

BUSINESS AND INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (BIDA) MEETING

May 14, 2025

A monthly meeting of the BIDA was scheduled for Wednesday, May 14, 2025, 9:00 a.m., Room 208, City Hall, 229 Main Street, Nashua, NH.

Members present:

Jason Haviland – Chair
Lydia Foley – Vice Chair
Dick Cane
Mark Prolman
Carl Andrade
John Ziemba

Staff members present:

Liz Hannum, Econ. Dev. Director
Matt Sullivan, CDD Director

Members of the public present:

Peter Schaeffer

Charette and PlanNH events:

Connor Muise, Deputy Planning Manager, Community Development Department. Mr. Muise said that the first event will be with PlanNH at the Performing Arts Center.

Ms. Hannum said that the theme is “public private partnerships” with development and planning. She said that there is someone from the State of NH, someone from an environmental group, herself representing the City side, a panel discussion/presentation, then Q&A, and then there is a walking tour of some of the projects going on in the downtown area, and end up at the Rambling House to wrap up. She said it will a session where we can all learn from each other.

Mr. Muise said it will be on Monday, May 19th, beginning at 1:00 p.m. He said it will be a prelude to the charette at the end of the month. He said that they’ve already done the outreach for it and the campaign launch, and has been circulating a pre-event survey for attendees that want to participate but cannot attend the event.

Ms. Foley said that BIDA’s charette is Friday the 30th and Saturday the 31st, there will be lunch, food.

Mr. Muise said that it starts at 10:00 a.m., that’s when the walking tour begins with the consultant, and have come up with an initial route for the tour, it will start at City Hall, and the charette will take place in the auditorium. He said from the start at City Hall, the walk will start going up Main Street, and the first stop would be the Water Street area, where the construction is for the Riverfront. He said that the walk will continue along Clocktower, and the footbridge. He said that this walk will be for the consultant.

Mr. Prolman asked what the objective is for this.

Mr. Muise said that the main area is the Millyard. He said that there is a lot of city-owned property there, and the City is trying to combine a lot of different plans that have been done, such as the dog park, the waterfront development plan, and are trying to combine this together to have a

cohesive conceptual plan for the district.

Ms. Hannum said that they're going to start on Main Street to get them a feel of what it's like, and the Riverfront project is Quadrant 2. She said that Quadrant 1 is in the Millyard, so we're trying to give them an understanding of what is currently being worked on, and what it could look like, and how to connect it. She said from Mine Falls, it will go all the way up around the "thumb", all the way down to Main Street, over to BAE, and back, so it will be a 2.5 mile loop walk.

Ms. Foley asked if PlanNH put together a report afterwards, stating what the fantasy is for the Millyard area.

Ms. Hannum said that they are trying to understand what kind of public and private things people want there, what kind of public amenities do we want, and what kind of development do we want to see there, so that is the basic understanding.

Mr. Prolman asked who the consultants are.

Mr. Muise said PlanNH.

Ms. Hannum said it will be a combination of what will we do with these parcels, and how do we get the public involved, do we want to see a full dog park, a children's playground, keep it natural, or is that the best use.

Mr. Muise said that the walking tour will get a general sense of the surrounding area and how the Millyard is connected, or not connected, to adjacent areas. He said that there are some tree design improvements planned for crossings by Pine Street over at Clocktower Place, and we'll go over to the large parking area, and we'll talk about development or the potential for it, it's kind of limited because of the floodplain. He said that we'll meet again for the proposed dog park, we'll talk about the existing businesses in the Millyard, come down to the footbridge, and the last stop would be the proposed roundabout. He said it would be a little over a two-mile walking tour, and we have about two hours to do it in, so we'll have to walk and talk, and we will re-convene at City Hall, and that is when there will be lunch. He said that everything at City Hall will be upstairs in the auditorium. He said that there will be two sessions on Friday, one in the afternoon at 3:00 p.m., and one at 6:00 p.m. He said that he's already put out a survey to share with everyone's network, for folks that cannot stay at the event for that long. He said that the dinner will be catered.

Mr. Haviland asked if the meeting at 2:30 p.m. is the one where Matt wanted to have limited attendance.

Ms. Hannum said yes, that meeting is much more business leader focused, versus the evening session, which is focused on the general public, it's more of a drop-in type event, where the 2:30 meeting is more about getting information from the stakeholder groups, and people who work in the area.

Mr. Muise said it is open to all. He said that in the survey, it mentions their relationship to the district, if they work in the immediate area, own property in the area, if you live nearby, it's open to all, and we will have a much more capacity for a lot of people attending, there will be translation services for the second session.

Ms. Foley asked if it is dinner on Friday and lunch on Saturday.

Mr. Muise said not for people participating in the sessions, there might be some snacks.

Ms. Foley said that perhaps we should reach out to the Y and see if they can send some child care staff. She said that would be great, as it is a hinderance for some people to come with small kids.

Mr. Muise said that right now on Friday it's 3:00 – 4:30 p.m. for the first session, and 6:00-7:30 p.m. for the second session. He said on Saturday the first part is everyone organizing their thoughts, and there will be a public presentation at 3:00 p.m., the grand reveal, in the Auditorium.

Mr. Haviland asked if the BIDA property is big enough to be specifically mentioned in this.

Mr. Muise said it is.

Mr. Prolman said that we know that our piece is a part of the overall bigger piece.

Mr. Sullivan said that he'd like one or two BIDA members there, and thirty persons attending is the sweet spot, but that includes BIDA, staff, a couple elected officials, a couple property owners and other interested parties.

Developer Tour:

Ms. Hannum said that there's not much to update, except that she's got invites for BEA, so Taylor Gadwell is checking their schedule to see if they can attend. She said that she's looking for more panel people, but wants to know if we want most of the people to be internal, like Sam, Matt and herself, or, more local developers.

Mr. Haviland said that he'd design it under the branding of making Nashua developer friendly, that's what we're after here, we want to highlight our great process, our ease of doing business, and we want to show how it's great to do business in Nashua.

Mr. Cane said that Larry Hirsch from the Planning Board would be good, he's a broker for developers, and deals with a lot of existing properties, he'd be a good person to be on the panel.

Ms. Hannum said that we should have someone from BIDA.

Ms. Foley asked how long the talking part will be before we get on the bus.

Ms. Hannum said it's not long, perhaps thirty minutes.

Mr. Haviland said that's pretty tight, as people mingle, and it's tough to wrangle people, as everyone wants to talk and network.

Ms. Foley said perhaps a half-hour of networking and an hour of talking.

Ms. Hannum said that she started the list of properties.

Mr. Prolman said that 221 Main Street is a good example, a 3-story office building, keep the bank on the first floor, the height restriction is six stories, but if it's six stories, the upper floors can be converted to apartments, the infrastructure is all there, and structurally, it can go up three stories, and it would be a great conversion, and the parking garage is right next door, it's a cheap way of building up.

Ms. Hannum showed the list of properties for the tour, with a status of each, and some are potential sites, and has not contacted any of the property owners yet. She said that some of the sites are privately owned, and we don't have control.

Mr. Haviland said that we should make some effort to get the status known of these properties.

Mr. Cane said that in looking at the list, they are mostly near the downtown. He said that there are several hundred acres down at exit 1 owned by the Flatley Company, it's probably the most developable piece of land there is in the City of Nashua, and somehow we have to get them involved and invited. He mentioned the Law properties off of Amherst Street, they have over 30 acres, the Costco property off of exit 1. He said that these are larger sites from a developer standpoint.

Ms. Hannum said that the reason she kept it close is because they are all drivable within a short distance, but would be happy to open it up wider. She said it will be at the Sheraton, at exit 1.

Mr. Prolman said that since we'd have the attention of these developers, we want to present enough product to get them to get out and walk.

Mr. Cane said that they're such big parcels, we cannot ignore them.

Mr. Haviland said that for the Flatley property, for example, it could be identified as jumbo, and someone would have to be really ambitious.

Mr. Prolman suggested calling Chris Lynch from the Airport, he's got a parcel available that could accommodate a good-sized hangar.

Mr. Sullivan said that he can reach out to him.

Ms. Hannum said that this needs to get out on people's schedules, and we need the panelists and need to start doing the invites, as we're only 3-4 months out now.

Mr. Cane said that he could reach out to Mr. Flatley, they won't sell any of their land though.

Mr. Prolman said that Flatley could be a panelist, talk about his property, and back into it.

Mr. Prolman said another good panelist would be Dick Anagnost, he communicates well, he's a down-to-earth guy, and he's a major player, he owns thousands of apartment units.

Ms. Hannum said that she'd need the developers contacts.

Ms. Foley asked if there are any people or businesses we'd like to see there, major players, such as the hospital, BAE, or someone who really cares about housing.

Mr. Prolman reiterated that Dick Anagnost would be great to have, he's got a nice delivery, and has done it all, shopping centers, apartments, gambling.

Mr. Haviland said that Ms. Foley can see if they're available, if they're willing, we don't want twenty panelists, but five or six would be great.

Ms. Hannum asked if BIDA members can email her contacts, and she'll start collecting the lists, and in the next week or so, can narrow it down, and the members can decide. She said at the last developer tour, there were about ten properties on the tour.

Ms. Foley said that there were two buses, and on each bus, there was someone from the City as chauffeurs or hosts.

Mr. Haviland said that on the last developer tour, there were some drive-bys, and a couple stops.

Ms. Foley said that seating will be limited because of the capacity of the buses, and BIDA will not charge for this.

Ms. Hannum said that Matt will pay for the hotel, and she would pay for the bus, but only because there was no authorization yet, and had to put a deposit down.

Mr. Haviland said that perhaps BIDA can do breakfast.

Ms. Hannum said that they haven't ordered any food yet. She said that she has a draft of the branding, and isn't sure how she feels about it and won't show it yet, but it might be done by September, and as part of the package, they are creating an Economic Development flyer, so will have that by September.

Ms. Foley asked what would be the intended outcome, to market the City as being developer friendly, we have projects here, we want you to come, make it as easy as possible.

Mr. Prolman said that for the panel, and in explaining how the City is developer friendly, City staff can explain the process, and how the City operates. He said that there are some communities that tell developers to come on it, let's get it done.

Mr. Cane said that a lot of developers do multi-family, perhaps pick one that the City has done really well with, and having that person speak for a few minutes may be the most effective means of communicating how effective the City is working with developers, rather than City staff, someone who's gone through the process.

Mr. Prolman suggested Peter Flotz, from High Street could be a good example.

Mr. Sullivan said that either Mr. Flotz or NeighborWorks would be good.

Mr. Sullivan said that there is no news on BIDA's development site to report.

Mr. Prolman said that Mr. Flotz now controls NIMCO and Bagshaw.

ADJOURNED at 9:53 am.

Submitted by: Mr. Falk, Deputy Planning Manager
CF - Taped Hearing