



Department of Resources and
Economic Development



**Hampton Beach Area Commission
Meeting Minutes, November 20, 2008
Training Room, Hampton Police Station**

In Attendance:

John Nyhan- Town of Hampton
Brian Warburton, Vice Chairman, DRED (Seacoast Parks/Rec)
Bill Watson- Secretary/Treasurer- NH Department of Transportation
Fred Rice, Town of Hampton
Chuck Rage- Hampton Chamber of Commerce
Eric Steltzer- OEP Representative
Fran McMahon- Rockingham Planning Commission
Jamie Steffen- Hampton Town Planner (Admin)
Candice Sicard- Secretary

Excused:

Geannina Guzman-Scanlon- Hampton Beach Village District (Illness)
Tom McGuirk- Hampton Beach Village District (Conflicting town board meeting)

Chairman Nyhan called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

DRED Grant for Admin Support

The Chairman introduced Candice Sicard, noting she would be helping in an administrative function preparing the minutes and agendas for monthly meetings. There was discussion about funding the administrative position, and that this is still in the works. There is a component of the RSA which indicates the responsibility for handling money is channeled through DRED and the Planning Department. Chairman Nyhan explained that a grant could be turned into the town and accepted by the town in a public hearing. The funds then would be given to the Planning Department for a sub-account listed as HBAC administrative support. Until the payment process is approved, Candice has agreed to volunteer her time.

Consideration of Minutes, October 23, 2008:

MOVED by Mr. Warburton to approve the 10/23/08 minutes as presented.

SECOND by Mr. McMahon

VOTE **7-0-0** **MOTION PASSED**

Old Business:

Annual Report & Proposed Bill for Schedule Change (Rice)

The annual for the past year has been sent or briefed to all agencies as required. Mr. Rice was notified that representative Styles is preparing to amend the HBAC annual schedule. The bill being drafted will stagger terms of members and change the end of the term date every year

Chairman's Report:

Hampton Beach Redevelopment Campaign –Update

Chairman Nyhan distributed a digital copy of a document to the Commission members. He noted that in conversation with various people in the past months he has noticed excitement and support of the Hampton Beach Redevelopment Project. On December 10, 2008 at 7:00pm at the ballroom of the Ashworth Hotel there will be a meeting about the redevelopment project. The Chairman said that he is going to be inviting guests such as State Representatives, Senators, members of the Governor's Council, various elected officials and business owners. To date approximately 100 individuals have been identified to be invited. Chairman Nyhan detailed the purpose of the meeting and that it will be in two parts. The first part is to bring awareness to the project, specifically what it is and what it can do for the seacoast region. The second part is intended to mimic a campaign rally, so to entice others willing to be involved and support the project. The intention is to bring the project and its benefits to the attention of the Governor's office and to have media coverage of the event.

In keeping with a campaign rally experience, the Commission should consider treating the project as a candidate. The Chairman noted that there will be a local, regional and state media focus including the newspaper, TV and radio. The town has given the okay for a one half-hour taping session that will be aired on Channel 22 describing the importance of project. Panelists will include Skip Windemiller, Economist Dr. Laurence Goss, Beverly Hollingworth and architect of the project, Ward D'Elia. Brad Jett will coordinate the taping and will produce DVD's, which will be sent out across the state to TV stations. Also, Chairman Nyhan is currently holding meetings with local and state newspapers in hopes they will report on the project as an article or editorial.

The Commission discussed how building a statewide economic benefits platform would be the key to justify full funding of the project. Public officials are interested in the project in terms of revenue and it was reiterated that this is not a Town of Hampton project; it is a state project as well. For business owners and politicians, a showing of support at the December 10, 2008 meeting is important and would be appreciated.

Chairman Nyhan has met with Beach Village District and the Chamber of Commerce asking for support, noting that it is important to work together as community.

The Chairman assigned tasks to the commission members in order to help with the ongoing campaign. He asked the following:

Mr. Rage- Investigate hotels that maintain a database of guests from the state who visit the beach annually, then coordinate a list of 100 people who would support the beach redevelopment project.

Mr. Rice- Provide the template for the HBAC stationery and gather economic information around tourism. There is more information needed on the reasons people consider or do not consider exiting Route 95 for the destination of Hampton Beach.

Mr. Warburton- Compile top ten reasons why Hampton Beach and its State Park is the best resort area in the Northeastern part of the country.

Mrs. Guzman-Scanlon- Has already offered to work with Mr. Stelzen on investigating the possibility of matching grants or supplemental funding for the project. It is the goal of the commission to ensure that all possible funding opportunities were explored prior to asking for assistance.

Mr. Watson- investigate where citizens or businesses could donate to this campaign, since there have been recent inquiries. It is the understanding of the Chairman that any funds that are collected may be used only for educational awareness activities (brochures, advertising, CD's), and not for lobbying purposes. There was discussion about how to set up the flow of the donations. Mr. Rice suggested we set up manifest system requiring two signatures of endorsement prior the treasurer writing the checks.

Mr. Stelzen - prepare for the December meeting with an updated list of elected Senators and Representatives.

Mr. McMahon- work with Chairman Nyhan, Dr. Goss and the RPC to add economic comments, statements or trends supporting or supplementing Dr. Goss's statement.

Mr. McGuirk- investigate restaurants that maintain a database of patrons from the state who visit the beach annually, then coordinate a list of people who would support the beach redevelopment project.

Mr. McMahon suggested that having a well organized and attractive website established would also bring further visibility to the project. The website could also be linked to the town and Chamber of Commerce's Web Page. Mr. Rice noted that DRED has a website currently but that it is extremely technical and cannot have the element needed for this type of campaign.

Mr. Rice shared a story from the Portsmouth Herald detailing that Governor Lynch has only proposed limited cuts to the capital budget. There will be two phases of cuts, so this should be taken into consideration when speaking with lawmakers.

Committee Reports

1. Community Development- Tom McGuirk

a. Design Guidelines Booklet

Mr. McGuirk was not in attendance but there was discussion about the booklet and the extended period of time the commission has waited for this. There was discussion about reviewing project plans proposed at the beach and the Commission not always receiving the plans before they are submitted to the ZBA or Planning Board.

2. Beachscape – Geannina Guzman-Scanlan

Mrs. Guzman-Scanlan was not in attendance but had spoken to the Chairman, noting that there was nothing to report currently. Mr. Rage explained that there are trees going up and will be a tree lighting ceremony by Patriots Corner and the Fire Station. Chairman Nyhan noted that the beach village district, the town and Unitil have a final agreement where Unitil is granting permission to hang banners on electric poles along Ocean Blvd north of the bridge. There will be both winter and summer banner and if all goes well, there is a possibility that the banners can be extended to other utility poles at the beach.

3. Zoning & Redevelopment – Fran McMahan

Mr. McMahan noted that the Planning Board is considering zoning proposals that will change in the business seasonal district for multi-family homes. Currently there are forty-foot setbacks and this is difficult to always meet at the, so most applicants will need a variance. The Planning Board has agreed to put forth a warrant article making the setbacks seven feet. The board will finalize a proposal at their December 3, 2008 meeting and will then have a public hearing on the matter on December 17, 2008. There was extensive discussion about the wording of warrant articles and if there are legal ways to help cut down on the verbiage, or to help the voters in advance understand what they are making a decision on. It was clarified that each state is different and that NH requires an extensive amount of description on their ballots, and although there have been efforts in the past, the articles will likely remain lengthy for the voters.

4. Transportation and Parking – Bill Watson

Mr. Watson reported he had no updates on the Hampton River Bridge project but that he and the RPC are working on expediting the transportation parking study. Mr. Watson recently had a meeting with the Gas It Committee to discuss potential funding resources for the study. There was discussion about the lack of reliable transportation to the beach from the parking lot proposed in the Route 1 Corridor Study. Mr. Warburton asked if Mr. Watson if he could inquire about the storm water project by Haverhill Ave., Mr. Watson said he would do so.

5. Other

a. State Park Report – Brian Warburton

Mr. Warburton noted that the state currently has several things in the works, but NH, not unlike the rest of the country, is going through a difficult time coping with economic challenges and there will be some effects on the Hampton area.

b. Status of Earth, Sea and Space Museum – Fred Rice

Mr. Rice noted that there was a fundraiser in November at the Sheraton Harborside, which was well attended and enjoyable. They were able to raise some money, and Mr. Rice noted that the Friends of the Earth, Sea and Space Center have plans for other fundraisers. In the upcoming week Mr. Rice plans to meet with Crystal Kent in order to keep things moving on the business support letters for the feasibility study which includes the projects economic feasibility study and design.

c. Other Old Business

None

New Business

1. Recommended new project reports vs. committee reports (Nyhan)

Chairman Nyhan is recommending doing away with the committee format for report giving and that this should be seen as project driven not a committee task. There was support for this. Starting in December there shall be projects not committee reports

2. Grants & Alternative Funding Project (Nyhan)

Chairman Nyhan noted that grant and alternative funding is the key to the commission's success, and spending time and effort to find funding for the Hampton Beach Master Plan is also important. It was added that Geannina Guzman-Scanlan has volunteered to help in this effort but the Chairman also asked everyone to get involved.

3. Meeting Request – Town Manager – Bridge Repair Project (Nyhan)

The Town Manager Fred Welch would like to meet with this commission to revisit all options available regarding the bridge repair project. He wanted to have an opportunity to share his thoughts. Mr. Watson along with Chairman Nyhan will look into this matter future and try to get more details before scheduling a meeting the Town Manager.

4. Public/Business input – Communication Recommendations (Nyhan)

Noting that he was putting this topic on the table for initial discussion only, Chairman Nyhan recommended that the Commission consider some additional communication vehicles in which the public could utilize in presenting their ideas and thoughts about the Hampton Beach Master Plan. For example, he suggested that from January through our March meeting that he host a public input session one hour prior to our meetings. He also felt that we should provide a quarterly report (one report) to the organizations that we represent. Finally, he proposed an annual input session open to the beach business community. Chairman Nyhan noted that his goal is to continue working towards a positive way to get community input. It was very clear that the commissioners had different view points on this topic, so it was decided to continue the discussion at the December meeting.

5. Other New Business

Mr. Warburton reported that he had informed Patrick Cronin of the Hampton Union that the repair of the North Beach Seawall is being delayed until May of 2009. He noted that since the funding has been approved it is available regardless of the completion timeframe. There was discussion about mentioning this at the December 18, 2008 meeting.

MOVED by Mr. Warburton to adjourn

SECOND by Mr. Rice

VOTE: 7-0-0 MOTION PASSED

Meeting adjourned 8:26pm

