

EDC Meeting Minutes 5/21/25

Approved:6/18/25

8:00 am to 9:02 am

Chairperson: Rich Pelletier

Vice Chairperson: Keith Cobbett

Commission Members: Riché Colcombe, Kim Opperman, Bob Nash,

Town Administrator: Laura Buono

Planning Director: Robyn Payson

Planning Board: Susanne White

Chamber of Commerce: Keith Cobbett

Supt of Schools: Jennifer Crawford

Select Board: Rich Pelletier

Water/Sewer Dept: Dana Clow

Excused: Jennifer Crawford

Guests: Mike Tardiff Central NH Regional Planning Commission

Rich Pelletier opened the meeting at 8:00 am.

Minutes 4/16/25

Susanne White made a motion to approve the minutes. Dana Clow seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Rich Pelletier introduced Mike Tardiff of the Central NH Planning Commission to discuss the Economic Development Plan and the update to the Housing chapter of the Master Plan.

Mike Tardiff said this is where the strategic vision for Economic Development is laid out. Mike Tardiff said that they wanted to know if the Commission concurred with the other materials because it is a vision, but it is also your marketing document. He said that we don't have many tools available to us in New Hampshire some of the tools are now being utilized; the TIF, and setting up the Advisory Board, zoning changes RSA 79E, RSA 72:81. These are when someone asks for a break on their valuation within the downtown area (79E) for a few years to allow them to make an investment. The Commercial Industrial Exemption (RSA 72:81) is a similar thing where your valuation is kept down for a few years on a commercial or industrial use to be part of that decision to make an investment. The trick is marketing it more. What they are saying is promoting the use but making sure that when someone is doing that locational decision search, they know it is being used and that it is a tool that is available to them. The other part are the Economic Redevelopment zones (ERZ) those are the ability to get a break on your business profits tax which is less of an issue that in the past because we have reduced our business profits tax but it is a tool to allow a business, if they have made an investment in staff and equipment to apply for a break in their business profits tax. It doesn't affect the town budget at all. It's a state tool but it is highlighting that as well and starting to overlay some of our different incentives on top of each other. He thought that the TIF zone having an ERZ on top of it and having a commercial/industrial exemption on top of it; you are showing someone who is deciding between Hillsborough and Antrim and Keene that you are using all of the tools that are available to you. The next step is making sure that you are using all of the tools that are available to you, and making sure people know that it's available to them.

There was discussion about the sewer capacity issues.

Mike Tardiff said his take on it and the emphasis on the continued coordination between the Town and the Water/Sewer Commission. He said since we started this project, there is less opportunity for federal help. There still are some federal dollars out there, but they are harder to get. We want to make sure that this plan gives you a path if you are applying for funds in the future you can point to the plan as support.

Mike Tardiff talked about the Brownfields sites. He said the Associated Electric site would work well vs the Woods Woolen Mill which is all trail head and clean up. They did not receive the assessment grant so they will apply for it again.

Laura Buono said they would be applying this fall for a Brownfields grant for Associated Electric.

Mike Tardiff spoke about the development of a trails committee. He said CNHRPC will be able to staff that. This would be a subcommittee of the Conservation Commission.

There was discussion about the trails committee.

Mike Tardiff said all of the economic development tools and the trails have become a selling point for the town.

Mike Tardiff spoke about the Electronic Vehicle stations no longer being funded and he has found few of the existing chargers working. He said there should be level 2 chargers available in Hillsborough.

Mike Tardiff talked about the project to improve Henniker Street. They are working on getting that into the 10 year plan.

Riche' Colombe asked about Henniker Street being eligible because it isn't a state road.

Mike Tardiff said it is eligible for federal aid but not at the 100% level, it's an 80% 20%. That came out of the transportation advisory committee that Henniker Street was the highest regional priority. There is an allocation of funds for our region every other year that this fits within, you just never know when you get to the executive counsel and how things could change. Typically their highest regional priorities end up in the 10 year plan.

Mike Tardiff talked about revisiting the parking evaluation.

Mike Tardiff said all of this should be out on the web.

There was further discussion about RSA 79E and 72:81

Riche' Colcombe asked if someone could apply for 79E and 72:81 together?

Mike Tardiff said if it's historic or in your village it's a smaller scale and not a commercial/industrial use. There could be a situation where you could overlay the two but it's the same break from the valuation.

Riche' Colcombe said the downtown sidewalks needed to be looked at because some of them were in disrepair.

Laura Buono said those sidewalks were included in the Capital Improvements Plan.

Mike Tardiff said they have gone as part of their Safe Routes to play to other towns to look at the condition of their sidewalks. He said that is something that the transportation planning staff could do.

Laura Buono said there is a Capital Reserve Fund for sidewalks.

There was discussion about the condition of the downtown sidewalks.

Riche' Colcombe said when going for grants it is important to go to their Representatives and Senators because that can make a difference.

Kim Opperman spoke about the amount of foot traffic downtown.

Mike Tardiff talked about the "Complete Streets" program.

Mike Tardiff reviewed the updated the SWAT document he wants to do a public session on it. He will be meeting with the Planning Board and discuss this tonight. He also wants to talk about economic development future of the town.

There was a discussion about the low number of school kids coming into the region. Multi family housing is not bringing in a lot of kids in.

Mike Tardiff said this is something to be discussed when he reviews it in the discussion about the Housing chapter of the Master Plan.

There was a discussion about children being brought into the school system.

Susanne White said we should emphasize that Hillsborough is a family friendly town.

Mike Tardiff said the discussion was very helpful, they are going to come with the draft plan and then we can think about a public outreach session. Tonight, he will be at the Planning Board meeting with the kick off to the housing chapter.

Rich Pelletier said Riche brought up an RSA giving oversite of racetracks to the town. He said the Commission may want to discuss it if a race track comes to town.

Riche' Colcombe said she spoke to the broker, and they are not ready to come before the town yet with a concept plan.

Riche' Colcombe made a motion to adjourn. Laura Buono seconded the motion.

Meeting adjourned 9:02 am

Respectfully submitted,

Robyn Payson, Planning Director