

**Minutes from Downtown 2020 Committee Meeting April 23, 2013
Room # 201 at 8:30 AM**

In Attendance: Lou Gagliano, Bob Jacobs, Ken Bernhard, Gerry Kagan, Craig Rebecca Schiavone and Dan Kail

Absent: Valerie Smith-Malin,

Summary of Minutes

1. No minutes of previous meetings were available for review.
2. The draft letter intended as guidance for Community groups to write letters of support for the Committees work was approved for use but only as a guide. It is the intent of the Committee that the Groups write their own letters expressing why the work and direction of the Committee's effort tied the purpose of their group. The decision to whom the letters were to be addressed was left to the Chair.
3. The Power Point draft prepared by the Chair as an explanation of the path from the 2007 Plan of Conservation and the creation of the Downtown 2020 was reviewed. The intended purpose of the Power Point is to be used during upcoming meetings with elected Boards. It was agreed that the charts needed to be made more user friendly. The Chair will work on a redrafting process.
4. Discussion turned to the issue of the Committee's work as among other things input to the presentations to elected Boards which have been scheduled in the next several weeks. The issue of missing leadership as an element of why many of the proposed downtown changes have not been made was noted. These comments came principally from the Committee but were also noted by comments from the public in attendance. Members of the Committee made it clear that without a follow up implementation, and a group charged with this responsibility, the Community would be faced with another planning effort without implementation.
5. Connie Greenfield a member of the community and Save Westport Now (SWN) noted her concerns and that of her group about who would provide

direction for any consulting group retained. She also commented as to the fact that in reading many of the proposals of the firms responding that they did not seem to have a “town” sensitivity and that they talked about Urban planning. Members of the Committee responded by explaining that Urban planning is a term used to describe a more all inclusive planning process to take into account the stakeholders and members of the community and does have a “town” planning attitude. The Chair during a latter portion of the meeting offered to meet with SWN to engage in a discussion of our efforts and respond to their questions in an effort to gain their trust. Ms. Greenfield said she would attempt to set up this meeting.

6. Discussions moved to the upcoming meeting with the P&Z Commission of 5/9 and related preparation. Chair noted that it was critical to build a base of cooperation between the groups, and to help the P&Z understand the objectives of our work and how these efforts could be better integrated. Chip Stevens a member of the public and the Commission said that the Committee needs to use the 5/9 meeting to create this improved working environment and just “get going” with our efforts. Chair indicated that to move forward funding approval from the Board of Finance was required and that to obtain this the backing of the P&Z was needed. The Chair went on to say that he believed there were at least two areas that the Committee and the P&Z agreed:

- The need for a baseline traffic study to determine solutions to the safety and congestion issues that exist,
- The need to update Section 7 of the POCD dealing with the downtown area related to all of the projects that will occur in the next 5 years in the downtown area.

These and other related areas of agreement need to be pursued and a process for acknowledging the role of both groups is a priority for the meeting of 5/9.

It was suggested by the Committee that a pre-meeting with members of the P&Z occur prior to the meeting of 5/9; Mr. Stevens agreed to contact the Chairman of P&Z and request such a meeting.

7. Meeting was adjourned at 10:00 AM.