

## **Economic Development Update**

January 17, 2012

### **Telecommunications**

#### Fairpoint (Broadband to East Dover)

Now that the Fairpoint installation of zones 1 and 2 are about 1 ½ months old, they have indicated verbally to me that they have signed up about 60 households or about 25%. That seems low considering the initial demand. When my connection was installed, I spoke the with technician who indicated that proliferation throughout the area does take some time and he would expect it to go up based on his experience in Marlboro. Extrapolating these numbers to Zone 3 would yield about 40 households, at least initially.

Fairpoint has also made a rather minor economic concession regarding the \$275,000 for zone 3. The indicated verbally that they would be prepared to give the town free internet service for the 3 wireless zone connections along Route 100 for a period of 1 year. This has a value of only about \$1200. They also indicated that the cost to upgrade Route 100 would be approximately that of Zone 2 or \$60,000. They will also firm up the costs with their engineering department. They do not have any plans to upgrade this equipment on their own for this year.

I spoke with Cliff Duncan regarding the possibility of him servicing Zone 3. Cliff indicated to me that the cost to him would be prohibitive. He needs to replace poles to allow him to achieve the required clearance among his cable, electric wires and phone wires (approx \$1000 per pole). In addition, his cost to lay cable in this area is approximately \$22,000/mile. He would also need to negotiate with Electric and Phone to achieve this. This sounds like a non starter.

To put all of this all into perspective, the cost for the 1.5Mbps plan through HughesNet is \$80/month. If the town were to pay 50% of that cost for each of the 170 households in Zone 3, then the town could pay that for 40 months or 3.3 years to equal the \$275,000. If we use 50% of households that wants the internet, then that results in 80 months or 6.6 years.

My recommendation is for us to drive the starting number to Fairpoint. The HughesNet scenario can be used as leverage. My question is, do I have the authority to negotiate with numbers that are unapproved? The alternative is to just pick a number that the town can support for both Zone 3 and Route 100. If Zone 3 is \$275,000 and Route 100 is \$60,000 then the total is \$335,000. A middle of the road position can be say 60% of that cost or \$200,000. Then negotiate from there.

#### Cell Service

I have spoken with Stubb Thomas regarding his tower and have printed out and briefly reviewed the Dover Telecommunications Ordinance as well as Act 248. Stubb's agreement with Earthtone ended last month and our agreement ends on Jan 19<sup>th</sup> of this year. We have developed several

contacts at AT&T and in my discussion with Stubb, I am going to pursue these contacts after the 19<sup>th</sup> and after thoroughly looking at the permitting issue.

## VTEL

Nothing to report.

## **Survey**

There will be a public discussion of the Town Survey at the town offices on Wednesday, January 25 at 6 PM. This will be listed in the Deerfield Valley News and is already on the website. The survey is on the town website under Work Plan and Selectboard Updates within Economic Development (<http://www.doververmont.com/work-plan-selectboard-updates>).

## **eVermont**

### *Wi Fi Hotspots*

Things are moving forward regarding the wireless zone. I sent the signed MOU back to eVermont and have had communication with Phil Petty regarding installation. One approach is to install in 3 phases. The eVermont sponsored portion of the zone first and follow that with portion ending at La Toscanella Pizza. The final would take the zone to Mountain Park Plaza. We have not mapped out the building to receive repeaters past La Toscanella, as we ran out of time during their visit.

## **Website**

The job description for the web coordinator has been advertised and is listed on the Town Website under Economic Development.

<http://www.doververmont.com/economic-development>

## **Trails**

One of the abutters in the B+ proposed trail site has opposed the use of his property. We are currently pursuing an alternate route.

Mike Purcell has met twice with the Vermont Youth Conservation Corps (VYCC) regarding refurbishing the ridge trail between Mount Snow and Haystack with the construction of scenic overlooks along the trail. Mike is the point person for this effort with Sherm assisting.

## **Beautification**

We have narrowed the list of responses to 3 firms. They are scheduled for presentations and formal interviews over the next several weeks.

An RFP for the flower barrels program is included for your review.

### **Marketing**

The DASP program is proceeding along. So far we have allocated about 1/3 of the total budget and 8 businesses. I expect at least 6 more to apply.

The question arose as to whether the appropriation of \$24,000 for the program ended at the end of the fiscal year or in 4 quarters. We will ask for a clarification from the board.

In an effort to develop a list of email addresses of Dover households, we have inserted a request to send us your name and email address with the tax bill that was sent earlier this week. We immediately got 10 responses with very positive comments. We recognize that this tax reminder only went to those who have not paid the final payment, but that comprises about 80%. We will continue to build the database.

### **Events**

The event application for the Blueberry Festival is enclosed.

### **Venue**

There will be a public meeting on February 1 at Town Hall to discuss the idea of venue. There will be 2 identical meetings, one at 1:00 PM and one at 6:00 PM. This will be advertised in next week's DVAL news.

### **Interpretive Signs**

The RFP was sent out to 10 sign makers. To date we have received only 1 submission with the deadline being January 31.

### **Financial**

Nothing new to report.

### **FEMA**

Fema has asked us to pick an area of interest and/or expertise and identify some volunteers to develop a set of goals. After the goals have been identified, projects can be derived. They expect another meeting to the public in February.