



COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OFFICE

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Minutes to the CD&NR Committee meeting on 2/3/10

Present for the committee: Chair David Berezniak (DB), Councilor Russ Ellis (RE), Larry Kupferman (staff)

Others attending: Mike Flora, Jim Wemette, Lisa Geisweit from Burlington Telecom, Mimi Gutchell from the Marketplace, Al Levy from Summit Technologies.

- 1) RE moves to approve the agenda and the minutes from the previous meeting; so moved.
- 2) Public forum: none.
- 3) Defining the parameters of the “Downtown WiFi District”.

RE suggested the more the better in the downtown; DB asked the BT staff what their plan involves. Jim Wemette described that BT would install 3 access points between City Hall and Pearl St. for outdoor WiFi access and that the other 7 BT hot spots (including City Hall Park) would be provided free of charge to all who wished.

RE asked about winter time use being limited by its outdoor application; Jim W. mentioned that the Library now has WiFi access provided by Comcast but BT would engage them about increased capacity.

BT provided hot spots are now located at City Hall Park, Leddy Park, North Beach Camp Grounds, Room 12, Contois, and the waterfront.

The Church Street marketplace application would be defined as the blocks between Main St. and Pearl St. and include City Hall Park.

DB: how far will the WiFi bleed into the side streets? BT staff: it would be a challenge to direct the signal down the side streets beyond Church St.

Jim W: hopes to recover some of the capital costs thru added services to downtown business who wish to provide free WiFi indoors; the current estimate is approximately \$5,000.

RE: how do we give them the go ahead to proceed? The committee and council give the go ahead with the authority to spend the \$5,000.

Al Levy: predicts that peak usage during the summer would be much higher than the 3 proposed access points could support and that everyone with a cell phone would automatically choose the free WiFi rather than use their cellular service. For him, the issue is the density of access points to provide a successful service model and thinks the plan should be revised.

Jim W: BT will monitor the usage factors but thinks an initial deployment is sufficient. BT would assume additional expenses after the initial installation but that needs to be verified by BT authorities.

Discussion about capacity and demand on Church Street when summer hits and evenings get busy and the question of providing sufficient levels of service.

Al Levy: suggests approaching the installation from a demand assumption from the beginning rather than phasing it in as it grows.

Next task:

To determine a source for the initial installation funding such as: Dept of Marketing and Tourism, sponsorships, USDA Rural utility service.

Next meeting: 1st Wednesday of March; agenda will be an open discussion of the “computers in every home” component of the resolution.

DB: asks if the committee can take action for each part and the committee concurs that it will.

Mike F: there is synergy about computers and BT involvement and ties the relationship to sales and parameters and will bring details to the next meeting.

5) other business:

CEDO staff will bring the progress of the TIF application to the committee as it proceeds.

Adjourn at 6:35 pm.

Notes submitted by Larry Kupferman