

**Charlemont Economic Development Roundtable
Charlemont Planning Board
Meeting June 1st, 2011 at 7 pm, Warfield House
DRAFT MINUTES**

The meeting had been properly posted in town hall and on the public bulletin board in front of town hall for several weeks as well as on the town website.

Planning Board members present: Gisela Walker, Chair, Trevor Mackie, Clerk, Jerry Pratt

Others: member of the public per attached sign up sheet

Jessica Atwood, Sr. Economic Development Planner, Council of Governments

Alyssa LaRose, Assistant Economic Development Planner

Ms. Walker opened the meeting at 7.15pm with introductions, thank you to the Warfield House for hosting the meeting and a short check in about how the e-mail listserv system is working for people. No problems.

Pratt reminded everyone of the half a dozen of good ideas that had surfaced at the last meeting such as a brochure focused on introducing tourists to businesses and activities in Charlemont, a general listing of businesses in town to promote those within and outside of town, cooperating on some public events, addressing the River issues proactively, focusing on the upcoming 250th anniversary of town, and a town newspaper.

The two planners then had the floor to go over the draft of their updates to the economic development chapter presenting a plethora of valuable statistics and economic highlights about employment, tourism, transportation, land use, education, and income levels. While such information can be a bit dry, Mr. Healy pointed out that it is valuable background information to have for grant applications and any form of fundraising.

Their presentation sparked many interspersed discussions about how their information related to ideas about what was needed in town to stimulate the economy.

Participants also heard about various organizational resources available to us such as the different chamber so of commerce, cooperative marketing plans for businesses along scenic byways in Western Mass., the Community Development Corporation and others.

With all the spirited discussion it was late by the time we got to the draft recommendations the planners had submitted. The group decided to use the next meeting to go over those, and to reach consensus on just a few specific projects to start working on with everyone eager for action. People were concerned about how to generate enough excitement to get more residents involved. Mr. Mackie reiterated his hope that this would not just be an effort for businesses but that we would find a way to involve residents.

Mr. Loftis from **Berkshire East** agreed to host the **next meeting on June 14, 2011 at 7pm.**

Respectfully submitted by Gisela Walker