TDI BOARD OF DIRECTORS **Friday, 5-17-2023, 7:30 am**

Topsham Town Hall, Upstairs Conference Room

Attendees: Derek Scrapchansky (Town Manager), Curtis Neufeld (Chair), Andy Sturgeon (Vice Chair), Chris Wasileski (Secretary, via Zoom), Steve Pelletier, John Hodge, Peter Picarillo, Dan Catlin (Guest)

Absent: Nate Cloutier, Curtis Picard, Brian Robinson (Treasurer, sent the report in remotely)

Minutes

1 CALL TO ORDER – Curt Neufeld

2 MINUTES – Curt Neufeld

- Chris W. to catch up on transcription of minutes – to be posted on Town website per Derek S.

3 TREASURER's REPORT – Brian Robinson (Remotely Submitted prior to meeting) No action.

4 Discussion on Workforce Housing / Apartments and Approvals (Streamlining Process)

- Cost of sites and suitable properties is a major issue per John Hodge and other BOD members.
- John H. also mentioned that an affordable housing fund similar to Brunswick could be a solution?
- 0% Loan funds? Can't make things work at 7.5% or higher for example? Interest rates a major issue.
- Assistance with site costs, paying down basis points of loans up front; assistance with site selections / consultant expenses / surveys, etc.; utilizing the list of properties in order to target and approach affordable workforce housing developers with the property owner's consent; town staff resources… all areas where TDI could potentially make a difference?
- Dan Catlin attending in order to lend his expertise on housing to the discussion (Goodwill area / Mallett Woods and adjacent apartments); Welcome Dan and thank you for attending!
- We will need to determine what allocation and funding policy might be? John H. and others will research how some other organizations do this. We will discuss findings further at meeting 6/21.
- Other land parcels around town as part of Steve Pelletier, Curt Neufeld, Andy Sturgeon's group have been studied and identified as part of a spreadsheet list / map. Some discussion on which parcels, also on sharing of information relevant to private property owners (e.g. willingness to share or not?)

5 CPIC Update and discussion – Andy Sturgeon

- General discussion of current CPIC issues by Andy S. and Derek S.
- Brief mention of drive-thru windows and some common traffic issues in Topsham Fair Mall.
- CPIC still in discussions and split over some of the issues related to above.
- Going through a lot of material (per Andy S.) looking at all Development "Zones" throughout Topsham.
- All notes/areas that are focus areas are up on CPIC and Comp Plan websites (Andy S.)
- Two Consultants assisting process – 2019 Comp Plan is being implemented; taking some time.
- How short are retail / restaurants or local businesses on labor (post COVID?) based on workers coming back to work in full force? Or lack thereof? Could relate to workforce housing (John Hodge)
- Dan Catlin mentioned that double drive-thru lanes are here to stay due to COVID! 70% of sales / via apps!
- Tontine Mall and design studies via Principal Group; Dan C. mentioned downtown example (Brunswick)
- Rock Row Westbrook is another example – targeting unique and high value retail / food / entertainment?
- Could business development require the expansion of housing in order to serve the new workforce?
- Derek S. mentioned consideration of the elderly relevant to senior affordable housing/goods/services.
- John H. offered data from Brunswick Housing Authority on waitlists, demographic information, etc.
- Crooker Quadrant and relocation issues along with neighborhood considerations still important issues.

- Character/Design of Crooker Quadrant – Andy S. mentioned some divergent opinions on CPIC.
- Market Basket will create jobs as Andy S. noted; why not consider retail/commercial at the Crooker site?
- Need for Motel/Hotel? What are we missing? Can we look at some commercial concepts on 196?
- Discussion of Sewer Expansion requirements – longer-term capital projects by Sewer District (Bridge).
- Curt N. will look into Sewer Capacity (e.g. SW Quadrant); other areas where infrastructure is needed.
- Electric (Enterprise Electric / Jeff Kelly estimate & feasibility) and Sewer (Stu Kay) are high cost items.
- Dan Catlin mentioned that he has been working on uses for the 100 acres // What could assist process?
- Discussion on potential TIF – example of former Bruce Allen property; could help with Infrastructure?
- Derek S. mentioned GoNetSpeed and Fiber Optic expansion (capacity in order to work from home!)

- Dan Catlin mentioned Tom Errico / Traffic Study (20-year wish list), and renderings by Mitchell Rasor.
- Further to the above, could we connect more sidewalks and make sure housing developments have walkable access to retail businesses (e.g. Mallett Dr. residents walking down to get a coffee or meal).
- Bus turnouts, curbing, tip-downs or crossing, lighting, and landscaping – could we advance this plan further?
- Could there be some great inexpensive things? Or what would the costs of improvements be? EV Chargers?
- Dan Catlin also mentioned that some of these "Green" improvements could save basis points on financing.
- Curt N. mentioned that we should draft recommendations in order to give the Town Selectboard and CPIC & Town Staff recommendations on Workforce Housing and opportunities for advancing housing in Topsham.
- Derek S. question about minutes/action items to be addressed at the next meeting on 6/21.
- Meeting adjourned.

6 OTHER BUSINESS – No time for other business – Workforce Housing discussion took up the entire meeting.

7 ACTIVITY UPDATE (time permitting) – Derek Scrapchansky: No time for this update end of meeting.

8 ADJOURN