



Windham: New group looking to attract development

By Terry Date
Staff writer

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WINDHAM — Local leaders seeking tax relief through commercial development want help from a Northeastern University-led group that teaches people how to promote appropriate economic growth.

Selectman Margaret Crisler, one of the members of the newly formed Windham Economic Development Committee, said the group is looking to partner with the Center for Urban and Regional Policy, based at Northeastern.

"We want to find the right kind of commercial development for Windham," she said.

That will be a task, considering that residents do not want to compromise their quality of life, she said.

"We want to maintain Windham's rural look and feel," Crisler said.

The center helps gauge local strengths and form recommendations for appropriate business and industry.

Selectman Bruce Breton applauds the development committee's efforts, saying the town needs tax relief and has locations for tax base broadening projects off Interstate 93 and elsewhere to provide that relief.

The Board of Selectmen voted 4-0 last week to authorize the committee to seek \$5,000 in transportation and development grants to pay for its membership in the urban policy center, Crisler said.

The center will provide committee members with training, help them survey the town's strengths and weaknesses, and help them focus their attention on appropriate development, according to a presentation by Don Zizzi, a research associate at the policy center.

Over 50 towns and cities in New England and New York belong to the partnership, as do the State University of New York at Plattsburg, Cleveland State University, and the University of Georgia.

The Windham Economic Development Committee was formed in June as a subgroup of the Greater Salem Chamber of Commerce. The panel includes a cross section of local business leaders, planners, and town officials.

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