

FINAL

**WEST LEBANON REVITALIZATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS OR
Remote Via Virtual Platform
LebanonNH.gov/Live
May 20, 2024
5:30 PM**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Councilor Chris Simon, Dan Nash, Erik Endrulat, Kim Chewning, Andrew Faunce, Laurel Stavis, Jim Winny

MEMBERS ABSENT: James Mashal

STAFF PRESENT: Nate Reichert (Director of Planning & Development)

1. CALL TO ORDER – The meeting was called to order at 5:30 PM.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

A. April 15, 2024

*Mr. Nash MOVED to approve the meeting minutes of April 15, 2024, as amended.
SECONDED by Mr. Winny.*

Amendments:

Change the dates of future meetings on Page 2: Lines 37 and 38.

** The Vote on the MOTION was approved (7-0-0).*

3. OLD BUSINESS

A. Continued Discussion on the West Lebanon TIF District

Chair Simon stated that, if the Main Street streetscape project was not already being completed, this would be a good example of how to put a TIF in place to complete a project. However, this is already in the works through federal funding. If a TIF was placed in the Main Street area, it would seem to be seeking a project, instead of the other way around. He stated that he is not in favor of placing a TIF on Main Street at this time.

It was noted that there was previous discussion that there was not a firm project that would encourage development beyond what currently exists. There does not seem to be an anchor project. Mr. Nash stated that he believed recreation use of the land near River Park could be the project that anchors this. Also, a trail on the sewer easements would be difficult, and a TIF would come in handy for this.

Ms. Chewning stated that the City Council recently acknowledged that there will likely be a 10% increase in taxes for the next few years. She stated that she is having trouble looking at anything that will take away from the tax base any further at this time. There is no greater tool for revitalization than a good school system. A TIF idea would need to make sure that the schools do not lose tax dollars at this time.

There was discussion regarding the City using the project at River Park as the economic engine and to help with the project's coordination in 2020/2021. This has not occurred. Chet Clem explained that the approximately \$5M scope of the project for this TIF would have been used for the remaining Phase I infrastructure – including the southern entrance off Route 10 and the Lyman Street loop. This would have qualified for federal transportation funding, but these dollars are harder to come by at this time. This project is now being sought entirely privately.

Ms. Chewning stated that she believes this group is interested in the revitalization of West Lebanon and River Park is a key to this. It is important to understand what it will take to move this project forward. She asked what this Committee can do to help push this project forward. She asked what a TIF would do for this project. It was explained that, in a TIF, the money comes from tax dollars. River Park would get built, the City would take on the cost, and the money made back would go to pay off the loan.

Ms. Stavis stated that she is confused regarding where the public benefit leaves off and the private begins for this proposed River Park project. It was noted that the intention is to revitalize all of Main Street to create a domino effect. Chair Simon stated that it is yet unclear if a TIF would be beneficial for River Park. Chet Clem stated that he is very interested in becoming part of a TIF in West Lebanon, but he has pushed for this, and it has not gone anywhere.

Ms. Stavis stated that she does not believe a TIF can rely on only one project; it should be bigger than that. This discussion has focused specifically on River Park, as a single project. If this project will be relied upon to revitalize West Lebanon, this is a departure from previous discussions.

The Committee agreed that it would like to continue to hear discussion, such as from the EDC, and additional information on this topic moving forward.

Andrew Faunce exited the meeting at 6:45pm.

4. NEW BUSINESS

A. An update and discussion on River Park with the developer

This was discussed as part of the previous agenda item.

5. OTHER BUSINESS

None at this time.

6. ADJOURNMENT:

Mr. Nash MOVED to adjourn the meeting at. SECONDED by Ms. Chewning.

**** The Vote on the MOTION was approved (6-0-0).***

Respectfully submitted,

Kristan Patenaude

Recording Secretary