



CITY OF BELFAST
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From: Thomas Kittredge, Economic Development Director

To: Mayor Eric Sanders, City Councilor Brenda Bonneville, City Councilor Paul Dean, City Councilor Neal Harkness, City Councilor Michael Hurley, City Councilor Mary Mortier, and City Manager Erin Herbig

For: Belfast City Council Workshop of October 11th, 2022

Regarding: Development History of the Belfast Industrial Park

As a potential source of guidance regarding how to develop the City-owned parcel at 45 Front Street (Belfast Yards), the City Council had requested a memorandum regarding the development of the Belfast Industrial Park.

Creation:

The Belfast Industrial Park (also referred to as the Belfast Airport Industrial Park, the Belfast Business Park, and the Belfast Airport Business Park), was created by the splitting off of excess property from the Belfast Municipal Airport in two portions, the first being 39.45 acres in 1982, which became the south phase (centered on Little River Drive) of the park, and the second being 18.00 acres in 1987, which became the north phase (centered on Airport Road) of the park. The north phase of the park is referred to as phase I because it was actually permitted, developed, and began to be sold off prior to the south phase (which is referred to as phase II). Infrastructure for the south phase of the park, was funded at least partially by Economic Development Administration funds (that were awarded to Waldo County).

Lot Sizes:

Individual lot sizes within the business park have varied from 1.22 acres (lot N-2) to 3.90 acres (lot S-13). I reached out to A.E. Hodsdon, the firm who prepared the business park's Site Location of Development Applications to the Maine Department of Environmental Protection, regarding how the lot sizes were arrived at. To a predominant degree the lot sizes were dictated by the City's own minimum lot size at that time, which was 40,000 square feet. I will note that many of the businesses that located within the park purchased more than one lot, either initially or eventually, providing some indication that the individual lots were sized too small when they were created.

Marketing Efforts:

Eastern Maine Development Corporation created a report for the park entitled Belfast Airport Industrial Park - Market Development Strategies (28 pages in length, with an additional 61 pages of appendices). A four-page color brochure for the park was also created by the Belfast Development Corporation. During the past decade, the primary method for marketing the park has been through the City's website and through word of mouth, with no paid marketing efforts being utilized.

Goals:

In the aforementioned Belfast Airport Industrial Park - Market Development Strategies, the Belfast Airport Industrial Park Committee recommended that the park should serve a variety of City goals, including: 1) diverse job offerings, with mobility opportunities, and available to non-college bound; 2) high-quality business location options, justifying in-City costs; 3) a 'ready to go,' flexible location for a variety of businesses, focusing on: light manufacturing, wholesale, and service; limited retail should be allowed; 4) attraction of businesses into one central location, as means to decrease potential land use conflicts among commercial and residential property owners; and 5) the creation of tax base to support City services.

In actuality, the chief priority for selling park lots has been to support job creation, particularly within businesses who are already located within Belfast or in surrounding communities. While there was never a consistent established formula for job creation numbers and the sale prices for lots or any clawback provision if job creation numbers were not met, there was at least one instance (Waymouth Northumbria Precision Metals Firm) where the City put together a proposal to lower the lot sale price (reimbursing the lot sales proceeds to the firm) in return for good jobs. In addition, over the years, the City has broadened the range of eligible uses in the park to allow non-industrial businesses to locate there.

Lot Sale History:

Sale prices for lots have tended to fluctuate only mildly throughout the entire history of the park. In certain instances (lots S-2 and S-3) lots have been granted by the City for free because they have been determined to be difficult and expensive to build upon. These are the sale prices for lots where records could be readily obtained:

Originally Sold To	Year	Lot(s)	Sale Price	Acreage	Price Per Acre	Current Occupant (s)
Tidewater Oil	2020	S-2	\$0.00	1.83	\$0.00	Tidewater Oil
Tidewater Oil	2020	S-3	\$0.00	1.82	\$0.00	Tidewater Oil
GO Logic	2020	S-6	\$25,000	1.67	\$14,970.06	GO Logic (not yet built)
GO Logic	2020	S-7	\$25,000	1.67	\$14,970.06	GO Logic (not yet built)
Trillium	2016	S-8	\$32,000	2.66	\$12,030.08	Trillium
Tidewater Oil	2015	S-6	\$20,000	1.67	\$11,976.05	GO Logic (not yet built)
Gary Hagan	2013	S-5	\$25,000	1.63	\$15,337.42	USDA RD
Easterly Wine	2007	N-8	\$25,000	1.66	\$15,060.24	Easterly Wine
Arthur and Sherry Dodge	2006	S-1	\$29,000	1.72	\$16,860.47	Little River Redemption
Ducktrap River	2004	S-4	\$29,000	3.12	\$9,294.87	Ducktrap River (but not built upon/buffer)
Easterly Wine	2004	N-9	\$23,258	1.83	\$12,709.29	Easterly Wine
Group Home Foundation	1998	S-9 and S-10	\$45,000	3.26 (S-9) + 3.00 (S-10)	\$7,188.50	Ducktrap River
Ducktrap River	1998	S-13	\$24,000	3.90	\$6,153.85	Ducktrap River
Coastal Helicopters	1996	N-10	\$8,500	2.34	\$3,632.48	Francis Albert

Notes:

Lot S-6 was later bought back by the City of Belfast and resold to GO Logic, along with lot S-7. Tidewater Oil was granted lots S-2 and S-3 for no cost in 2020.

Easterly Wine combined lots N-8 and N-9 into one parcel in 2008.

Group Home Foundation combined lots S-9 and S-10 into one parcel.

One Additional Point Related to the Redevelopment of 45 Front Street (and not to the Belfast Industrial Park):

A survey was developed and distributed to the Mayor and City Council in September of 2017. This survey touched upon overall development goals, layout and aesthetics, the role of the City and process, development goals related to residential uses, and development goals related to commercial uses. It is not possible to summarize or inventory the responses to this survey as only one was completed and returned.