

Killington Town Mountain Partnership Committee Meeting
Wednesday, June 23, 2010
SP Land Offices
9 a.m.

Attending the Meeting: Kathy Judge, Mary T. Holland, Chris Bianchi, Chris Nyberg, Steve Selbo, Kathleen Ramsay, Jeanne Karlhuber, Ken Lee, Jill Frankle and Bill Vines.

In response to Kathy Judge's lead-in inquiry about the source of divisiveness in Town, Chris Bianchi, suggested the following as key issues:

- The petition for and the subsequent re-vote on the Fireside Land acquisition;
- The petition to redirect the 1% local option tax; and
- Golf Course financing.

Steve Selbo added:

- The attacks on the Planning Commission's approvals of the Village and golf course PUDs.

There was a general discussion about the perceived lack of consensus building with the first vote on the Fireside land acquisition as contributing to the divisiveness. The Town waited too long to get information about the project out to the community.

Jill Frankle asked how the option taxes are allocated. Chris Bianchi responded that the local option tax revenue is used to fund the Economic Development & Tourism Department. The Economic Development & Tourism Director, Seth Webb, works with the EDT Commission to craft the budget which is submitted to the Select Board for its approval.

The so-called "Bernie Rome" citizen's petition for the reallocation of the local option tax was mentioned. Chris Nyberg said that Seth needs to be given enough time for the Economic Development & Tourism effort to coalesce and then follow-through. Steve Selbo agreed that this is not the time for change: Seth needs some running room.

Jeanne Karlhuber said that the Town needs to address rumors about the golf course in an easy-to-understand way, with clear, simple facts and then we

need to work together to find solutions to the problems. Bill Vines added that a mea culpa is needed: this is what didn't work with the golf course and this is how we're going forward.

Jeanne noted that the EDT is working to develop a strategy to market golf in Killington. Bill Vines said that he'd rather see \$200,000 dedicated to marketing golf than paying down the debt at the golf course – the current marketing budget is laughable. Chris Bianchi noted that the current marketing budget is less than half of the original marketing budget.

Bill Vines reported that he is hearing that the EDT should be both Economic Development and Tourism, not just tourism. Jeanne Karlhuber said that the EDT is starting to broaden its focus and is looking at green initiatives and growing the population. Jeanne noted a recent meeting Seth Webb had with the Sherburne Elementary School principal, Loren Pepe, and the School Board.

Steve Selbo said that there was an SP Land partners meeting in Killington on Monday and Tuesday, and that the amount of time necessary to complete the development process hasn't changed:

2010: market feasibility throughout the rest of this year (adjusting to new market coming out of the economic downturn, knowing that there will be a greater demand for smaller, more efficient units).

2011: architectural work

2012: Act 250 permits

2013: Shovel in the ground

Steve noted that the appeal of the Planning Commission's conceptual master plan approval of the golf course PUD is going to cost the Town \$8,000 to \$10,000 to defend. Lawyers are preparing briefs to submit to the Vermont Environmental Court now.

Jeanne Karlhuber noted that Killington has two things working for it:

- A developer that's ready to go;
- And the local option tax.

Chris Nyberg said that skier visits will increase with the development of the ski village. Events also help to boost visits.

Chris Nyberg said that while the northeast was the only region in the country that didn't see growth in the number of skier days, Vermont did grow its visits by 1.4% over last winter season despite a late start, lower than average snowfall and an economic recession. Considering the

aforementioned, KPSRP (Killington Pico Ski Resort Partners) was pleased with the 3% growth in skier visits over the prior year. It was also noted that Vermont remains third in the nation for skier visits just beating out Utah again. Colorado is first and California is second.

Chris Nyberg gave an update on snow making improvements at Killington and Pico, and introduced "Pico Planet Kids," a new learn-to-ski area for toddlers. The Resort is also working to permit tubing at Pico on the Exhibition slope for day and night operations.

Overall, the Resort is well on it's way recovering from 10 years of deferred maintenance, and they have spent more than \$15M in the last three years on capital projects, which does not include annual maintenance and upkeep like painting and aesthetics with its "First Impressions" initiative.

Chris Nyberg said that skier traffic patterns changed with the installation of the new Skye Peak quad, and the resort is re-working the traffic flow in that vicinity.

Chris also announced the restructuring of several departments at the Resort including; the hiring of a new Marketing and Sales Director with a renewed focus on sales; creating a combined position for the current HR Director Diane Davis to include, Guest Services and the Ambassador program, with the new title Director of Guest and Employee Relations; a new Director of Snow sports position for oversight of the ski school, rental program and day care and Tracy Taylor will focus on the continued growth of Pico. The Resort's Director of Lodging, Dan Dohner, has announced his resignation as he has accepted a position out west with Rock Resorts the lodging division of Vail Resorts, so Chris will be hiring for that direct report position as well.

Steve Selbo said that in the next 30-45 days, he plans to convene a meeting of parties that may be interested in developing a "fire district" for a water supply and distribution. Interested parties include: SP Land, the Resort, the Town, condo associations, etc.

Bill Vines reported the Chamber's work with the Economic Development & Tourism Commission, including publications and web site. The EDT and the Chamber have collaborated to publish companion brochures: the EDT has printed 30,000 lure pieces to be distributed down country and the Chamber has published 20,000 business guides to be distributed in the area. Samples of the new brochures were passed around.

The Chamber and the EDT have also worked on a unified web site, designed to increase traction for the EDT's relatively new site and refresh the Chamber's site which has been around for awhile.

The Wine Festival will be held on July 16, 17 and 18 with signature events Estate Tasting and Grand Tasting hosted by the Chamber and other events sponsored by enterprises around town.

The Holiday Festival will be back on December 9 -12 after a one-year reprieve.

With these events, the Stage Race and the upcoming New England Women's Golf Association tournament and American Junior Golf Association/Killington Junior Golf Championship, a high-profile event which will take place August 2nd-5th this year, it's all starting to work, Bill Vines said.

Jeanne Karlhuber gave an update on the EDT:

- Following-up on Bill Vine's report, Jeanne noted that a series of postcard mailings will go out to second homeowners. The first one, which will be going out any time now, will feature the wine festival and golfing in Killington.
- Phase II of the website has been a good collaboration with the Chamber;
- Our Economic Development & Tourism Director, Seth Webb, has brought energy and results to the position;
- With the departure of Dariece Kirby-Kline, the Department was restructured by expanding the job description for the position to include marketing and media relations. Suzie Dundas has been hired to fill this position and started work last week. The restructured department, including grant writer/special projects coordinator Meg Horrocks and an intern, will have at least \$20,000 less in personnel costs per year than the previous staffing plans.
- Events: The Stage Race on Memorial Day was a huge success. The AJGA/Killington Junior Golf Tournament is coming up in August, as is the "It's Cooler in the Mountains" free concert series at the Killington Base Lodge on Saturday evenings from 4-6. This series is a collaboration of the Pickle Barrel, the Resort and the Town. "Dog Days" will be in September, with the Dock Dogs and Disk Dogs. The Hayfest and the Killington Classic will take place in September.
- Scenic Byways Project. EDT Director Seth Webb is working with towns along the Route 100 and Route 4 corridors on the application for Scenic Byways designation. Once designated as a scenic corridor, we

will be eligible for inclusion on scenic byways maps, funding for special signage of the route and very significant grant opportunities.

Mary T. Holland gave an update on the Town-wide reappraisal. The state requires that at least 90% of the properties have interior inspections – the Listers are working on inspecting the condos and updating their data now. Mary T. noted that in doing these inspections, the Listers have noticed how few people are around in the summer. Reappraisal contractor Russ Beaudoin will be responsible for valuations all of the commercial properties and the properties of elected officials. Chris Bianchi said that the re-appraisal is long overdue, and applauded the Listers team for how well they done so far. Jill Frankle suggested that a second informational meeting on the re-appraisal would be helpful for those that missed the first one. Notice of the informational meeting will be included with the tax bills which will go out next week.

Bill Vines suggested that we could do a promotion for re-appraisal inspections by coordinating special offerings for second homeowners in August and September. Kathleen will follow-up with the EDT.

The next meeting will be September 13 at 9 a.m.