

**TOWN OF BARKHAMSTED
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STUDY COMMITTEE
FEBRUARY 18, 2009
7:00 P.M., TOWN HALL**

AGENDA

- 1. Call to order**
- 2. Review results of Route 44 Focus Group (see summary attached)**
- 3. Discuss follow-on actions resulting from Riverton and Route 44 Focus Groups**
- 4. Update on plans for Riverton events and need for “Friends of Riverton”**
- 5. Status report of Economic Development Study being conducted by Garnet Consulting**
- 6. Discuss need for permanent Economic Development Commission**
- 7. Next Steps**

Barkhamsted, Connecticut Economic Development

1. Why is economic development important to Barkhamsted? What is the Town trying to accomplish by having an economic development program?

Allocate 100 points to the following categories or others you add to the list:

Economic Development Purpose	Mean Score
1. Reduce residential tax burden by having more businesses paying taxes to the Town	35.8
2. Improve employment opportunities for Town residents	29.3
3. Allow residents to obtain desired goods and services locally	23.8
Other Purposes (Please Specify)	
4. Provide a sense of community	.75
5. Bring more visitors	.1
6. Contribute to quality of life	.25

2. From a business perspective, what are the strengths and weaknesses of Barkhamsted as a location for business?

Strengths	Weaknesses
▪ Road network (US 44, Route 8, Route 219, others)	▪ Low customer base
▪ Recreational opportunities – river, lake, Sundown, roads good for biking	▪ No water or sewer
▪ Traffic count on US 44	▪ Lack of business land
▪ Low crime & poverty	▪ Wetlands along US 44
▪ Separation from city problems	▪ Distance from a major city
▪ Beauty of the Town	▪ CT is not business-friendly
▪ Proximity to Bradley	▪ The current economy
▪ Little local competition	▪ Competition from other communities/states/countries
▪ Northwest Connecticut Community College	▪ No local paper (lack of advertising opportunities)
▪ Available labor	▪ Costs (of living, of electricity)
▪ Good schools	
▪ Town website	
▪ Community minded people	
▪ Lack of signs and visual clutter	
▪ Library	
▪ Open space	

3. What local or regional issues are shaping Barkhamsted's ability to have an effective economic development program?

- Lack of public transportation
- Impacts of potential extension of Route 8 as divided highway to the north
- What to do about Riverton – tourism potential
- State Forests – tourism potential
- MDC and State Forests use up 50±% of Town's land area
- Vacant business space in the region (not much locally)
- Finding appropriate land use balance
- Maintaining community character
- Energy costs

4. What are the primary opportunities Barkhamsted has for economic growth in the future?

- Use the Town's open space as the focal point
- Recreational activities (both outdoor and indoor)
- Town is farm-friendly (except for sign regulations)
- Agribusiness
- Alternative energy
- Attracting travelers
- Home-based businesses
- Reuse of the Hitchcock property
- Development of the landfill property

5. What other topics are important for discussion tonight?

None were noted