

BARRINGTON  
BROOKFIELD  
DOVER  
DURHAM  
FARMINGTON  
LEE  
MADBURY  
MIDDLETON  
MILTON



NEW DURHAM  
NEWMARKET  
NORTHWOOD  
NOTTINGHAM  
ROCHESTER  
ROLLINSFORD  
SOMERSWORTH  
STRAFFORD  
WAKEFIELD

**DRAFT** MINUTES  
STRAFFORD REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY COMMITTEE MEETING

March 31, 2015  
Dover Adult Learning Center (McConnell Center Rm 220)  
61 Locust Street  
Dover, NH

Members Present: Deanna Strand, Dover Adult Learning Center; Lin Tamulonis, Great Bay Community College; Rick Foster, Dover (Private); Christine Soutter, City of Somersworth Economic Development; Ute Luxem, Profile Bank; Dan Barufaldi, City of Dover; Dennis McCann, Strafford Economic Development Corporation; Robert Jaffin, City of Rochester

Guests Present: Senator David Watters, NH State Senate; Serena Galleshaw, Seacoast Local; Tory Jennison, Health and Safety Council of Strafford County; Annette Nielsen, NH Employment Security; Chris Goodwin, Dover Chamber of Commerce

Staff Present: Executive Director Cynthia Copeland, AICP; Matt Sullivan, Regional Planner; Shayna Sylvia, Communications and Outreach Specialist

1. Welcome/Introductions

Matt Sullivan welcomed the group. The meeting commenced at 3:30pm.

Welcome and introductions were made around the room. Cynthia Copeland thanked the group for joining SRPC staff for today's meeting. She gave a brief history as to how SRPC originally got involved in the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Process.

2. Economic Development District Update Designation

M. Sullivan shared that Strafford Regional Planning Commission began working on their first Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) in 2010. This regional economic development plan was adopted in 2011, and has been followed by subsequent annual updates in 2012 and 2013.

M. Sullivan added that another goal of SRPC's economic development planning processes, along with completing a CEDS, was to become an Economic Development District. This goal was recently accomplished in late January 2015. M. Sullivan elaborated that with this new designation the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Committee will undergo a transition to a Board of Directors for the Economic Development District.

BARRINGTON  
BROOKFIELD  
DOVER  
DURHAM  
FARMINGTON  
LEE  
MADBURY  
MIDDLETON  
MILTON



NEW DURHAM  
NEWMARKET  
NORTHWOOD  
NOTTINGHAM  
ROCHESTER  
ROLLINSFORD  
SOMERSWORTH  
STRAFFORD  
WAKEFIELD

An Economic Development District (EDD) is defined by economic distress relative to median household income, per capita income, and poverty rate in a planning region. M. Sullivan explained that there are three census tracts in our region that qualify as distressed. These are located in Durham and Rochester. M. Sullivan shared the other requirements for becoming an EDD including an approved Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy document, and having adequate capacity to support economic development within a defined geographic area. He explained that the EDD process began in November 2013, and was followed by close work with the EDA to ensure they had all the appropriate planning documents and information. Chris Soutter acknowledged the work of SRPC staff members in this process.

M. Sullivan addressed what this announcement means for SRPC's stakeholders. He added that SRPC's status as an EDD will benefit all of our communities, but that it will especially be beneficial for our northern communities who may not have full time planning or economic development staff and are looking for support for infrastructure to enhance economic vitality in their communities.

M. Sullivan began to review the Economic Development District's Year One Work Plan. This includes continuing to provide regional collaboration, assistance, and support to partners and stakeholders; engaging in performance based planning standards in relation to economic planning documents; public involvement and coordination through outreach with stakeholders, this committee, and others; and organizational development and training related with the SRPC's new function as an Economic Development District.

M. Sullivan explained that SRPC would be applying for funding from the Economic Development Administration to support the task outlined in the Year One Work Plan. He continued to address SRPC's function as an EDD in how it is beneficial to our communities and stakeholders. M. Sullivan shared that those currently involved on the CEDS Committee would be involved on the EDD Board of Directors and continuing to guide the annual CEDS updates to ensure that the information included within is both beneficial and relevant to regional stakeholders. The EDD is the formal mechanism through which regional entities are eligible to receive Economic Development Assistance Grants. This status as an EDD, along with the existence of a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy, is beneficial for those applying for EDA funding in that it gives entities a competitive advantage. C. Soutter inquired as to whether EDD status affects the application process for an EDA grant. M. Sullivan shared that it does not affect the actual application process but instead can impact the selection process that happens at the EDA.

Chris Goodwin asked for an example of a project that would be supported by EDA funding. M. Sullivan provided the City of Rochester EDA Infrastructure grant as an example. The City received an EDA grant to support water and sewer infrastructure that would bring in businesses and allow present businesses to expand, facilitating job creation and economic development for the city. M. Sullivan shared other communities in the region have looked into infrastructure projects supporting economic development and vitality as well. Serena Galleshaw asked if EDA funding typically supports infrastructure related projects. M. Sullivan responded in the affirmative. S. Galleshaw asked if there were other areas, other than infrastructure that EDA grants support. M. Sullivan explained that there are other types of EDA grants. Annette Nielson asked if EDA grants can support workforce development. M. Sullivan explained that some EDA grants could indirectly support such a project.

BARRINGTON  
BROOKFIELD  
DOVER  
DURHAM  
FARMINGTON  
LEE  
MADBURY  
MIDDLETON  
MILTON



NEW DURHAM  
NEWMARKET  
NORTHWOOD  
NOTTINGHAM  
ROCHESTER  
ROLLINSFORD  
SOMERSWORTH  
STRAFFORD  
WAKEFIELD

Dennis McCann asked for clarification on EDA funding and what they support. M. Sullivan explained EDA has different funding rounds and that money is available for different types of projects as different times. S. Galleshaw asked if SRPC has a specific number of grant applications they are interested in partnering on. M. Sullivan responded that an answer would depend on the funding that becomes available through the EDA. C. Goodwin asked how EDA funding is broken up. M. Sullivan explained that EDA funding opportunities are released on a publicly set schedule, but that communicating with our regional EDA representatives will give SRPC a better sense of when specific funding opportunities will become available. A discussion ensued concerning the types of grants available through EDA and what types of projects are supported.

Dan Barufaldi addressed how calling an entire region distressed based on a few areas of distress in a region affects funding for those areas that are actually distressed. D. McCann shared that the factor of commuting to work must be considered. If the EDD designation allows for the region to secure funding, job creation would benefit not only those in the region, but those traveling from adjacent areas to employment in the region. C. Copeland shared that it comes down to how we make our case. The region is fortunate to have received this designation as it allows us to apply for funding that will support the entire region. C. Copeland added that we have the opportunity to work with the University as well.

Annette Nielsen asked if this designation is re-evaluated after a period of time or rescinded by the EDA. M. Sullivan shared that, in his current understanding, the only way the region could lose the designation is if the required duties are not performed. C. Copeland shared that the future absence of distress would not mean that the region would lose its designation.

### 3. CEDS Annual Updates

Shayna Sylvia handed out three copies of the DRAFT 2013 Annual Update for the committee to pass around and review. She explained that one function of SRPC's economic planning efforts is an annual update to the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy. The 2013 Annual Update is complete in draft form, and the 2014 Annual Update is being drafted. S. Sylvia reviewed the 2013 Annual Update outline including: an overview of the comprehensive economic development process; the vision and goals of economic development planning in the region; partners and stakeholders involved in the process; exemplary projects in the region related to economic development and the relationship between those and planning goals; data updates related to demographics, housing, employment, and education, and project submissions and updates from our communities and stakeholders.

When reviewing the exemplary projects S. Sylvia provided an example in each goal area. Such examples included Turbocam in Barrington and Somersworth's reconstruction project in their downtown, among others. Types of data included in the 2013 update were also reviewed.

In reviewing the project updates, S. Sylvia shared that she would be requesting that communities review the updates for each project in their municipality for accuracy. S. Sylvia shared that the 2013 and 2014 Annual Updates would be completed for June and brought to the Committee for their approval. M. Sullivan added that the 2013 Annual Update will be distributed soon for the Committee's input and review. He stated that a link would be distributed to the group with the location of the document.

BARRINGTON  
BROOKFIELD  
DOVER  
DURHAM  
FARMINGTON  
LEE  
MADBURY  
MIDDLETON  
MILTON



NEW DURHAM  
NEWMARKET  
NORTHWOOD  
NOTTINGHAM  
ROCHESTER  
ROLLINSFORD  
SOMERSWORTH  
STRAFFORD  
WAKEFIELD

Ute Luxem inquired as to why SRPC is focused on the 2013 Annual Update when there is more recent data. A discussion ensued concerning the importance of maintaining a yearly Annual Update, evenly retroactively, and how circumstances allowed this to be completed at a later date. M. Sullivan explained that data limitations affect the update process as well, and that the updates follow the calendar year. It was important to have a 2013 Annual Update for the EDD grant application. D. Barufaldi asked if there would be value in modifying the name of the document so readers may not be confused about the nature of the document.

M. Sullivan shared that the EDD process is new and that SRPC is learning alongside the Committee how this designation can benefit our stakeholders and the region. M. Sullivan added that SRPC is interested in recruiting more members and thanked attendees for joining the group today and consider joining permanently.

#### 4. Member Updates

M. Sullivan asked Committee members and guests to provide a brief update on some of their work related to economic development in the region.

He introduced Deanna Strand of Dover Adult Learning Center and thanked her for hosting the group today. D. Strand thanked Strafford Regional Planning Commission for deciding to host these meetings in different locations around the region. D. Strand surveyed the group concerning their involvement with adult education and reviewed the adult learning services that DALC organization provides. D. Strand updated the group on changing statistics including decreasing high school dropout rates. Adult learning is therefore becoming focused on building skills for the workforce or for pre-secondary education. Dover Adult Learning Center has teamed up with Great Bay Community College to develop a program that will benefit those in need pre-secondary education classes and services.

Dover Adult Learning Center is also working with NH Employment Services and other partners to connect more directly to partners in the workplace to train individuals for the workforce if they choose not to go to college. D. Strand shared that legislation affecting workforce development will encourage planning efforts focused on preparing individuals for the workforce.

D. Barufaldi explained that the City of Dover's economic development department runs an educational program entitled BizEdConnect which helps students get experience in the real world business environment. This program will soon be connecting with Great Bay Community College to begin an internship program. The program has been running for three years. He added that City of Dover has seen 50 new businesses in the city in the last five years, and an associated 700-800 new jobs. Small advanced manufacturing companies have been doing particularly well. Dover's population is significantly younger than many other communities in the area.

C. Soutter shared that Somersworth has signed a memorandum of understanding concerning a solar panel farm that the City is planning to have installed at a superfund site. The city is continuing to invest in the downtown with infrastructure improvements. The City has received their second 79-E project. The City is also working on a request for proposals for the sale and redevelopment of the old police station. The city also approved to put in more units in the Chinburg mills development.

BARRINGTON  
BROOKFIELD  
DOVER  
DURHAM  
FARMINGTON  
LEE  
MADBURY  
MIDDLETON  
MILTON



NEW DURHAM  
NEWMARKET  
NORTHWOOD  
NOTTINGHAM  
ROCHESTER  
ROLLINSFORD  
SOMERSWORTH  
STRAFFORD  
WAKEFIELD

Tory Jennison shared that the Health and Safety Council of Strafford County is starting a series of community emergency preparedness classes working with first responders from communities. For the purpose of the upcoming training county employees will be involved. This training is also open to the public. B. Jaffin asked about Crisis and Emergency Risk Communication training. T. Jennison shared that the Health and Safety Council of Strafford does offer this training. A discussion ensued about the training offered by the Health and Safety Council of Strafford County.

Senator David Watters shared the importance of the state budget. He shared some of the bills that the Senate has passed including those concerning banking laws, and securities legislations. D. Watters shared that he has been working on legislation focused on education and job training. He talked about his interest in the Governor's Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics task force. D. Barufaldi thanked D. Watters for his work.

S. Galeshaw shared that Seacoast Local has seen a trend of many new small businesses. There has been a great sense of collaboration among business and interest in creating thriving downtown areas. She shared that Seacoast Local operates in 24 communities in the seacoast area of New Hampshire and Maine. S. Galeshaw added that due to the amount of new businesses, Seacoast Local added a new level of membership for businesses and startups. There are now over 200 members. S. Galeshaw shared Seacoast Local's biggest annual event, Plaid Friday, was very successful this year in encouraging people to shop local. This event involved local businesses who chose to participate by offering deals and incentives.

D. Barufaldi excused himself from the meeting.

C. Goodwin explained to the group that she sells office furniture. She shared that recently, she has seen an increase in businesses buying more furniture, possibly representing an increase in business performance.

Rick Foster shared that he is doing his own urban renewal project on Rutland Street in Dover.

D. McCann shared that Strafford Economic Development Corporation found from their audit that they have the largest revolving loan fund in the state. He elaborated on the number of businesses served, how the loan fund is structured, and how the loan process works. SEDC is interested in EDA funding to further capitalize on their revolving loan fund. He shared that SEDC is currently working with thirty businesses and focusing on those who are growing at a self-sustaining rate. SEDC has found other ways to fund the agency. D. McCann elaborated on how SEDC runs. C. Soutter asks if there are businesses that SEDC has not been able to fund due to their loan constraints. A discussion ensued.

A. Nielsen reviewed some of the current work of NH Employment Security. A current report shows the state has almost recovered from the recession. Important areas that still need to be considered include long term unemployed and re-skilling the workforce. She shared that this area of the state is not seeing the population aging as rapidly as other parts of the state. Because the seacoast has been expensive for some time, many individuals have moved in to areas like Dover. She suggested not only targeting high school students in skill training, but a larger population.

BARRINGTON  
BROOKFIELD  
DOVER  
DURHAM  
FARMINGTON  
LEE  
MADBURY  
MIDDLETON  
MILTON



NEW DURHAM  
NEWMARKET  
NORTHWOOD  
NOTTINGHAM  
ROCHESTER  
ROLLINSFORD  
SOMERSWORTH  
STRAFFORD  
WAKEFIELD

L. Tamulonis shared that one of Great Bay Community College's grants is winding down. She shared that the ATAC center in Rochester has been expanded. There is no other place in the state that offers Composites Training like the ATAC. The Portsmouth campus is currently being expanded to include a student success center. Work Ready NH is functioning out of the Rochester and Portsmouth campuses and has been very successful. L. Tamulonis elaborated on some new programs such as the medical assisting programs developed with Exeter Core Physicians. She shared that Wentworth Douglass Hospital is interested in launching a similar program. She added that she had been involved with a visioning process for the Dover CTE program, and commended the effort. Great Bay is also looking at grant funding for apprenticeship programs. The Portsmouth Naval Shipyard has trained and graduated close to 200 new employees through their apprenticeship program

D. Strand shared that a visioning board for the CTE visioning process is on display in the hallway at the Dover Adult Learning Center.

B. Jaffin shared that Rochester has a new plaza development going in on Route 11 and that they are interested in hosting a farmers market in the green space at the plaza. He also suggested that northbound on and off ramps from Route 16 be considered with the building of this development. He added that the planning board has seen more applications for higher density housing. He opined that this will allow for walkable neighborhoods. B. Jaffin gave an update on rail in the state including the NH Rail and Transit Authority, their work, and the Capitol Corridor study. He added that Farmington recently approved their TIF district. New Durham has shown an interest in a Park and Ride. B. Jaffin addressed training for the shipbuilding industry. He also addressed post-secondary education for transit program. He is on two research groups for transit training. He shared that SRPC has started a rail working group to explore rail opportunities.

5. Next Steps/ Next Meeting

See agenda item #6.

6. Closing Remarks/Adjournment

M. Sullivan thanked the group for sharing their updates. He asked for meeting location suggestions for a meeting in mid-June. He added that he would forward a link with the CEDS 2013 Annual Update and information on EDA grant priorities and funding cycle.

The meeting adjourned at 5:05 pm.

Minutes respectfully submitted by,

Shayna Sylvia  
Communications & Outreach Specialist Intern