



**LEBANON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
FEBRUARY 24, 2025 - 4:00 PM
COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY HALL OR
REMOTE VIA VIRTUAL PLATFORM
LEBANONNH.GOV/LIVE**

1. Call to Order

The February 24, 2025 Economic Development Commission meeting is hereby called to order.

2. Approval of Minutes

A. January 22, 2025

3. New Business

A. Strategic Plan Review

B. Master Plan Chapter 6: Economic Development

4. Future Agenda Items

5. Next Meeting Date

A. March 24, 2025

6. Other Business

7. Adjournment

Meetings are open for in-person and remote attendance. Members of the public that wish to attend remotely may do so by going to LebanonNH.gov/Live where you will find instructions on how to enter the meeting. Members of the public will be able to participate and ask questions through the City's virtual platform or by phone. Please note: Should technical difficulties occur during the meeting that disrupts virtual or phone connection(s), the meeting will continue without remote access capabilities.

DRAFT

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 22, 2025 – 4:00PM
Council Chambers – City Hall – or remote via Virtual Platform
MINUTES**

EDC MEMBERS PRESENT: David Newlove (Chair), Chip Brown, Councilor Karen Liot Hill (Vice Chair), Andrew Key, Dean Cashman

EDC MEMBERS ABSENT: Councilor Doug Whittlesey, Dan Nash, Tracy Hutchins (Upper Valley Business Alliance)

STAFF PRESENT: Deputy City Manager David Brooks

1. CALL TO ORDER:

- The January 22, 2025, Economic Development Commission meeting was called to order at 4:00pm.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

- A. October 16, 2024

Motion by Councilor Liot Hill to approve the meeting minutes of October 16, 2024, as presented.

Second by Mr. Brown.

**The Vote on the MOTION was approved (5-0).*

3. NEW BUSINESS:

- A. Update on 20 Spencer Street Redevelopment Project

Mr. Brooks explained that The Muse Lebanon project did not get funded through the New Hampshire Housing Finance Authority. The funding for this round was very competitive and several applicants contested and appealed their scoring. The New Hampshire Housing Finance Authority has been going through the process of meeting with each of those applicants and this process should be complete by the end of January. The scoring for The Muse Lebanon project is known, but it is unclear how it stands compared to the other applications received. It appears that all of the projects that were funded were returning applicants. Ways to strategize moving forward will be considered prior to the next round of capital subsidy funding, which will likely occur in October 2025. There could also be consideration into pursuing a different development approach which would significantly reduce the number of units for the site. The current plan is to move forward with the next round of capital subsidy funding with the 80 unit project which was previously approved by the Planning Board. If the project does not receive funding in the next round, the project could then be reconfigured to require less or no capital subsidy.

There was discussion regarding changing these units to market rate instead in order to get something on the tax roll for the City. Mr. Brooks stated that the project, as proposed, will pay taxes. Mr. Brown suggested that the Commission wait to see how the project's scoring stands and then consider the proposed tax benefit in terms of considering a different approach for the project.

- B. Update on Downtown Parking Lot Redevelopment Study

Mr. Brooks explained that the next community conversation is scheduled for Wednesday, February 12th in the Council Chambers. Based on guidance from the EDC and Downtown Lebanon TIF Advisory Board at a meeting on December 11th, effort is being put toward fine-tuning Option 1, which is to keep the area as a parking lot and make certain improvements. Option 2, the riverfront park, and Option 3, which includes some development will also be further refined. The fourth option is the only one that generates a surplus, while all the others include costs. However, little to no additional time will be spent refining Option 4. Staff is seeking an engineering assessment of the retaining wall, the guardrail, and the drainage outfall at the river to obtain an estimate of what it will cost to fix these items. Staff is also seeking an estimate of what it may cost to get rid of the wall and slope the parking lot in a single grade so that there is not a continued retaining wall issue. Hopefully, this information will be provided ahead of the February 12th meeting and then presented to the City Council in April.

- C. Master Plan, Chapter 6, Economic Development, Review and Update

Mr. Brooks stated that, if the Commission is satisfied with the revisions to Chapter 6, it could bring it before the Planning Board. The Planning Board could then consider scheduling a public hearing and adopting the Chapter as a revised portion of the Master Plan.

Motion by Mr. Brown that the Commission is satisfied with the revisions to Chapter 6 as proposed, and to move them forward to the Planning Board for inclusion into the Master Plan.

Second by Mr. Key.

**The Vote on the MOTION was approved (5-0).*

4. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS:

Mr. Brooks stated that there is an ongoing action to bring the Strategic Plan up to date. There will be three upcoming public sessions on this topic – next Tuesday (28th), Thursday (30th), and the following Thursday (February 6th). The City Council will have a discussion on this topic in February. As the Strategic Plan is a guiding document for the budget, this conversation will be a kickoff toward the budget process for the year. The Strategic Plan outlines which actions the City will prioritize for completion this year. The Strategic Plan will be a topic of discussion at the Commission's February meeting

5. NEXT MEETING DATE:

A. February 24, 2025

The Commission agreed to meet on February 24th, March 24th, and April 28th and then revisit schedules to determine the best meeting dates going forward.

6. OTHER BUSINESS

None at this time.

7. ADJOURNMENT.

Motion by Mr. Key to adjourn the meeting.

Second by Mr. Brown.

** The Vote on the MOTION was approved (5-0).*

The meeting was adjourned at 4:44PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Kristan Patenaude

#2 Housing and Neighborhoods

EDC listed among “responsible” boards and committees, but not specifically referenced within individual Strategic Objectives, Action Plans, etc.

#4 Recreation, Arts & Parks

Strategic Objective 4.3 - Enhance the vitality of Arts & Culture in the City in cooperation with the arts community in the Upper Valley. This includes energizing the arts economy as well as opportunities for public art.

Action Plan 4.3.1 – Increase volume of public art

Key Performance Indicator 4.3.1b - EDC representative to propose that developers add public art in any new development involving public/city owned land. Ongoing.

Current State 4.3.1b – 20 Spencer St redevelopment project approved in Sept. 2024 with arts focus, including gallery space in lobby, and live-work units designed for artists.

#8 Economic Vitality

Strategic Objective 8.1 - Facilitate a Vibrant, Sustainable and Resilient Economy that provides a high quality of life.

Action Plan 8.1.2 - Work with property owners and developers to facilitate projects that enhance the City's Master Plan and Strategic Objectives.

KPI 8.1.2 - Develop working relationships with property owners/developers to assist them in moving their projects forward. Utilizing the tax incentive measures that are available.

CS 8.1.2 - City successfully partnered with LWM to obtain InvestNH grant funds for demolition of parts of redevelopment site. In December 2023, City Council granted 79-E tax relief for 11-year period with condition related to Declaration of Outdoor Recreational Activity. Council re-affirmed 11-years of 79-E tax relief in January 2025.

CS 8.1.2a - In October 2023, City Council agreed to conditionally accept River Park Drive as a public street. A TIF District has been considered for West Lebanon Main Street area, but there is no defined public improvement to be undertaken at present.

Action Plan 8.1.3 – Update the Economic Development Chapter of the Master Plan

KPI 8.1.3 – EDC works to develop their update process with guidance from City Staff.

CS 8.1.3 – Complete chapter update and present to Planning Board for adoption by end of Q1 of 2025.

Strategic Objective 8.3 – Work cooperatively with UVBA, the Corporate Council and others to enhance the business climate in the region.

Action Plan 8.3.2 – Work collaboratively with UVBA, the Corporate Council and others to enhance the business climate.

Action Plan 8.3.3 – Program to assist minority, LGBTQ+ and woman businesses (DEI)

Action Plan 8.3.5 – Provide small business resources at the Libraries by having programming, databases, and other resources available to people who own or are developing new business.

KPI 8.3.5a – Increase collection materials and programming that support small businesses in Lebanon.

KPI 8.3.5b – Collaborate with organizations such as the SBA, non-profits, and local small business to assess and provide supportive materials and programming.

CS 8.3.5b - EDC hosted a Small Business Workshop in October 2024 with representatives from Grafton RDC, Small Business Admin, and SCORE mentor program.

Action Plan 8.3.6 – Work collaboratively with UVBA and others to identify gaps and community and regional needs for potential recruitment and retention efforts.

KPI 8.3.6 – Partner with UVBA to execute a regional Gap Analysis

CS 8.3.6 – Discussions under way at EDC on the need for Gap study.

Strategic Objective 8.4 – Coordinate regionally to enhance tourism opportunities in the Upper Valley

Action Plan 8.4.1 – Partner w/ UVBA to promote tourism in the UV

KPI 8.4.1 – Provide microgrants to UVBA to promote tourism in the UV.

CS 8.4.1 – CM has provided microgrants to UVBA to create tourism opportunities in the UV. The City funded the startup costs for the UV Local app with ARPA funds.

Action Plan 8.4.2 – Enhance tourism relative to the City's historic sites, online map, photos, videos, and on site signage

Strategic Objective 8.5 – Implement opportunities for redevelopment in the four core business districts of the City.

Action Plan 8.5.1 – Implement West Lebanon Charrette Studies (PLN)

KPI 8.5.1 – Acquisition & development of Westboro Yard recreational area

CS 8.5.1 – Negotiations continue with NH DOT to acquire a portion of the railyard and develop it into a recreational area. NHDOT has conceptually approved design for multi-use path along CT riverfront.

CS 8.5.1 – WLRAC and EDC analyzed the potential benefits of creating a TIF District in West Lebanon. The discussions were put on hold in the absence of a defined public improvement to be undertaken.

KPI 8.5.1a – West Lebanon Main St. Improvements and roundabout completed NLT 2026

CS 8.5.1a – Final design underway, complete design in 2025, bid in winter 2025, begin construction in spring 2025

KPI 8.5.1b – Acquisition, demolition and redevelopment of the properties located at 14, 28 and 30 Main St.

CS 8.5.1.b – RFP for Main Street parcels issued March 2024 for potential redevelopment proposals. No viable responses were received. The City is now initiating discussions with area firms to consider redevelopment projects.

Action Plan 8.5.2 – Downtown Redevelopment - 20 Spencer, Village Mkt, Kleen, Parking Lots (PLN)

KPI 8.5.2 – Redevelopment of 20 Spencer St. for workforce housing

CS 8.5.2 – The Muse Lebanon/Tamposi selected in March 2024 as preferred developer of 20 Spencer St. based on revised RFP. Site Plan Review approval for 80-unit affordable housing project obtained from Planning Board in Sept. 2024. NHHFA funding application unsuccessful in Fall 2024;

KPI 8.5.2a – Redevelopment of the parking lots behind City Hall, maintaining the existing parking capacity, developing workforce housing and green space.

CS 8.5.2a – City engaged multi-disciplinary consultant team to study and address potential issues and questions associated with redevelopment of parking lots. EDC and Downtown TIF to

coordinate with consultant and help lead public engagement processes. Community Meetings held in Sep. 2024 and Feb. 2025.

KPI 8.5.2b – Partner with developer to develop the Village Market property.

CS 8.5.2b – City engineer evaluating developer proposal for left turn access into Village Market property; Developer has obtained extensions of time from Planning Board;

KPI 8.5.2c – Partner with developer to develop the mill property at the former Kleen Laundry site.

CS 8.5.2c – City successfully partnered with LWM to obtain InvestNH grant funds for demolition of parts of redevelopment site. In December 2023, City Council granted 79-E tax relief for 11-year period with condition related to Declaration of Outdoor Recreational Activity. Council re-affirmed 11-years of 79-E tax relief in January 2025.

Action Plan 8.5.3 – Update Economic Development, Lebanon CBD, and West Lebanon CBD Chapters of the Master Plan

KPI 8.5.3 – Boards & Commissions partner to make necessary updates to individual chapters relating to their goals.

CS 8.5.3 – EDC started update process for Chapter 6 (Economic Development); should be finished by end of Q1 of 2025;