn at 5:31 p.m. Mr. Verocchi seconded the motion, which passed 4-0-0.