

MINUTES OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING
EXECUTIVE CONFERENCE ROOM
April 24, 2018 4:30pm.

Committee Members present: Councilor Martin Dumont, Chairman
 Councilor Jonathan McCallion
 Councilor Martin Pepin (Temporary appointment)

Administration/Staff present: Bob Belmore, City Manager
 Robin Comstock, Economic Development Manager
 Trish Harris, City Clerk,

Others: David Baker, Somedowntown, LLC
 Richard Brooks
 Richard Michaud
 Jenne Holmes

Councilor Dumont called the meeting to order at 4:37pm.

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING – March 20

Motion made by Councilor McCallion seconded by Councilor Dumont to accept the minutes of the previous meeting of as presented, Motion passed 2-0-1, Pepin abstained.

NEW BUSINESS

Former Police Dept. property – David H.M. Baker, Managing Partner, Somedowntown LLC

City Manager Belmore stated that there was a 2 page letter from David Baker included in the packets. He is interested in a purchase agreement for the former police station on Main Street. Baker said he has a sense of what the city is looking for. His vision is to increase the density of young knowledge people who will have positive economic activity within the community and to the school system.

Baker said he is willing to make a major long-term commitment to the community and continue the successful momentum that has taken place; indicating that the police station will take a considerable amount of capital to improve it. His plan is to have 6 high end apartments on the top floor and a restaurant or more on the lower floor. He plans to complete the top floor apartments first.

City Manager Belmore explained that this committee cannot make decisions about the sale or cost of the property. Those decisions have to be made by full Council. There was discussion about the history of sales and purchases of the former police station property.

Councilor McCallion said this has been on the committee for a while. He'd like to sell it and get it back on the tax roll. He asked, what happens if this plan doesn't work out, like other plans in the past? City Manager Belmore said there will be timelines put into the proposal.

Mr. Baker said his plan is dependent on the price; he would like to come to the committee with a well thought out plan with capital in place. The City will be a different place in 3-5 years. He stated that this Council is forward thinking and dynamic and all of the work that has been done in the downtown is a great improvement and important.

Evaluation of Plaza Commission Recommendation

City Manager Belmore said he was asking for direction from the Committee in regards to the Plaza Commission's report and recommendation. Did the Councilors want staff to Draft an RFP to send out to developers. Belmore outlined some of the report's components such as any proposed building being a mixed-use building; the creation of green space, etc. Councilor Pepin said likes the idea of the building and the green space. He stated that maybe he is old fashion, but this community is missing people downtown. We need to draw the people back into downtown area. Councilor McCallion said whoever builds the building should also be required to own and maintain the plaza facade.

There was discussion about building above the plaza.

City Manager Belmore said that would have to be negotiated with the individual condo owners.

Councilor McCallion, seconded by Councilor Pepin, made a motion to have the City Manager to Draft an RFP for the redevelopment of the Plaza based on the Plaza Commission's recommendations. Motion passed 3-0.

OLD BUSINESS

Form Based Codes

Tabled until the next meeting.

HB 316

There was a brief discussion on HB316; consensus was to remove it from the agenda.

OTHER

Land Use Boards and Approval Process

Tabled until the next meeting.

DRAFT Proposal for Marketing Consultant

City Manager Belmore said there are funds allocated in the FY17-18 for a marketing plan. They will also be working on a more robust Economic Development web page.

Staff has Drafted an RFP to issue for the development of a marketing plan, marketing brochure, communications plan, and website content. Belmore stated this would help with the present development in process on creating a new City website platform.

MISCELLANEOUS

There was discussion on the Drafted “For Sale” sign to be placed at the former police station property. It is like a ‘Wanted’ sign.

EDM Comstock explained that there is a Downtown Business Roundtable scheduled for May 10th at 8:30am, in Council Chambers. There have been two other Roundtables that have been very successful.

There was discussion about internships. Councilor Dumont said there is a demand for graduates. The CTC is a good feeder. There is an appetite for it in our community, and at other local communities.

City Manager Belmore said there has been discussion about moving the Farmer’s Market to a downtown area or onto High Street. It was agreed that the perfect location might be Holy Trinity Church on High Street. The Farmer’s Market is scheduled for Mondays, 3-6p and has been at the Goodwin Facility on Rte. 108.

EDM Comstock stated that Trackside Taco has closed. She has been contacted by an individually owned business, who is interested in the location.

ADJOURNMENT

***Motion made by Councilor Pepin, seconded by Councilor McCallion, to adjourn the meeting.
Motion carried with a 3-0 vote and the meeting adjourned at 5:39 p.m.***

Respectfully submitted,

Trish Harris, City Clerk