

**Town of Waldoboro**  
**Economic Development Committee (EDC) Meeting Minutes**  
**Municipal Building - 1600 Atlantic Highway**  
**May 12, 2011 at 10:00 a.m.**

1. **Call to Order** - This meeting was called to order by Misty Gorski. **Members present:** Planning & Development Director Misty Gorski, Jen Merritt, George Seaver, and John Lawrence. **Citizens Present:** John Higgins. **Reporters Present:** Sam Baldwin, Lincoln County News.
2. **Approve & Sign Minute**- No quorum was present.
3. **Brief citizen comment (items not on agenda)**- None.
4. **Downtown Master Plan Community Forum Planning**- The group discussed the logistics for the first Community Forum. The consultants will discuss the layout for the meeting with the EDC prior to the start of the meeting. They will also discuss information for the second forum with the EDC. The group will arrive early to set up then get organized for the event. The EDC discussed set up for the forum, hand outs for the meeting and additional information.

Gorski mentioned the Maine Development Foundation's Downtown Center program and their enthusiasm for the project. Roxanne Efflin, Executive Director for the Maine Downtown Center, has offered to visit Waldoboro and talk about their program and how well it has worked in other communities. She has also offered additional resources for the forums if needed.

Lawrence asked if TIFs would be covered during the forum. Lawrence was concerned that too much of the focus would be on grants. Gorski explained that the conversation would encompass a variety of financial tools available, including TIFs, tax credits, grants, and loans. More information may be focused on the historic tax credits as it is the most complicated resource to understand. This information falls under the historic district topic. The point of this discussion is to identify all the potential resources available to allow the community to make the best decision on how to achieve the goals for the downtown. It is important for people to know what is available otherwise they will not know the best way to achieve the desired outcome. It was agreed that the TIF district would be mentioned. Merritt was concerned that the EDC had not received their training on TIF districts and it might be premature to mention. This was discussed as not being an issue because the level of detail to be addressed at the forum is basic and only intended to identify TIFs as possible resources, not how it should be structured.

Merritt asked if the consultants would be available to meet with property owners individually to discuss strategic planning for their properties. How will people know what resources can be leveraged with other resources? Gorski replied that the scope of work they were contracted to do does not include that level of work. The master plan will outline strategies in which property owners can utilize multiple resources and Gorski is always available to help answer questions. The consultants are available individually if a property owner would like to work with them beyond the scope of the downtown master plan project. The first step of the project is to produce a master plan that will work for the community and is supported. Then it is up to the community to decide the best approach to implementing it. If not all the available resources are identified it will be difficult to discuss the best strategy for the community. The plan will identify what we currently have in the downtown, what the challenges are, what can be done to

overcome the challenges, and what the available resources are to overcome the challenges. It is up to the community to decide how to actually implement the plan.

At this time the Committee discussed reaching out to property owners and contacting them personally. Refreshments were also discussed for the forum.

The Committee discussed forum 2 briefly and the importance of the downtown master plan to the community as a whole. Gorski explained how issues in the downtown are issues affecting the entire community. If there are steps we can take now to resolve some of these issues it will be a positive step toward solving some of the overall issues in town. One of the issues Gorski addressed was abandoned buildings. If there are resources and incentives we can offer property owners to improve vacant buildings and make them once again available for commercial use it would be a positive way to reduce the number of vacant buildings while also adding usable commercial space to the community. It is important to use what we have to support existing businesses while also attracting additional businesses. While this project does focus on the downtown it will benefit the economy throughout the community by attracting additional traffic and utilizing local services and goods. Lawrence commented on some people's feelings that the route one corridor is more important than the downtown and efforts should be focused there. He commented on the traffic movement through this area. Seaver added to the conversation that similar concerns happened in Damariscotta but route one being directed out of the downtown area actually benefited the area. Damariscotta was able to benefit from the bypass while also still attracting people into the downtown. Merritt added that specific decisions were made in this area to control development along route one in order to direct people toward the downtown. Gorski explained that route one is appealing to some types of businesses. Other businesses are also looking for quieter areas with cheaper rent, especially small businesses and those just getting started. Gorski also explained the costs of expanding infrastructure along route one and how it is cost prohibitive to expand along the corridor while areas in town, like the downtown, already have these resources that are underutilized.

Higgins added to Lawrence's comment that there is a need for this information to be explained to the broader community because many people are unaware about these issues and how the downtown project will be beneficial. These connections need to be made for the public. Higgins also commented on the discussion of population growth in the town and that many people feel the projections are unrealistic, making the need to plan for growth unnecessary. He felt it is important to inform people where this information is generated from and how it will actually relate to the town. Higgins commented that the project has merit but it is vital to communicate this to the broader community. Gorski agreed this is an important point that does need to be addressed in greater detail. The goal of the project is not to take businesses off route one or shift business from route one to the downtown but to utilize the existing spaces available and attract more commercial businesses to the community.

**5. Adjourn** – The Committee adjourned at approximately 11:30 AM.

Economic Development Committee:  
Waldoboro, Maine

Misty Gorski, Planning & Development

Respectfully submitted,

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William "Bo" Yerxa

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Misty Gorski,  
Planning & Development Director

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Ted Wooster

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George Seaver

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Elaine Abel

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Jen Merritt

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John Lawrence