

**Economic Development Advisory Committee**  
**Date: 02/17/21**  
**Town of Hooksett Municipal Building,**  
**Time: 5:00 PM**  
**Minutes**

1 **CALL TO ORDER@ 5:03**

2

3 **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:**

4

5 **ATTENDANCE: David Scarpetti-Chair, Jim Sullivan-Council Rep, Alden Beauchemin, Mark**  
6 **Chagnon, Matt Barrett, Paul Scarpetti**

7

8 **STAFF & OTHER DEPARTMENTS: Andre Garron-Town Administrator, Nicholas Williams-Town**  
9 **Planner**

10 **EXCUSED: Peter Stoddard, Ivan Gault**

11

12 **APPROVAL OF MINUTES 12/16/2020: Motion to approve made by Mark Chagnon 2<sup>nd</sup> by Jim**  
13 **Sullivan as written. All approved motion passes**

14 **Paul Scarpetti abstained, not in attendance**

15

16 **DISCUSSION:**

17 **1.) Exit 10 update: project details are still in discussion. No update to discuss at this**  
18 **meeting**

19 **2.) Exit 11 proposal:**

20 **Nicholas W** the ZBA variance on east side, (applicant Silver City) has been withdrawn, the  
21 Excavation is still pending before ZBA. The variance on the west side where the existing pit is, is  
22 still pending before ZBA as well. A request for a traffic impact study was performed and has  
23 been review by SNHPC and the board. Now the board has requested to have a third-party  
24 geological study done on the site seeking an excavation permit.

25 **Jim S** Asked what are the 5 criteria?

26 **Nicholas W** they are questions the applicant has to explain as to why they want a variance

27 **Alden B** There is a lot of confusion when people talk about the projects of the west and east  
28 side. I would like to talk about the west side.

29 **Alden B** provided a handout/summary for the board. At the last ZBA meeting it became  
30 apparent that the project may be in jeopardy. I contacted the architect of the west side project,  
31 Peter Bartash, and I asked him to put together a summary of the benefits that town would  
32 receive from this project. \$1,000,000 contribution from the project to fund traffic  
33 improvements on Hackett Hill, the toll road and rt 3A intersection. Approx. \$1,490,000 annual

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34 property tax. Contribution from the project will accelerate sewer and water expansion and all  
35 this in the TIF district. Vehicle registration, 150 temp jobs and 200 permanent jobs. It is a good-  
36 looking building and will improve that site, that is ugly as it is now. It will be a benefit.

37 **Matt B** I think the project is great and the contribution to the town is great. The excavation  
38 work has been done to the site so it will be easy to get going with construction and the location  
39 is easy access to the highway.

40 **Jim S** any new development in that area will have impact on the residents in that area. Traffic  
41 will come from any new development. If we are going to deny a project because of traffic  
42 nothing will ever get done development in the area will all come with traffic. The location is  
43 conducive to traffic on and off 93 and 3A this project will reduce our taxes. I think we try to  
44 make sense of it and provide our support and then we hear different perspectives from our  
45 other boards it then slams the breaks on our support. We need to work with the boards for all  
46 their input. If these companies move elsewhere and we lose them, then we ask why we didn't  
47 do more. If there is an allowed use that comes, then we can't stop the development.

48 **Paul S** we have the west side that is damaged goods as it is now, and it is shovel ready. The  
49 property on the west side is not conducive to commercial and this project would be good.  
50 Trucks have back up alarms, but you don't really hear them, and I don't see the traffic as a  
51 problem on 3A they will use 93. they are willing to give \$600,000 for road improvements.

52 **Mark C** I think this summery handout should be provided to the ZBA. I think the west side  
53 property is damaged goods and we need to look at the best use. In my mind it is a great use and  
54 nobody has come to the town with anything better. We need to ask what is best for the town  
55 and that property.

56 **Andre G** my thoughts about the west side as a Administrator and Economic Development  
57 Administrator, you can't help but look at these numbers on this summary and see it will have a  
58 positive impact on the area. My concern is that I wish the town had re-zoned that area. The  
59 master plan update will provide insight on the what the town wants, this variance and could  
60 change the course of that area for a long time. I like the positive input and we need to change  
61 the zoning to what will work in that area. If the Variance is permitted and the traffic can be  
62 fixed with the contributions from this, then that is benefit to the whole town. The money to the  
63 TIF will be beneficial.

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64 **David S** I believe this was industrial and that Jeff L got it rezoned. If we give this variance to the  
65 west, then we can't give the variance to the other side.

66 **Paul S** the argument is, one is better for Commercial and the other is not. That is reason  
67 enough.

68 **Alden B** the west side is damaged, and the east side is high and visible and better for  
69 commercial.

70 **Matt B** I think of it as a gift to the town. We can take this eye sore and put a good-looking  
71 building in it.

72 **David S** can we send a letter to ZBA with our support?

73 **Andre G** I think you can, but it will not influence there review of the 5 criteria. It is better to  
74 send the support to Planning Board. I don't think it will have influence on ZBA, they are focused  
75 on the criteria.

76 **Jim S** the projects are different as night and day, they are 2 different areas. We should send a  
77 letter indicating why we think this project is better and not both, like we had talked about and  
78 supported before. Is this project in contradiction to the mast plan update? If the master plan is  
79 eyes on the future and as soon as we update and it is not in the plan. We may want to look at it  
80 and tweak it if that is the case. Let's support this and I believe the other side is a different beast.

81 **Nicholas W** the MP update states specifics to exit 11, It is not contradictory from the update.

82 ***Economic Development Advisory Committee based on the findings in the summary provided***  
83 ***by Peter Bartash, Granite Woods LLC proposed development on the west side. A motion was***  
84 ***made by Paul Scarpetti to send a letter of support to the ZBA with attached summery before***  
85 ***the March 9<sup>th</sup> meeting. 2<sup>nd</sup> by Mark Chagnon. All in favor.***

86 **Alden Beauchemin, Paul Scarpetti and David Scarpetti recuse themselves from discussion as**  
87 **they are abutters to Map 13 Lot 51 (east side proposed development)**

88 **Matt B (stand in for Chair- David Scarpetti)** we have a number of concerns about the east side,  
89 there is an issue about the plans and the fact that all still indicate the proposed warehouse on  
90 the plans and if they kept that on there it could result in a different decision from the state and  
91 permitting. The applicant will be lowering the grade 41 feet to the north and 44 feet on the  
92 south side. The application section says that no excavation will go lower than the highway. It set

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93 a dangerous president that anyone can excavate their property. The value has been elevated  
94 and we think that is untruthful. If the landowner gets more revenue from fill of an undesirable  
95 product. I think there are a number of reasons for denial.

96 **Mark C** it is a good piece of property as it looks now. Best use is not going down 44 feet. They  
97 say they will gain acreage. I would have to say this is not the best use of this property.

98 **Matt B** everyone has had an issue with the west side and how it was excavated and now it looks  
99 like they want to mimic the same thing on the other side. The same look that NO one liked.

100 **Mark C** do they have to dig to erect the building? Can they develop without excavating?

101 **Jim S** my concern as well. From an economic development standpoint, we love the project then  
102 we found out that they would remove so much to get the project. There is no guaranty that  
103 they will build what they said. Is there any requirement to put the site back? Can we require to  
104 reclaim it? I would be inclined to support if we had ways to reclaim.

105 **Nicholas W** according to their engineer it would accommodate parking.

106 **Ken Scarpetti Abutter of Map 13 Lot 51-** You look at this project it is a shell game! if you look at  
107 the plan they are claiming there are 13 acres they are going to gain but if you look at the plan  
108 and take the site down that low then you look at the truck traffic and the slops that will come  
109 off that that has to burn up 5 6 acres because of the grade going down and they will have to  
110 make provisions for the area around the building and the parking area then beyond the  
111 pavement they are doing for the trucking it will a 3 – 1 slope it will be more like 7 acres. If you  
112 scale the rt 3 side they will only about 40 – 45 ft. that is all they can gain. So I don't see why no  
113 one has look at this and how they balance this site the equalizing of the site with the fill they  
114 have into the ravines you have on the site now. It would be interesting to see what they would  
115 get for acreage. The bottom line is to look at it from the town side. If warehousing is that  
116 valuable right now then you would build it now and on that site there is space to do just that.  
117 This is all about money. If you grant this then anyone with a bank of sand can sell it. Was it an  
118 excavation permit they got on the west side? That should be looked in to.

119 **Andre G** the ZBA grants the excavation permit but this developer has withdrawn the variance  
120 request for the warehousing building. Can they apply for an excavation permit, is it an  
121 allowable use there?

122 **Nicholas W** no it is not allowed in the Commercial zone.

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123 **Andre G** So now they can't excavate the land without the permit from the state and ZBA? Do  
124 they have to get a Variance for the excavation permit?

125 **Nicholas W** now this is interesting question because they concurrently applied for both and  
126 then they pulled the variance on that site that the excavation was applied for.

127 **Andre G** so they were associating the excavation with the proposed warehousing facility, and  
128 now that they withdrew it there is no basis for independently moving forward with the  
129 excavation permit.

130 **Matt B** if they want the facility why not build it as is there is room. Why take the site down  
131 40ft?

132 **Jim S** if you want to build something you have to do some excavation, but this is beyond that.  
133 The state would still need to grant the AoT permit

134 **Andre G** what is the AoT based on if they withdrew their application for development?

135 **Jim S** maybe the state will make the decision for us. If the state agrees and the town did not  
136 then why are we not, why is the town going against the state?

137 **Mark C** the lowest point is 3A and highest point is 93. How do the regulations read to allow  
138 that? That may be the option out of this.

139 **Jim S** we made a support for the east side and did we remove our support? I think we should if  
140 we have not one that already

141 **Mark Chagnon Made a motion that the Economic Development Advisory Committee, based**  
142 **on new findings and while waiting on the states AoT permit, we do not support the project.**  
143 **2<sup>nd</sup> by Jim Sullivan. All in favor**

144 **3.) ERZ Update:**

145 **Nicholas W** we have had 7 applications in the new ERZ zones

146 **David S** even without being able to put up signs the word has gotten out and the information  
147 on the website helps. Maybe we can add more somehow?

148 **Nicholas W** there is a layer on GIS. I could reach out to new business about the ERZs

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149 **David S** can we get a list of these properties and send them a letter with information about the  
150 ERZ?

151 **Nicholas W RSA 72:80 Commercial and Industrial construction Tax Exemption:** we have more  
152 details to work out and then we will need to present it to Town Council, then we can move  
153 forward with the announcement.

154 **Jim S** send a press release

155 **Nicholas W Master Plan Update:** this has been going on over the last 3 yrs. It has been  
156 challenging with all land use boards and Town Council. I want this board to review the chapter  
157 on Economic Development. Also, I think more important, is the section for land use. On the  
158 downward trend is retail and we are seeing the uptick in warehousing. The town would like to  
159 attract the industrial sector and look in to what and where is the future use. I think it's  
160 important to identify the Economic Development we want to attract. Is it retail is it  
161 Commercial? We are starting to see the larger spaces that don't have tenants. We can develop  
162 and plan to help managers connect with possible tenants. Look at Exit 10 & 11, explore the  
163 potential to re-zone. Allow mixed use?

164 **David S** mixed use is nice use. Affordable housing is important to look in to, there is such a  
165 shortage.

166 **Nicholas W** mixed use is how projects are trending. I think exit 11 would be nice fit for that.

167 **Jim S** what we want to start to attract? What do we have that will bring these projects in? How  
168 do we attract the projects we want? How can we reach out and bring those in? Mixed use is  
169 good in some areas. Elderly or low income would be able to walk to what they need. Maybe not  
170 at exit 11. If that's what is suggested in the Master Plan, then we need to listen to it.

171 **Paul S** you have to plant the seed and be patient. You may not see the efforts made today for  
172 another 10 yrs., but it must be planned. The development regs require a better building now  
173 and we will see those results in 10 yrs. Do you have an idea with continuity between boards?

174 **Andre G** we need to get together semiannually, meet, and understand how these two worlds  
175 can coexist. To start it has to be a conversation. To have a better understanding is to have the  
176 conversations, for a better perspective.

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177 **Jim S** You have been saying you want to do something to bring the board together and it is a  
178 good idea to wait for the Master Plan. Maybe have a round table discussion with all boards and  
179 have an agenda so not to get off track. Tackle that agenda one item at a time, then plan on  
180 meeting once a year.

181 **New Development:**

182 **Nicholas W** Nothing for the Kmart plaza has been brought to the town. We have had 10-12 new  
183 businesses coming to Occupancy Review for locations available in town. Still's Turf is looking for  
184 CO. Starbucks will be going for their CO next month. The Sports Dome next week as well. Blue  
185 Bird Self Storage is going to Planning with a new building. 1380 Hooksett Rd is proposing  
186 Contractor bays. 1562 Hooksett Rd as provided plans for Retail and a Drive thru Dominos. The  
187 Old Chinese site has interest in a Coffee shop and gas station.

188 **Alden B** Also, I talked with the developers at exit 10, Technology Dr., they are still in the  
189 planning and working on traffic study.

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193 **Meeting Adjourned @ 6:39 Motion made by Matt Barrett 2<sup>nd</sup> by Paul Scarpetti, all in favor**

194 **Minutes respectfully submitted by Kathy Lawrence**

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