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Comprehensive Economical Development Strategy Meeting
January 13, 2011
Rochester Community Center, Rochester, NH
Minutes
Kickoff meeting

Members: Charlie French, Charter Weeks, Christine Davis, Craig Wheeler, Dan Barafaldi, Denis Roy Palmer, Doreen Rainville, Glenn Coppelman, John Hall, Karen Pollard, Katie Muth, Lin Tamulonis, Mark Wentworth, Mike Burns, Paul Eaton, Rad Nichols, Steve Cates, Todd Selig, Ute Luxem and Warren Daniels, Dennis McCann

SRPC Staff: Cynthia Copeland (Executive Director), Michelle Auen (Regional Planner) and Marilyn Barton (Administrative Assistant)

1. Call to order

The meeting was called to order at 8:15 a.m. and C. Copeland and M. Auen welcomed everyone to the kickoff meeting and introductions were given around the room.

2. Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Overview

M. Auen gave an informative overview of the CEDS process with a PowerPoint document. The discussion included how funding was received to create a CEDS document, what it is and the role of the strategy committee and Strafford Regional Planning Commission (SRPC). A handout was given out regarding guidelines for the CEDS process. M. Auen reviewed the process and the legal requirements for CEDS and opened the discussion for questions and comments.

A discussion ensued that a CEDS document is very important for funding and a rewrite is required every five years as well as an annual update. D. McCann noted that CDFA operates statewide and keeps track of various demographic and statistics which would be helpful. He also noted the CDBG has been an immense help as a source of financial assistance for projects.

C. Copeland stated goals and priorities need to be established in order to move forward and get funding as well as showing a track record of what was done. C. Copeland noted when a CEDS plan comes together for the region for economic development; it is very similar to a town's CIP and could be connected to transportation for projects.

C. Copeland noted the role of SRPC is to gather information, assist in facilitating the process, ensure public involvement and write the document.

A discussion ensued as to establish a consensus on what the goals, project priorities would be. C. Copeland stated the group should speak up as to how they want to do things.

3. Planning Foundation

M. Auen reviewed the next steps needed, which included a development of an environmental scan; identify regional expectations and strategic projects, a plan of action and performance measures. M. Auen noted that SRPC has been conducting focus interviews within the region, research and data collection, writing the background document, gathering the work group and garnering support for the document. M. Auen stated CEDS would include four main elements that included the following: Vision, analysis, action plan and evaluation and went over the goals and objectives of the strategy committee. The committee then broke into groups to work together on the goals and objectives.

4. Process and Products for Strategy Committee

The timeline of the process was reviewed with everyone with meetings going through March 24, 2011, a public meeting on April 7, 2011 and a final meeting on April 26, 2011. M. Auen noted the grant closes on June 30, 2011.

M. Auen then reviewed what the next steps in the process would be: First tasks include working on a vision mosaic, an environmental scan, clusters analysis and distressed areas. It was decided members would work on a SWOT analysis and what their vision of Strafford count is and goals before the next meeting.

M. Auen noted the next meeting would be on Thursday, February 3, 2011 at 8 a.m. at the Rochester Community Center in Conference Room 1A.

5. Questions and Answers

There was discussion on the eastern boundary of Maine and how we our region does relate to what they do. There was also discussion on any statistical data on where people work, shop, etc. It was noted DRED had hosted a bus tour of the area and a lot was learned from traveling all through the area as one can get a sense of the real estate, infrastructure and industrial parks and perhaps that could be done again.

6. Adjournment

The meeting ended at 9:45 a.m. and M. Auen stated she would follow up on those people that did not show up and would send out a list of those people participating on the strategy committee.

Respectfully submitted,

Marilyn Barton
Recording Secretary