

MEETING MINUTES
PORTSMOUTH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

April 6, 2007

City Hall Conference Room A

7:30 a.m.

Members Present: Dana Levenson, Chairman; Everett Eaton, Vice-Chairman; Thomas Ferrini, William Gladhill, Paul Harvey Sr., Cliff Taylor, Michael Murray, Edward Hayes, Lisa DeStefano John P. Bohenko; City Manager
Members Absent: Ned Raynolds, Robin McIntosh
Staff present: Nancy Carmer, Economic Development Program Manager, David Holden Planning Director

Chairman Levenson opened the meeting at 7:30 a.m.

Minutes

Commissioner Harvey made a motion to accept the minutes of March 9, 2007. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Eaton and passed unanimously.

Presentation: Quarterly Reports on Tourism and Business Development for the period January 1, 2007 – March 31, 2007

Marge Hubbard, Tourism Manager and Ginny Griffith, Business Development Manager of the Greater Portsmouth Chamber of Commerce distributed quarterly reports and presented the activities under the respective Chamber programs for the first quarter of 2007.

Ms. Hubbard noted that the Chamber has begun a column in the *Portsmouth Herald* to report on destination marketing efforts. The 6th Annual Tourism Summit was held March 14th and 100 people attended. *The Guide to the Seacoast* was released at the Tourism Summit and distribution to other venues is underway.

Ms. Griffith reported on the successful eCoast Birthday Bash on January 4th, the release of the annual Portsmouth Naval Shipyard economic impact report, expansion of WiFi in Market Square and activity of the Business Education Collaborative.

Zoning Amendment Updates

Planning Director David Holden reported the following on the City Council referrals to Planning Board:

- 1) The Planning Bd. held a public hearing on 3/15/07 on proposed zoning amendments for Non-Residential Planned Unit Development Overlay District in Office Research and Industrial Zones and for Change in Height/Floor area ratios in Central Business A and B Districts. Both amendments were recommended to the City Council for approval.
- 2) On 4/4/07 the City Council held 3rd reading on the proposed zoning amendment for change in height/floor area ratios in Central Business A and B Districts and passed the amendment.
- 3) Mr. Holden also reported that the Planning Board has proposed, and the City Council has scheduled readings of a zoning amendment to eliminate amusement parks along the city's major corridors.

EDC Reports and Updates

- *Chamber Government Affairs Committee (GAC) February 16, 2007* – William Gladhill reported on the proposed legislation that he and Ms Carmer reviewed and recommended to the GAC for advocacy. He also summarized legislative action on the final list of bills which the Committee

has selected. Lastly, he reported that the February guest speaker was Senator Martha Fuller Clark who spoke on education funding bills.

- *Building Re-use Committee Activities*

1) Mr. Bohenko reported that the Building Re-use Committee held a listening session on the re-use of the Plains School and Creek Athletic Club (AC) on 3/27/07. Approximately 9 people attended including many residents from the Creek AC neighborhood. Residents were curious about the club's activities and the nature and type of club that occupies the former fire house. George McKenna, President of the Creek Athletic Club informed the public that the Creek Athletic Club was originally established 50 years ago as a neighborhood social club for persons of Irish heritage. It has grown to the current limited membership of 66. Members gather in the building to socialize, play darts, cards, board games and plan fundraisers, etc.

The Club contributes to the greater community by its annual donation to the Salvation Army and by raising funds for an annual \$1,000 scholarship award to a neighborhood high school student. It also participates in community events and parades with the old fire pumper vehicle called the "Eureka" which the club has restored at a donated cost of \$2,000. Other contributions by Creek AC to the community include sponsoring a City athletic league team and sponsoring the local Neighborhood Night Out for the residents. The club would like to remain in the building. Re-use ideas for the Creek AC included preservation of the park and exploration of a building use that augments park use, such as indoor activity room and restroom facilities.

2) RFP for Lafayette School – At the April 4, City Council meeting, the Building Re-use Committee recommended to the City Council that the City Manager be authorized to issue a request for proposals for the building. Commissioner Harvey asked where the boundary of the park and the school would be. City Manager responded that it would be the edge of pavement near the playground and basketball court as identified in the previous KinderCare proposal. Commissioner Harvey is concerned that this will encroach on play area as many children use the paved area for games and riding bikes.

- *HarborCorp LLC Hotel and Conference Facility* – City Manager Bohenko stated that on April 3, 2007 the Technical Advisory Committee held its first public meeting to consider the design of the proposed hotel, garage and conference center following a series of work sessions. The applicant has made progress on the site review criteria, but additional informational was requested for the next meeting.
- *Islington St. Corridor RFP* – Ms. Carmer stated that the RFP is still a work in progress and City Manager Bohenko noted that the delay is attributable to the staff's diversion to extensive work for the Building Re-use Committee.

Public Comment Period – No members of the public wished to comment.

Next Meeting Date - May 4, 2007

Adjourn

Respectfully submitted,
Nancy M. Carmer
Economic Development Program Manager