

TOWN OF NORTHFIELD, VERMONT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SUBCOMMITTEE MINUTES Minutes of February 20, 2024

I. ROLL CALL. Subcommittee members Jeff Schulz (Town Manager), Lydia Petty and Charlie Morse (Select Board), Economic Development Director Tom Davis

The meeting was called to order at 1:00 p.m.

II. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (Scheduled): None

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The October 25, 2023, minutes were approved.

IV. DISCUSSION:

a. Review of projects in the Economic Development Department in the following areas:

PROJECT	SCOPE	STATUS	UPDATED	\$ TYPE	FUNDING	%	AWARDED	Next Action Date
MUNICIPAL LIBRARY	To provide resources to address repair and mitigation needs in small, rural public libraries that also serve as community meeting spaces and public facilities	2/16 - Call with library folks to review deck. Next is to meet with the Board for this new opportunity. Link here.	2/16/2024	Grant	\$100,000			2/22/2024
SUPPLY CHAIN IMPACT GRANTS PRE APPLICATION DEADLINE - JANUARY 19, 2024	\$50,000 - \$250,000 Any project should either benefit the applicant and additional organizations or enable applicant's reach to new or larger markets (for example, product aggregation, co-branding, vertical or horizontal efficiencies) Infrastructure improvements Equipment	2/16 - Declined. Issue: Both Moksha and La Pancieta are users or resellers of VT-made products, but don't produce a VT product source, like wheat, grains, dairy, produce. Making new products using pver 50% Vermont ingredients would qualify, but VT does not produce enough.	2/16/2024	Grant				Resolved
PEDESTRIAN WALKWAY - WALL STREET - WATER STREET	NEW WALKWAY, BIKE LANE FROM COMMON TO DOG RIVER PARK	2/14 - Update meeting. TM urging D&K to get scoping study done more quickly. We are one month behind.	02/14/24	GRANT	\$40,000	20%	\$35,200	3/10/2024
NORWICH/NORTHFIELD COMMUNICATIONS	WORKING WITH KAHWA DOUOGUIH ON A TECHNOLOGICAL SOLUTION TO BETTER COMMUNICATION BETWEEN NORWICH AND NORTHFIELD REGARDING ASSETS, EVENTS, CHANCES TO PARTNERSHIP.	02/14 - NU received a grant for Placer.AI, which gives us an opportunity to gather better data on habits of both residents and visitors. Working on determining remaining costs.	2/14/2024					2/22/2024
CERV - HANNAFORD GRANT	Funding of up to \$10,000 for purchasing food at Hannaford - population served must be 50% or more of people over 65.	2/6 - Email to Joe Zuaro to see if they qualify. 2/9 - CERV did not qualify as their support services are mostly for youth and families.	2/9/2024	Grant	\$10,000	0%	\$0	Resolved
NHS AUDITORIUM GRANTS	Working with NHS to find grant funding for improvements to the auditorium for multiple uses in the community. Luke Plumley - luke.plumley@cvsu.org	2/6 - Heard back from Vermont Humanities - grants do not include infrastructure. Checking Vermont Arts Council.	2/6/2024					2/28/2024
RURAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND LOAN PROGRAM	RDLG - Grants and 0% loans to set up local economic development loans through our local utility. Includes funding to manage the program.	1/9 meeting gave instructions on how to pursue the RDLG program. Information gathering next - then discussion with town mgr. 2/6 - TM agreed to pursue next steps for full application details.	2/6/2024	GRANT	\$300,000	0		2/27/2024
CETRANGOLO - 11 NORTH MAIN - APARTMENT COMPLEX	WORKING WITH NORTHFIELD DEVELOPMENT CO. ON 25 UNIT APARTMENT COMPLEX	2/6/2024 - BRELLA funding of \$15,000 for Weston and Sampson to generate a Corrective Action Plan (CAP) has been approved. Expected receipt in early March. Drawings of the apartment complex in development.	2/6/2024		\$63,000		\$63,000	3/5/2024
70 DEPOT SQUARE - TRAIN STATION / BANK BUILDING	WORKING WITH NORTHFIELD DEVELOPMENT CO. - PURCHASE, RENOVATION, RESTAURANT, APARTMENTS, TAX CREDIT PROGRAM	2/1 - Folino's is shooting for a July 1st opening date. The apartments should be ready to rent April 1st. Press release by NVD set for March.	2/1/2024	Tax Credits	\$122,490	0%	\$122,490	3/1/2024
FORAN FAMILY LAND	WORK WITH OWNERS OF 181 ACRE PARCEL OFF DOYON ROAD TO DEVELOP MULTIPLE HOUSING OPTIONS AND COMMUNITY AMENITIES	1/30 - Email to Kevin Camisa to see where the family is on moving forward with housing development.	1/30/2024					3/1/2024

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NORTH MAIN AUTO	Find grant funding to get Guy Martin an automatic tire changing machine. Since being injured when hit by a car, his mobility and ability to lift are greatly compromised.	1/30 - Melissa Bounty at ACCD suggested the BGS grant program in September.	1/30/2024	Grant	\$25,000	0%		5/1/2024
SMYTH METAL WORKS RELOCATION	James Smyth, owner, lives in Northfield. Wants to relocate to Northfield if possible. Has time flexibility. Needs at least 1500 sf.	1/30 - Met with Norma at FGS. She is not in a place where she can clean out the garage, so Smyth is down to Bill Lyon as a location as of now.	1/30/2024					Holding
HOMECOMING SEEDS - FARM	Charlie Watt moved to Northfield and bought a farm on West Hill. He has grown out an inventory of seeds over the last few years that will be the foundation of his business and crop plan. In 2024 he will begin growing and hopefully log my first sales and officially be "in business."	1/29 - Charlie didn't qualify for the state programs, looking at USDA Value-Added Producer Grants now.	1/29/2024					3/4/2024
HABITAT FOR HUMANITY - 95 NORTH MAIN STREET	95 North Main Street, next to Dogwood Glen Drive, is a vacant lot we seek to build a Habitat house on.	1/26 - Habitat has reached an agreement with the landowners and is preparing permits for a home to be built on this location. Good news!	1/26/2024					Resolved
AMTRAK STOP	PETITION AMTRAK TO STOP IN NORTHFIELD AGAIN	1/25 - VTrans is going to conduct a site visit to a proposed location for a train station in Northfield - which would be in Freight Yard Way. Many steps still to go.	1/25/2024	N/A				3/10/2024
MOKSHA FARM E-VEHICLE CHARGING STATION	Green Mountain Power program that is looking to locate chargers at businesses that are public attractors. There is a \$0 matching required for women and/or minority owned businesses. Moksha is both.	1/24 - Pre-application has been submitted.	1/24/2024	Grant	\$35,000	0%		3/1/2024
DOWNTOWN DESIGNATION FOR THE TOWN OF NORTHFIELD	TAKE THE NEXT STEP FROM BEING A DESIGNATED VILLAGE TO A DESIGNATED DOWNTOWN FOR MORE ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES IN NORTHFIELD	Preparing application materials to submit once new zoning laws are approved. Discuss final zoning bylaws with EDD Subcommittee	1/23/2024	N/A				2/20/2024

Wall Street Walkway - Ms. Petty gave an overview of the scoping of the Wall and Water Street and proposed new pedestrian walkway. She expressed the need to push for a strong turnout for March 26th hearing about the walkway.

Mr. Morse asked about the bus kiosk that has been moved from 70 Depot Square, where it was originally installed by the town's Energy Committee without getting written permission from the owners of the building. Ms. Petty said it was a little too early to consider a new location but that it was in the works.

Norwich/Northfield Communications – Ms. Petty wanted to make sure that the Norwich Task Force was informed regarding the work taking place by the EDD and Norwich to implement an AI solution for better communication.

70 Depot Square – Mr. Davis asked if the Select Board would like a tour of the building, including the four new apartments that are close to completion. There was a strong interest in doing so.

Zoning Bylaw Modifications – Mr. Davis brought up the issue of rural density zoning, where a proposal for converting minimum building size from five acres to two acres has a lot of opposition. He wanted to point out that there are parcels of land currently in rural zoning areas that are surrounded by homes on less than five acres, and zoning should be relaxed for those parcels to ensure Northfield can fulfill its mission of providing more housing.

Ms. Petty pointed out that the modernization of the zoning laws was the priority, but then to address issues like zoning where housing can be constructed.

Mr. Morse noted that the town needs to separate the areas where higher development will impact the roads or traffic from those areas on paved roads that can handle the traffic increase.

b. Other Matters –

Transportation Oriented Development Program – Ms. Petty asked about any progress on the program. Mr. Davis gave an update that the program was very slow to get moving and hoping to begin soon.

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V. ADJOURNMENT. The subcommittee adjourned at approximately 3:41 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Thomas G. Davis

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Economic Development Director