



**WESTPORT**<sup>sm</sup>

**DOWNTOWN PLAN IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE**

**March 2021 Minutes**

Thursday, March 25 | 8:30 am

Zoom Meeting

In attendance: Randy Herbertson (chair), Melissa Kane, Mozian, Alicia Mozia, Anthony Riggio, Foti Koskinas, Samuel Arciola, Jennifer A. Fava, Ken Bernhard, Kitt Shapiro, Mary Young, Peter Ratkiewich, Pippa Bell Ader, Sara Harris, Craig Schiavone, Deirdre O'Farrelly, Matthew Mandell, Steve Smith

Opening Remark - Chair

Hello everyone. I am Randy Herbertson, Chair of the Westport Downtown Plan Implementation Committee, and this is the March 25, 2021 meeting of this committee, the first regular meeting that has been held since late fall, 2019.

In my very short tenure, I've already learned one of the harder things to do is change a committee name, but I want to highlight what our role is here. We are not an approval, funding or execution body - we are here to vet and create plans, then champion and present them for consideration to the bodies that do the rest.

While we do have a Master Plan from 2014 that will be a key reference document for us, in even the last 7 years, and most prolifically, the last year has provided us with change and new opportunities for us all to consider as we contribute to the future of our Downtown District. As such, I am going to recommend for our discussion a simplified, but currently relevant strategic structure for us to consider, prioritize, and work toward. As we look at reference plans that date back 20 years and more, many of the opportunities are not new but may be cast in a new way.

This is a public meeting. Comments from the attending public will be invited as time is available and always via our dedicated email: [DPIC-comments@westportct.gov](mailto:DPIC-comments@westportct.gov). As this is a recorded meeting, I'd appreciate it if everyone would state their name prior to speaking.

Our agenda has been posted to the Town website and distributed to Committee members.

We are supposed to take attendance, but what I'd like to do this first time, since it's been a while since we've met, and we have several new members, is to have everyone introduce themselves, and briefly tell us what you do outside of this committee.

I. Review of last meeting status (Jan/November 2019)

A. Wayfinding (1/2020)

Design package is complete. Need finish coordination with DPW and Police on vehicular signage. A final presentation should be possible in the next month.

B. Playground

The previous location at Bedford Square is no longer available, and new requirements over the past year will impact future development. This should be re-considered under the Jesup Green redevelopment plans.

C. Restore/Revitalize Elm Street

This project has been completed.

D. Sigrid Shultz Lot

This project has been completed.

E. Baldwin Lot

This project is in design, and slated in the 2022 capital improvement forecast. The potential opportunity to create a lot relationship with the Avery lot has re-opened, and a meeting is scheduled with DPW to discuss options to create, to present to the Avery Trust.

F. SSD

This development stalled over the past year, but will be renewed with a new working group, as a key bucket in a new strategic focus.

G. Streetscape Improvements

The working group for this project will meet again to recommend options. Budgeting for this is in the 2022 capital forecast.

II. Downtown progress since our last meeting

A. Town/State/Utilities Development

1. Elm Street - as noted, this project is complete, and is a significant enhancement to the Downtown aesthetic as well as functionality.
2. Myrtle/Church Intersection - this project is complete, including enhanced vehicle and pedestrian safety features and the saving of a historic tree.
3. Pole Removal - Poles have been removed from Elm Street, and will be soon on Avery street, improving both storm resilience and aesthetic.

4. Main Street Planning - improvements for the Main/Elm intersection are designed and will be implemented, along with Main Street paving once current building development is complete by early Fall.
  5. Post Road utilities/traffic lights - Flood control improvements have been completed by Aquarion, and the State is in the process of installing new traffic lights at the Post and Parker Harding/Main/Myrtle intersections. Once complete, repaving will happen.
  6. Private Development
  7. 42 Main Street (Onion Alley)
  8. 44 Main Street (BR/Kleins) - Oko
  9. 69-97 Main Street (Lulu, Theory, Splendid, 7, Sundance)
  10. 201 Main Street (Belden Place)
  11. 323 Main Street (Hudson Malone)
  12. 345 Main Street (Grapevine/Outpost Pizza)
  13. 33 Elm Street (Madison Reed)
  14. 15 Myrtle Ave (Tailored Home)
  15. 224 Post Road (calico)
- B. Current Status (openings, vacancy, etc.)
1. 20 openings - 8 food service, 3 moving to Downtown, 4 concept stores
    - a) Open: B&N, calico, Tailored Home/cafe, Capuli Restaurant, Allison Daniel Jewelry
    - b) Soon: GLO Bar, Sundance, State & Liberty, La Fenice Gelato, Cold Fusion Ice Cream, Mrs. London's Bakery & Cafe, Pastifico, Offline (AE)
    - c) Fall: Oka, Memo (tavern), Elliptica, Local to Market, new le Penguin, Keri Rosenthal (House of Clement), Elliptica
- C. What we have learned to shape forward development during the 2020/Pandemic period
1. Welcomed Newcomers - urban-oriented
  2. Outdoor/social spaciousness seeking
  3. Hybrid stores - more services
  4. Community resilience
  5. Heightened Collaboration
- III. Overarching Forward Strategic Priorities (refer to Strategic Priorities document for further detail.)
- A. Parking Lots Reinvention
  - B. Technology Upgrades
  - C. Pedestrian Access
  - D. Sustainability
  - E. Maintenance
- IV. Next Steps
- A. Present Strategic Priorities to the First Selectman for final blessing
  - B. Establish new working groups against each priority bucket and some sub-initiatives
  - C. Next meeting: Thursday, April 15, 2021 at 8:30 am

Meeting adjourned at 9:45 am.