CITY OF PORTSMOUTH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION REVIEW OF COMMUNITY CAMPUS

Economic Development Commission, November 5, 2021

Minutes: https://files.cityofportsmouth.com/agendas/2021/misc/edc110521min.pdf

Affordable/Workforce Housing – With Commissioner Kwoka absent there was no report on the legislative aspect of affordable/workforce housing opportunities. However, Assistant Mayor Splaine invited audience member David Choate from Colliers International to comment on the topic. Mr. Choate reiterated the frustration he expressed at a prior EDC public comment session about the lack of action by the City Council on this topic despite much Council discussion. City Manager Conard noted that there is a City Council work session with the Portsmouth Housing Authority scheduled for Monday, November Economic Development Commission: 11-5-21 Approved: 12-3-21 8, 2021 to which the newly elected City Councilors are invited. She also mentioned there is a housing needs assessment underway which will help quantify the problem. Mr. Choate suggested that the City look at the creative solutions that are being employed in other communities through zoning amendments such as in Dover and Rye NH and on Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket where workforce housing on Land Trust lands is being created through formation of a land bank housing fund. Assistant Mayor Splaine encouraged Mr. Choate to participate in the November 8th City Council work session.

Other suggestions and input from the EDC on workforce housing actions included:

1. Inclusion of a question in the new BR&E survey to collect data on where employees are travelling from to work at Portsmouth businesses.

2. Undertake an effort to better understand workforce housing funding and type of housing products eligible.

3. Consider a land bank fund like Nantucket/Martha's Vineyard has for building housing.

4. Create a task force with broad participation similar the legislative study committees with a deadline for action.

5. Review the actions that have been taken by the City to address the problem including the analysis of publicly owned land for housing development and the gateway zoning and density bonuses for housing in the zoning ordinance.

6. Use ARPA funds to create housing at the Community Campus site.