

TIF Alternatives Committee Public Hearing
Eliot Town Hall, April 27 at 7:00 PM

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Wendy Rawski
Town Clerk

MINUTES

Attending: Rosann Lentz, Cindy Lentz, Bob Pomerleau, Charlie Bradstreet, Michele Duval, John Chagnon, Town Manager Dana Lee

Also attending: Bob Seeley, Donna Murphy, Mark Lentz, Denny Lentz, Grant Hirst, Jim Tessier, and Russ McMullen, Jo-Ann Lepore

1) Roll Call / Quorum

The Chair took roll call, noting that Janet Saurman was absent with notice, but otherwise all committee members were present.

2) Review Last Meeting Minutes: Tabled

3) Public Hearing – Feedback on Draft Criteria

The Chairperson opened the public hearing. The Town Manager was asked to give an overview of the draft criteria by which TIF projects would be judged and that the Committee is seeking input and feedback on whether they have the criteria correct, missed something, or need to reword one or more of the seven criteria.

4) Discussion

Russ stated that he was generally very impressed with the criteria presented. Denny asked if the committee intended to “weight” the seven criteria. He thought the committee should do so. John thought this was a good idea. Denny said that he thought #2 (community fabric) was very important.

Jim noted that Chapter 206 had language that spells out the goals of the TIF program and that one of the requirements is to have the development program “not be inconsistent with the Charter.” Since it is being developed, maybe the committee should ensure no inconsistencies with what the Charter Commission is drafting. Bob Pomerleau said that an earlier version of his criteria was premised from statute also and he felt the goals of the statute had been weaved into the seven presented. Bob P. also stated that he had attended all Charter Meetings and he knew of no caveats they were considering which would be inconsistent with the TIF projects. Michele said maybe we add Charter to #7 (consistent with Comp Plan) and add “if the Charter is in place.”

Bob Seeley said that he felt public transportation was very important to Eliot. John asked the assembly that if they had to rank the seven criteria, which would be more prevailing (ie. creates 50 jobs but has ongoing tax support required...). Jim said he felt that the criteria that stated little or no tax support was important.

Bob P. said that in some cases the TIF money can be used to purchase capital assets necessary for the economic development and could lower taxes or tax need by offsetting some of the costs of a firetruck, for example.

The Chairperson asked the assembly "if you had to rate the criteria by importance..." Bob said he worried about making scoring the projects too complicated and maybe we should just tally how many of the seven criteria apply to a given project. He also stated that we can project total income over the life of the TIF and will probably have way more projects than the TIF money will support. Charlie said that an example of no tax support might be the Town builds a park and ride, a company runs the public transportation service and the riders pay the fee to the company. Russ said that #3 (taxable value / jobs) was the state's top, stated priority. Bob said that making sure we adhere to the goals of the Comp Plan was important. Denny said it was important to find projects that the majority of the citizens support and would use, and not much tax money involved.

John noted that infrastructure was not on the list; asked if anyone had thoughts on infrastructure. Bob Seeley said he felt infrastructure should be paid by tax dollars.

Jim said that it is likely that once the list is created that 2-3 objectives may be combined into one very widely accepted project meeting several criteria. Jim also said that he felt maybe starting with the question "what are the greatest problems facing Eliot?" would be the place to start when choosing projects. Should get feedback from residents on biggest problems they see.

Denny said lowering household costs would be a goal. Mark said he felt the seven criteria hit the mark, do not weight the seven, just count the number of criteria met.

Bob P. said he felt that residents may have changed their views on Comp Plan goals since the 2007 survey and we should re-survey their sentiments. Russ agreed. Asked if the Committee could somehow survey residents. Donna said that the 2007 survey asked IF you had to have economic development, where would you want it. It did not ask IF we wanted economic development. Bob said that probably the core three concerns still existed (maintain rural character, keep taxes down and protect the environment).

Bob Seeley gave a history of Rte 236 and said that today it is too busy and crowded. Russ said 236 is the C / I zone and has been for many decades.

Cindy asked about surveying / getting feedback from residents. Dana suggested a survey be developed (he could draft) and then put it in the Sentinel to go to every house in Eliot. Donna suggested that the June election might also be an opportunity. Bob said that once we have projects, asking residents to rate them would be interesting.. Denny said that weighting the criteria is best, but overall the criteria are very good. The Chairperson closed the public hearing at 7:51 pm

Dana was tasked with coming up with a draft survey / questionnaire.

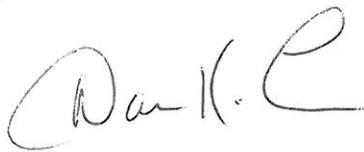
John suggested instead of asking them to comment on our project lists, to have developers / landowners suggest projects. Bob said that his village concept would require a landowner (or more) cooperation and that John's idea has merit to seek willing partners.

Jim suggested reaching out to all committees for ideas.

The Chairperson said that for the next agenda, we should figure out where and how to get good feedback. Dana said he has provided the ideas to date. Michele said we should look at what we have plus other idea gathering efforts (seniors, committees, survey, etc.) Bob favored diving into making a list / brainstorming. Suggested homework to look at statute, comp plan and pas-funded TIF projects provided by our attorneys.

Next meeting will be May 4th at 6:30 in the small meeting room, and at that time we will also approve any minutes.

- 5) Old Business: None
- 6) New Business: None
- 7) Adjourn: 8:08 PM

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Dana K. E.", is written below the list of items.