



**Town of Camden**  
**Minutes of the Meeting of the**  
**Camden Economic Development Advisory Committee**  
**September 24, 2012**  
**5:30pm**

**PRESENT:** Chairperson Peter Gross, Rick Bates, Pete Brown, Kipp Wright  
Liasons: Martin Cates (Select Board), Lowrie Sargent (Planning Board)  
Alternates: Deb Dodge, Meg Quijano

**ABSENT:** Ellis Cohn

**1. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 5:30pm.

**2. Approval of Board Minutes**

*Pete Brown made a motion to accept the minutes of the August 27<sup>th</sup> meeting as presented. Deb Dodge seconded the motion. It was unanimously approved.*

**3. Tannery Site**

Chairperson Gross told the group that the Select Board had requested that CEDAC re-visit the selling strategy for the Tannery Site. It had been suggested that the committee consider the idea of listing the site with a commercial realtor, he said. Gross suggested that the committee discuss and examine the criteria concerning job creation that had been originally set up and also take a look at the restrictions that had been placed on potential uses of the site.

Brian Hodges reviewed the list of parties who had expressed interest in the property over recent years. He also detailed the marketing efforts that had taken place across several platforms including various website listings, YouTube, Facebook, posters, and an advertising campaign.

The difficulties in selling the property were discussed, including its history involving hazardous waste, its positioning along a river with the accompanying setback requirement, zoning restrictions, and the issues surrounding bringing a business into a neighborhood. The group also discussed how the guidelines that had been set up regarding job creation had been particularly challenging.

Lowrie Sargent suggested that eliminating the job criteria could make the property more appealing to businesses, as it can be difficult for a business to divulge all their confidential business information including their long-term hiring plans. Deb Dodge noted that the job creation criteria is most likely more problematic than the property uses list.

The committee decided to review the guidelines that are currently in place in more detail,

and that a strategy for handling the Tannery Site will be discussed further at the next meeting.

**4. Comprehensive Plan**

Lowrie Sargent described the process that the Planning Board will be undertaking to update Camden's Comprehensive Plan. He said there are 23 chapters to review and that CEDAC will primarily be involved with the Economic Chapter and the Downtown Chapter. He said the Plan will be bigger this time around because of new information to be folded in, including the Select Board's goals and several studies that had been completed, including the Downtown Master Plan.

Sargent told the group that when this process took place last in 2005, the Code Enforcement Officer was able to assist, but at this point in time the CEO is performing many more inspections than back then. Therefore, Jean Friedman-White has stepped up and offered to coordinate the Chapter Working Groups, volunteering her time to do this. Another change this time, Sargent reported, would be that the State will be serving in an advisory capacity rather than having to approve each element of the Plan as before. This is due, he said, to the fact that also the Governor has dissolved the State Planning Office,

Brian Hodges noted the importance of having a current, approved Comprehensive Plan, saying that it is necessary in order to qualify for some grants. Lowrie Sargent reviewed the timetable for the review process, explaining that the Planning Board will have until 2015 to complete the review, and that the goal would be to have a revised Comprehensive Plan on the ballot for voters to approve in June of 2016.

**5. Downtown Network Board Update**

Brian Hodges reported that the Downtown Network Board had met on September 10<sup>th</sup>, and that their main charge is to make recommendations to the Select Board for implementation of the Downtown Master Plan.

a) **Grant Update:** Hodges said that the Downtown Network Board had decided to pursue two grant opportunities, one to provide funding for a study on a possible River to Harbor Walk from Shirttail Point down to the harbor, and another to look at the best uses of the Public Landing. Each study would cost a total of \$20,000, \$15,000 to be funded by the grant if approved, with a \$5,000 Town match. The grant applications had been submitted on September 18<sup>th</sup>, he said, and we would hope to hear an answer regarding funding by mid-October.

b) **Downtown Master Plan priorities:** Hodges reported that the Downtown Network Board is in the process of identifying projects which can be implemented in the near future as we wait to learn about future funding. He said that the Board is interested in engaging the Master Plan as a living document and not let it sit on the shelf. Already progress has been made on signage and on providing additional off-street parking, he noted, both of which had made a substantial positive impact this summer. Currently the Downtown Network Board is working on placing ideas for projects from the Plan into a grid format, he said, so they can make informed decisions and formulate recommendations for the Select Board.

**6. Goal Setting**

Gross told the group that in October the committee would be discussing where CEDAC is headed in accordance with the goals that the Select Board's had set at the beginning

of the year. He said that now with the Development Director in place, the Downtown Master Plan completed and several grant applications submitted, it is time for the committee to set a direction as to further areas to focus on. Martin Cates noted that a large majority of the Select Board goals are economically driven and so would come to CEDAC for consideration. Cates added that in working with the Select Board in an advisory capacity, specific recommendations can be driven from committee level up.

**7. Save the Date**

Peter Gross told the group that a Mobilize Maine Foundation/Discovery Event would be held in Damariscotta on October 30<sup>th</sup> from 4-6pm. The event is hosted by MCCED and he encouraged committee members to attend. He noted that this will be a great opportunity to share information with people who are working in similar areas in other areas along the Mid-Coast.

**8. Public Comment / Questions on Agenda Items**

There were no public comments.

**9. Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Downtown Network Board will be held on Monday, October 22<sup>nd</sup> at 5:30pm.

**Adjourn**

*Peter Gross made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Pete Brown seconded this motion. The motion passed unanimously.*

Respectfully submitted,

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Karen Brace  
Recording Secretary