

Minutes
Economic Development Committee
Town Managers Office
July 23, 2019
2:30pm

Attendance:

Committee

Cody McEwen (Chair), Mike Madore, John Davis (Town Manager), Jessica Masse - Designlab

Councilors

Louis Pelletier

Meeting called to order by Chair McEwen at 2:30pm.

I. Review of prior meeting minutes.

No changes.

II. Finalize initial updates for Phase II of Comprehensive Plan - EMDC.

The committee reviewed all current updates for Phase II of the comprehensive plan. The committee decided that the document for this phase was ready to be sent back to EMDC.

Chair McEwen will inquire with EMDC about getting chapters for Phase III as soon as possible so the committee can continue that work.

III. Discussion on Citizens' Institute on Rural Design (CIRD) Grant submission and next steps.

Chair McEwen presented the committee with the completed application, letters of support, and appendixes required and submitted online and on behalf of the Town of Millinocket yesterday evening for the Citizens' Institute on Rural Design grant for technical design and workshop assistance in developing a design workbook for future downtown revitalization. This grant aligns perfectly with the community and committee's mission of creating a much more vibrant age-friendly downtown with enhanced public spaces. All submitted documentation are attached to this record.

This grant was presented to the council chair and administration out of session. Due to the substantial evidence gathered from the community by means of the Town of Millinocket Annual Survey and the Katahdin Gazetteer, as well as paralleled efforts in another council standing committee the Age Friendly Communities committee, it was deemed appropriate by the chair to network with representatives from Our Katahdin, Northern Forest Center, and Maine Development Foundation to see this initial process through. In order to accept these grant funds, the council will need to approve an order to accept those funds at a regular council meeting.

Project goals mirror the committees recommendations from the July 9th meeting which include big ideas for electricity and lighting improvements, seating, public restrooms, and renovated sidewalks for ADA compliance. This also aligns with an initial phase of the Millinocket Community Revitalization plan which is a collaborative effort between multiple community stakeholders to enhance the downtown corridor and park spaces.

Successful applicants are notified in August.

In the interim, committee members will notify the chair if there are other grant opportunities available that the committee can work on to bolster this current opportunity.

Next meeting is set for August 20, 2019 at 3:00pm in the Manager's office.

Adjourned at 2:48pm

1. Lead Applicant Contact Information

- a. Organization Name - Town of Millinocket
- b. Street Address, City, State, Zip Code - 197 Penobscot Avenue
Millinocket, ME 04462
- c. Organization Website - <https://millinocket.org/>
- d. Contact Name - John Davis
- e. Contact Title - Town Manager
- f. Email Address - manager@millinocket.org
- g. Phone Number - (207) 723-7000 ext. 5

2. Are you only interested in being considered for the Learning Cohort? (Y/N)

No.

3. Please describe your organization background and mission. (Up to 1000 characters).

The Town of Millinocket was founded by and sustained by Great Northern Paper Co. (GNP) in the 20th century. For 100 years, GNP provided jobs for the majority of resident families, and funded essential infrastructure, the school system, and the regional hospital. Globalization resulted in the mill's closure in 2008. The community has been grappling with the challenges of reversing that economic free-fall. Our mission is to maintain a healthy and vibrant town that meets the needs of residents and visitors, and to guide future development in a manner consistent with community goals.

During the last three years, Millinocket has activated committees such as Economic Development, Events, Sustainability, Mental Health & Wellness, and Age Friendly Communities, in addition to our collaboration with Our Katahdin—a community and economic-development nonprofit dedicated to growing and diversifying the economic base. We have engaged with the Northern Forest Center to aid these efforts.

4. If applicable, please provide information about any project partners that are likely to be part of your application. For each partner, please provide Organization Name (if applicable), Street Address, City, State, Zip Code,

Organization Website (if applicable), Contact Name, Contact Title, Email Address, Phone Number, Short description of their potential role in your CIRD work. (Up to 1500 characters)

Our Katahdin

245 Aroostook Ave, Millinocket, ME 04462

www.ourkatahdin.com

Lucy Van Hook, Director of Community Development

Lucy@ourkatahdin.com

207-370-9456

Our Katahdin promotes downtown revitalization and rural entrepreneurs through the transformation of an abandoned department store into a co-working center and retail incubator. Our Katahdin will provide in-kind staff support to convene the community workshops.

Northern Forest Center

18 North Main Street

Concord, NH 03301

<https://northernforest.org/>

Staff Member: Ailish Keating, Millinocket ME

917-783-9489

The Northern Forest Center is a regional innovation and investment partner creating rural vibrancy by connecting people and economy to the forested landscape across Northern New York, Vermont, New Hampshire and Maine. Our goal is an economy that delivers purpose, innovation, and widespread opportunity and a shared commitment to stewardship of the Northern Forest landscape. The NFC will provide in kind staff support and leadership for this planning process.

Maine Downtown Center

at the Maine Development Foundation

2 Beech Street, Suite 203

Hallowell, ME 04347

<https://www.mdf.org/program-partnerships/maine-downtown-center/>

Contact: Rosie Vanadestine, Program Director, rosie@mdf.org

The Maine Downtown Center is the statewide coordinator for the National Main Street Center. MDC supports 27 accredited Main Street America and Affiliate communities. MDC's role will be to offer revitalization advice.

5. Please provide a description of your community and the context of your design challenge. (Up to 1000 characters)

Millinocket sits at the headwaters of the Penobscot River at the threshold of an expansive wood basket and in the shadow of Maine's largest mountain, Katahdin. Our 4,400 residents are surrounded by world-class outdoor recreation amenities, including whitewater rafting, hiking, fishing, hunting, single-track mountain biking, or glamping with stunning views of the North Woods. Katahdin is the northern terminus of the Appalachian Trail in the nearby 210,000 acre Baxter State Park. The newly dedicated Katahdin Woods & Waters National Monument is adjacent to Baxter State Park with an additional 88,000 acres of recreational wilderness.

Millinocket's ability to capitalize on these global draws is limited by its image as a defunct mill town with a dilapidated downtown. The potential for both industrial and Main Street revitalization is substantial. After decades of disinvestment, Millinocket is ready to reclaim its future. Millinocket has few financial resources to rely on, but has spirit.

6. Challenge Information (Up to 1000 characters for each section below).

A. Describe your design challenge. There will be opportunities to refine the design challenge throughout the course of the CIRD program.

i. Tip: Frame the challenge as more than the solution by giving background on the challenge and why it is a critical need in your community at this moment.

Our challenge is creating a guidebook of design principles for our downtown corridor that storefront owners, private individuals, non-profit organizations and the Town can apply when making investments in an improved look to spur and support economic development. Partner organizations are interested in supporting branding, wayfinding, and a streetscape. This includes Penobscot Ave, Congress St, and three parks in the geographic area. The Town

has coordinated a community stakeholder group to try and bring infrastructure and aesthetic improvements to this corridor to increase tourism and business development.

Stakeholders have begun envisioning a Millinocket Community Revitalization plan for the downtown. We have big ideas for electricity and lighting improvements, seating, public restrooms, and renovated sidewalks for ADA compliance. Our challenge is we lack the skills to develop a cohesive design. We need resources and expertise from a community engagement workshop to boost investment.

B. Describe your project team and partner organizations that will be involved. Who is a part of this project? Have you worked together in the past? How will you collaborate on this project?

Our project team and collaboration plan includes Northern Forest Center and Our Katahdin providing staff support for outreach, the Town providing background plans and ordinances, OSI and Katahdin Area Trails incorporating outdoor recreation links to downtown, Millinocket Memorial Library will provide space and outreach capacity, Thrive Penobscot coordinating outreach and transportation to community sessions, with Arcadia DesignWorks (a local firm currently designing the renovated Library and 230 Penobscot) providing expertise. The Maine Downtown Center will offer guidance on national best practices for Main Street revival.

We are collaborating with a growing number of non-profits. We have implemented several planning methods to prepare the community for state and federal resources: Community surveys, planning sessions, a revised comprehensive plan, broadband technical assistance through the EPA's Cool & Connected program, and the Katahdin Gazetteer, a regional vision and action plan.

C. How do you think your community would benefit from the design and technical resources provided through CIRD?

Our initial goal is to create design principles that can be applied to improvement projects in line with creating a walkable, age-friendly downtown - paved level sidewalks, improved curb structure, additional new seating and trash receptacles, improved lighting and electrical infrastructure, electric vehicle charging stations, new and improved signage and crossings, and Main Street façade improvement. If we can share our mission, connect with further funding opportunities, and make some small wins, we feel we will be well on our way to eventually hitting these long-term goals.

Making these improvements will create a safer and more welcoming main street to help attract and retain new residents. Revitalizing this corridor will strengthen social capital within the community and provide a productive location for all residents, business owners, and visitors to thrive.

D. What is your organization's current staffing capacity to work on this program?

Our staffing capacity for the Town of Millinocket includes the Town Manager, the three members of the Council Committee on Economic Development, as well as any department directors and employees that include but are not limited to Public Works, Wastewater, Code Enforcement, and the Planning Board.

Our organizational networks add in-kind staffing capacity of at least but not limited to one employee from Our Katahdin, Northern Forest Center, and the Maine Downtown Center. As our project moves forward through our initial downtown improvement phase, we will have additional organizational capacity with our other partners from Designlab, Millinocket Memorial Library, Arcadia Designworks, Thrive Penobscot, Katahdin Area Trails, and the Outdoor Sports Institute.

E. (Skip this question if you are only interested in the learning cohort)
Please list proposed sources for the \$10,000 match. The full match does not have to be secured at the time of application, identifying proposed sources of matching funds is acceptable.

Proposed cash match:

\$5,000 from private foundations/institutional partners. Funds are not currently secured.

Proposed in-kind match funding sources:

Council Committee on Economic Development - \$1,500 volunteer hours.

(3 people x 20 hours x \$25/hr)

Our Katahdin - \$1,620 staff capacity for community outreach and meeting design.

Northern Forest Center - \$1,620 staff capacity for organization and leadership.

Maine Downtown Center - \$900 staff capacity for advising and lessons learned from other Maine communities.

Designlab - \$1,500 donated meeting space at \$500/day for 3 days.

7. Supporting Material

Provide a link or compiled photo documentation of the context of your design challenge/community. You can include a link to one video (through Vimeo or Youtube) that describes your community and design challenge. Do not password protect media links. The total time should not exceed 3 minutes.

File upload i.Tip: Examples of documentation include photos from the applicant or an aerial image from Google maps. If you do provide a video, it can be informal, event shot on your phone - we just want to understand more about your community!

Documentation web link ii.Tip: Examples of link could be for a flickr album, youtube video, or an article about the area.

Youtube Link

Millinocket_Downtown Improvement Video: <https://youtu.be/52EYj1KooBA>

B. Optional letters of support: Provide up to 3 letters of support from community leaders or partners. This will help us better understand the network of support that will ensure a successful workshop and design process.

i.Tip: Letters can come from people like potential project partners, organizations that might provide in-kind donations, stakeholders who would benefit from addressing the design challenge, or local politicians.

Our Katahdin
Northern Forest Center
Eastern Maine Development Corporation

8. Would you like to be subscribed to the CIRD newsletter? (Y/N)

Yes



July 21, 2019

To Whom It May Concern:

As a proposed project partner, Our Katahdin is happy to provide a letter of support for The Town of Millinocket for the Citizen's Institute on Rural Design Grant Application for technical assistance to create design principles for downtown investment.

Our Katahdin works to bolster the digital, recreation, and modern forest products economies and create a robust community in the Katahdin region. We seek to pull together ideas, people and money to move our region forward through nurturing community, entrepreneurs, and light industry. We are committed to energizing the local economy and empowering community members to participate in creating our future with hope and a sense of pride. One of the ways we do that is by providing staff support for a region-wide collaboration of forward-thinking people, which just completed an 18-month process to create a vision and action plan for revitalization in the Katahdin Region called the Katahdin Gazetteer: A roadmap to the future. The plan has 203 action items ranging from large scale industrial development, to dedicating a row of your garden to the local food pantry. Seventeen action items focus on revitalizing our downtown streets. These actions have been vetted and are supported by the community.

The Town of Millinocket's proposal to CIRD falls directly in line with an action to prioritize development in the existing downtown, and specifically to conduct design studies to create a sense of place and identity that we hope will spur private investment:

Action 01.5

Conduct downtown design studies to create cohesive plans for downtown districts and main streets to leverage best practices in urban design.¹

Who

Municipalities, urban design team, community members

On behalf of Our Katahdin and the communities that comprise the Our Katahdin region thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A blue ink handwritten signature, appearing to read 'Lucy Van Hook', is written over the printed name.

Lucy Van Hook

Director of Community Development

Our Katahdin

Email: Lucy@ourkatahdin.com

Cell: (207) 370-9456



18 N. MAIN STREET
SUITE 204
CONCORD, NH 03301

603-229-0679
northernforest.org

July 21, 2019

To Whom It May Concern:

As a proposed project partner, we are happy to provide a letter of support for The Town of Millinocket for the Citizen's Institute on Rural Design Grant Application.

The Northern Forest Center is a regional innovation and investment partner creating rural vibrancy by connecting people and economy to the forested landscape across Northern New York, Vermont, New Hampshire and Maine. Our programs include: Advancing innovation in wood products companies, increasing adoption of wood heat, enhancing the quality of recreation experiences, investing in community assets and infrastructure, and advocating for supportive state and federal policies. Our goal is an economy that delivers purpose, innovation, and widespread opportunity and a shared commitment to stewardship of the Northern Forest landscape.

As an organization we are committed to the success and well-being of the town of Millinocket. Our current programs that are actively underway in the community include:

- Increasing the quality of area housing through the Millinocket Housing Initiative to attract professionals to new job opportunities through the acquisition and renovation of residential properties in downtown Millinocket.
- Bringing new forms of capital, such as New Market Tax Credits and impact investments to support the Millinocket Memorial Library renovation and the Mill Site Redevelopment
- Supporting the conversion to Wood Heat through the installation of pellet boilers in buildings in town to support local fuel sources and heat buildings in environmentally friendly manner.
- Providing backbone support to support targeted downtown Community Revitalization through the coordination of a stakeholder group and the development of an integrated investment strategy for downtown designed to retain and attract businesses, residents and visitors by building on local assets and conditions that will help address a diverse set of opportunities to revitalize the community. This strategy includes: Downtown Infrastructure Improvements, Downtown Business & Community Facility Development, Recreational Connectivity & Development, Community Branding & Marketing, and Community Capacity Building and Regional Connectivity.

The potential design and technical resource assistance from CIRD would help move the town closer to our shared goal of developing a guidebook of design principles for the Downtown corridor. This aligns well without mission and objectives for working with the town. We support this grant request and hope the town is successful in its application.

Sincerely,

Rob Riley
President



40 Harlow Street Bangor, ME 04401
207.942.6389 1.800.339.6389
Fax 207.942.3548

July 22, 2019

Mr. John Davis
Town Manager
Town of Millinocket
197 Penobscot Avenue
Millinocket, ME 04462

Dear John:

Eastern Maine Development Corporation (EMDC) is pleased to support the Town of Millinocket's application to the Maine Development Foundation's Maine Downtown Center Program for \$10,000. If funded, project activities will include the creation of a downtown design plan and efforts to improve networking capabilities. These components are needed to facilitate downtown improvements beginning with your plan to create a lighting/electrical infrastructure assessment/design and install a public restroom facility.

EMDC is committed to supporting the Town of Millinocket as well as all communities in the Katahdin region to advance efforts to foster economic growth and revitalization. This project aligns with our current efforts through a partnership with the Katahdin Region Development Board, the creation of a multi-jurisdictional comprehensive plan, and other regional efforts.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Lee Umphrey'.

Lee Umphrey
President & CEO
Eastern Maine Development Corporation

www.emdc.org



A solid red rectangular background that occupies the upper two-thirds of the page.

Citizens' Institute on Rural Design

Thank you for submitting your application to
the Citizens' Institute on Rural Design.

Successful applicants will be notified by the
end of August.