

City of Nashua
Business & Industrial Development Authority
Minutes for Thursday, August 5, 2004 at 4:00 pm
Mayor's Conference Room

Attendees: Mayor Streeter, Mike Monks, Gerald Prunier, Jay Minkarah, Donna Upson, David Fredette, Mark Sousa, Jennifer Mulstay, Nelson Leese (summer intern)

Members Absent: Harold Acres, Vincent Capasso, Mark Prolman, Brian McCarthy, John Stabile and Jack Tully

Mayor Streeter opened the meeting shortly after 4:00 pm.

The Mayor stated that he was glad that Jay is on board, that he is bringing the Office of Economic Development to a higher level and will help revitalize the Industrial Development Authority. He then turned the meeting over to Jay.

Jay Minkarah distributed an agenda and a packet of background material. The packet included previous meeting agendas and minutes, local legislation and state legislation concerning IDA. He then went through the items on the agenda.

I. Organization Issues

- a. IDA vs. BIDA: Mr. Minkarah noted that the Board of Aldermen passed a resolution authorizing the IDA to apply to *Business* as well as *Industrial* development (see BOA meeting of July 2, 2002). Therefore, it may be more appropriate to refer to the Authority as the Business and Industrial Development Authority (BIDA).
- b. Membership: Referencing the legislation included in the packet, Mr. Minkarah noted that the Board of Directors of the Authority is supposed to consist of nine appointed members and three ex-officio members. At the moment there are seven appointed members. Filling the two additional vacancies would be helpful in achieving a quorum. If any one has recommendations, it would be helpful to provide those to the Mayor.
- c. Responsibilities: Mr. Minkarah stated that there are certain basic requirements that the Authority should meet. According to the City's ordinances, as an example, there is supposed to be an annual meeting in January where officers are elected. A detailed annual report is also supposed to be submitted to the Board of Aldermen at the end of every year. Mr. Minkarah emphasized that it is important to elect officers.

Mr. Monks asked if there are by-laws allowing directors to be removed if they miss too many meeting. Mr. Minkarah stated that there are presently no by-laws, however, it might be good to have them.

Meeting times, dates and frequency, along with attendance issues were discussed. Mr. Punier suggested we continue to have meetings on the first Thursday of every month, at 4 pm. If that time doesn't work for an individual, he could excuse himself from the Authority.

II. Mr. Minkarah continued with a discussion of the Purpose of the Authority. He noted that the Authority is not to be an advisory group, but rather a group intended to actively promote economic development. He added that the group could continue to be in existence without doing something specific at this point. It would still be viable to be there in case an appropriate project did come up. Generally, projects that the Authority considers undertaking should show a public purpose, and the most appropriate target sites are probably those that suffer from some kind of barrier to development such as brownfields, tax-deeded properties or abandoned industrial sites.

a. Mr. Minkarah then reviewed a list of development options that could all lead to action items as we move forward.

1. Staff could provide a list of existing city property with potential for redevelopment.
2. The City contains several properties that are classified as Brownfields that have significant challenges for development.
3. The Authority could consider non-city owned empty or underutilized sites (i.e. Burke Street).
4. The Authority could consider Purchase/leasebacks. Jay stated he has been approached by a couple of industries concerning this possibility. Some established industries that own their buildings outright could benefit from an infusion of cash from sale of their properties with an agreement to lease the property back under favorable terms. Some of these include buildings that have become too large for current needs so there may be a possibility of subdividing the space for additional tenants.

Mr. Monks suggested that Mr. Minkarah put together a list of projects undertaken in New Hampshire by other IDA's for ideas. He referenced Keene in particular.

III. Mr. Minkarah went on to discuss the funding options the Authority has to finance economic development. He stated that currently there are no city funds earmarked for the IDA.

- a. One option noted was Revenue Bonds. He stated that if the Authority were interested, he would recommend bringing in someone from Bond Counsel to explain the pros and cons and process.

Mr. Punier stated that he knows they are used a lot in the Midwest. He also suggested there might be trade journal on public financing giving us additional information.

Mr. Monks said we need to be creative, he noted what Manchester is doing.

Mr. Minkarah stated that Manchester is using their Housing and Urban Development Authority very successfully. Mr. Monks asked about working with Jack Dunavan at the BFA, could we work through them or participate in a joint venture?

Mr. Minkarah added that many groups are using CDBG funds. Nashua cannot apply for CDBG Economic Development Grants, because we are an entitlement community. Nashua receives a block grant of just under \$1 million annually, but it is used almost exclusively for social service agencies. That could change though by having a really good project. Mayor Streeter suggested that allocating more funds from CDBG into economic development would be useful. Mr. Minkarah stated that we need a worthy project and timing would be difficult as proposals for CDBG funds are requested early, with approvals in May.

David Fredette suggested looking into multiyear grants. Mr. Minkarah noted that the City has an in house grant writer, so that we could look into these options. Mr. Monks suggested looking for government programs that are tied to unemployment, providing funds for improvement in that area. Other ideas were looking for matching funds and minority business funds.

Mr. Punier emphasized that we need a project to do, i.e. Sullivan Street.

Donna Upson suggested an Incubator. Mr. Minkarah suggested Bennet St., the Old Boiler house and the Cotton Storage Building could be looked into also. The project chosen should focus on job creation, saving jobs and/or tax revenue generation. We would also need to acquire a client: a business that would use the development.

Mr. Monks stated we need to make sure that there is a clean line of communications with the Planning Board, that these projects with issues be given some flexibility or that rehabs have some incentives. Mr. Minkarah suggested that members might want to take a look at the proposed Land Use Code from this point of view. Mr. Punier informed the group that businesses were pleased to see Jay attend the Land Use Code meeting.

Mr. Fredette wondered if we should send the Planning and Economic Development Committee a list of suggestions from the IDA concerning the Land Use Code.

Mr. Monks stated that the lease market is soft right now. A campus office park on 150 acres on Northwest Blvd. would be beneficial. Mr. Minkarah believes that the State or Forest Society has an easement on that site.

Gerald Prunier asked about the Tannery site its Steering Committee, stating that he had a NY company interested and was never contacted again. Mr. Minkarah replied that he would look into it.

Mr. Minkarah summarized items for the next meeting:

1. List of tax deeded and tax lien properties.
 2. List of Brownfield sites
 3. List of underutilized or abandoned redevelopment sites.
- IV. Donna Upson gave a review of the Revolving Loan Fund, a hand out was distributed.
- V. No other issues were brought up.
- VI. Scheduling: It was reiterated that the Authority would meet on the first Thursday of every month.
- VII. The meeting was adjourned at 5:15 pm.

Submitted by Jennifer Mulstay