

Minutes from Downtown 2020 Committee Meeting May 8, 2012
Room # 309 at 8:30 AM

In Attendance: Lou Gagliano (chair), Craig Rebecca Shaivone, Gerry Kagan and Bob Jacobs

Absent: Dan Kail, Valerie Smith Malin and Jeff Mayer

Summary of Minutes

1. Minutes from the prior meeting were approved without any change.
2. Chair updated the group on meetings of last week with: Planning and Implementation Committee, Save Westport Now, and Mark Coe project director of the National Hall complex project. With respect to Save Westport Now meeting Chair commented on the concerns of their group with respect to not going up in terms of height restrictions, not over-expanding downtown, whether a cinema downtown would be successful, and concerns about overall traffic impacts. Chair also provided comments on those areas of agreement particularly about using the riverfront more effectively including the concept of “greening” along the river and consideration for dredging.
3. Chair also noted the approval by the Selectmans Office of the first two applications for a bump out café.
4. Review of the Town Attorney’s reply on the E mail in terms of creating a not for profit for the purpose of raising funds. Consensus was that we would pursue a concept of “Friends of Downtown 2020”. Based upon the comment of Dewey Loselle, member of the public, contact will be made of Town Finance Director to review a similar and recent path taken by “Friends of Wakeman Farm” (community gardens program).
5. The consensus of the Committee’s feelings on priorities of meetings with stakeholders produced the following list of groups: P&Z, Board of Finance, RTM, DMA, Smaller non DMA retail group, Library, Cinema Initiative, Save Westport Now, PTA, Historic District Commission, and General Public. Chair

noted that contact and progress has been made with a number of these groups. Gerry Kagan suggested that meetings with these groups should include and be scheduled in a way that as many members of the Committee as possible could attend. It was agreed that this type of scheduling would be used as we proceeded.

6. A review of the skill set document prepared ahead of the meeting took place with respect to the type of consulting groups that would help the Committee exercise its responsibilities and ultimately produce a Master Plan of Development (MPD) for the downtown area. Committee commented on the need to make sure that a comprehensive traffic study be part of the MPD process. Gerry Kagan outlined how some of the overall visionary thinking and not the more specific portions of the planning effort may require different consulting groups. Gerry Kagan agreed to follow up and attempt to have some of these consulting groups meet the Committee to further our knowledge.

7. Meeting was adjourned at 9:50 AM.