

FINAL

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 8, 2025 – 3:30PM
Council Chambers – City Hall – or remote via Virtual Platform
MINUTES

EDC MEMBERS PRESENT: Andrew Key (Vice Chair), Chip Brown, Dean Cashman, Councilor Tim McNamara (City Council Rep), Councilor Chris Simon (City Council Rep), Eric Stacy, Brendan Callahan

EDC MEMBERS ABSENT: Dan Nash (Chair)

STAFF PRESENT: Deputy City Manager David Brooks

1. CALL TO ORDER:

The October 8, 2025, Economic Development Commission meeting was called to order at 3:30pm by Councilor McNamara in the absence of both the Chair and Vice-Chair.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

A. September 10, 2025

Motion by Mr. Stacy to approve the meeting minutes of September 10, 2025, as presented.

Second by Mr. Callahan.

**The Vote on the MOTION was approved (4-0-1, with Councilor Simon abstaining).*

3. NEW BUSINESS:

A. Discuss Potential Zoning Amendments for Fall 2025

- Commission's recommendations to the Planning & Development Department

Councilor McNamara explained that the City Council discussed some of these amendments, including the ones related to requirements for provision of EV charging spaces. It was determined by the Council that this is a sufficiently complicated item, and a Task Force was formed, comprised of three Council members, including himself and Councilor Simon, and three Planning Board members. The group will review the proposals for EV charging requirements and present a recommendation to the Council for adoption. He recommended that the Commission draft a list of concerns or questions to present to the Task Force.

Vice Chair Andrew Key entered the meeting at 3:36pm.

Jon Livadas, petitioner, explained that his petition is to move the current regulations from Zoning into Site Plan Review. There is no specific ask as to what that change would look like as part of the proposal. He offered use of his consultants as the Task Force moves through its process. He asked his consultants to speak to this proposal.

Paul Huelskamp, Anode Technology Company, explained that he lives in a suburb of San Francisco and has seen the first wave of an EV charging buildout. He noted that many of the public charging stations that are not owned by Tesla are falling apart. Waves of companies are going bankrupt and new technologies are being developed each week. It is dangerous to force people to make bets during this period of rapid innovation. There needs to be appropriate legislation and policy to drive innovation. The public charging facilities near him are everywhere and easy to use. He questioned if the best way to encourage EV adoption in Lebanon is to invest in multifamily charging. It may be better to wait and see what happens with the technology. He felt there are better ways to address the problem of EV ownership and the potential disproportionate level of this ownership.

Travis Stockman, electrical engineer, stated that the demand on the electrical grid seems to increase as more EV chargers are installed. There is room to adopt EV chargers in a more reasonable way.

Mr. Livadas explained that the projected scope for the project includes 4,900 manhours for the electrical work. For one electrician working full-time, this would equate to 28 months. For a crew of four, it would take seven months to complete the EV portion of this project.

Shane Wiebe, electrical engineer, explained that, with the adoption of IECC 2021, the energy code requires 20% of parking spots to have EV charging. Near Boston, the grid is getting close to capacity, requiring ownership to spend to upgrade the utility infrastructure because the utility infrastructure was never designed or intended to handle the electrical load being put on it by the all-electric buildings and EV chargers. As EV chargers continue to spread, this will drive costs up on the utility side.

Mr. Brown entered the meeting at 3:52pm.

Mr. Livadas stated that he keeps hearing that developers do not want to add EVs and are trying to avoid it. This is not the case. Developers want to install EVs to meet the market and provide for future growth in order to provide a service to tenants and create more demand. Developers want to have the flexibility to install what is right and plan for the future. The fires in California started due to old electrical equipment that was not maintained. He expressed concern that installing drastic load increases across the board which are not necessarily being used at the site could put this area in a bad position, similar to that of California. Each site should be evaluated and allowed to install the correct amount of EV charging for the site.

Mr. Key asked Mr. Livadas what he thought was the appropriate number of tenant parking spaces for EV chargers. Mr. Livadas stated that The Marek has 250 units, over 300 parking spaces, and 6-7 chargers, or approximately 3% of the total spaces. There have been no issues reported with people charging. He would propose installing 5% of spaces for charging for his development at this time, with an additional 5%-10% in the future, if needed. All of the chargers for this development will be private and thus not help expand public charging usage.

Mr. Weibe stated that he is starting to see Fire Departments push back on the locations for EV chargers in developments due to fire risks. Mr. Livadas stated that he is also seeing concerns from insurance brokers on this topic.

Councilor Simon stated that he is in favor of EV charging. However, the current proposal seems to put the cart before the horse. There are not currently 100 people looking for 100 units that are all EV ready. This could be something in the future to consider. A reasonable approach, including sharing of a few EV chargers on a site, should be considered.

Mr. Key stated that he does not believe a municipality should force a developer's hands upfront to require a certain number of EV spaces. It does not help what is already a tough position for developers in building single-family housing.

Mr. Key asked what the current requirement for EV charging spaces is at the Woolen Mill development. Mr. Livadas stated that he is required to install one per unit, or 155, and 50% of the remaining parking spaces, or approximately 45. This assumes that 100% of the units will require EV chargers, plus an additional number.

Councilor McNamara stated that 100%+ seems excessive, especially if the technology is going to change. A lower number seems more appropriate. Also, there is a difference between types of chargers and how quickly they charge vehicles. This may change the level of utilization.

Mr. Brooks reviewed the other proposed Zoning Amendments. The first four amendments are directly related to statutory changes at the State legislature, including items regarding manufactured homes, multifamily housing, residential parking requirements, and accessory dwelling units (ADUs). The next number of items include map amendments and corresponding text amendments related to the Northern Lebanon study. Proposed amendments #11-13 are being sponsored by one or more boards or committees. The Heritage Commission is seeking to update the Historic District regulations. The Food Truck Task Force is seeking amendments to allow Mobile Food Service on private properties. LEAC is sponsoring the proposed EV regulations. Items #14-16 include proposed text amendments to Section 608: Signs Definitions, Section 411: Pattern Zones Overlay District, and Section 509: Cottage Cluster Developments. Items #17-20 involve miscellaneous and technical amendments, such as the Definition of Care and Treatment of Animals, Section 1000, Definition of Lot & Definition of Agriculture, and Changes to Impact Fees.

Mr. Brooks explained that the legal review will help determine which, if any, of these amendments must go to the ballot. Those will have to be dealt with by the Council in January at a public hearing in order to be placed on the ballot for March. The other amendments which the Council could choose to adopt allow for a bit more flexibility in the timeline as to when they get approved. Once legal review is complete, the amendments will be sent through the

various boards/commissions for review and comment. The Commission can discuss if it would like to submit a formal recommendation on one or more of these amendments.

Councilor McNamara stated that amendments #5-10 seem to be fairly complex, and he suggested that the Commission hear a brief review of those items at the next meeting.

There was discussion regarding endorsing Mr. Livadas' proposal and how they apply to single-family versus multifamily housing. There was discussion regarding how to determine the correct percentage or number of spaces to follow. Mr. Brooks explained that the City Council controls the Zoning and can agree to pull these regulations out of Zoning. The Planning Board controls its own regulations and would have to then agree to put the regulations within the Site Plan Review process. This would be its own public hearing process. He suggested that the Commission's recommendation would include removing these regulations from Zoning and placing them into the Site Plan Review regulations.

Motion by Mr. Stacy to recommend that the City Council take the regulations out of Zoning, with the Planning Board's acceptance to include them in the Site Plan Review process, with the recommended minimum benchmark being the most recent published share of registered light-duty electric vehicles in New Hampshire, as reported by the US Department of Energy's Alternative Fuels Data Center.

Second by Mr. Callahan.

**** The Vote on the MOTION was approved (5-0, with Councilors Simon and McNamara recusing themselves from the vote).***

B. Discussion of Potential EDC Representative to the Arts and Culture Commission

Mr. Brooks stated that Mr. Nash was not able to attend the last Arts and Culture Commission meeting. This would be further discussed at a future meeting.

C. Discussion of Potential for Social Districts per NH RSA 178:33

Mr. Brooks explained that the State legislature recently passed legislation to allow communities the option to create Social Districts, or essentially outdoor drinking areas. Councilor Simon explained that this would allow people to carry a drink from one establishment and walk around a certain area with it. People would not be allowed to enter another establishment with the drink. This could help certain businesses to expand in the Downtown area. It could also allow for streets and parking areas to no longer be blocked off, which would be beneficial to the Downtown economy.

Mr. Brown stated that retail is all about activity and population flow. This could be a useful consideration at Colburn Park and the pedestrian mall areas.

Councilor McNamara asked about certain enforcement concerns. Mr. Key suggested that this could be piloted in order to determine if there are serious enforcement issues.

There was discussion regarding seeing the proposed map for the Social District(s).

There was consensus that the Commission would recommend the City Council review this item further.

4. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS:

Mr. Stacy suggested a future discussion regarding the pattern zoning district item.

The Commission agreed to continue to review the proposed Zoning Amendments at the next meeting.

5. NEXT MEETING DATE:

A. November 12, 2025

The Commission agreed to meet on November 12, 2025.

6. OTHER BUSINESS

None at this time.

7. ADJOURNMENT.

Motion by Councilor McNamara to adjourn the meeting.

Second by Councilor Simon.

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

The meeting was adjourned at 5:02PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Kristan Patenaude