

Minutes

Downtown Plan Implementation Committee

January 7, 2016

Town Hall Room 210 -9:00 AM

Note: These are “action minutes” of the meeting as previously agreed to by the DPIC. The entire meeting was recorded and can be viewed on the Town’s website.

DPIC Attendance: Dewey Loselle (Co-chairperson), Melissa Kane (Co-chairperson), Larry Bradley, Peter Ratkiewich, Lois Schine, Matthew Mandell, Pippa Bell Ader, Steve Edwards, Dale Call, Alicia Mozian, Ken Bernhard, Tony Riggio, Jessica Newshel, Gary Conrad, Steve Desloge, Steve Smith

DPIC Unavailable: Jennifer Fava, Mary Young, Craig Schiavone, Peter Boyd

Last month’s minutes approved.

Melissa reiterated that any others who are interested outside the committee can join working groups. How to best organize working groups.

P5 update. Steve Edwards presented to Board of Finance to get \$30,000 to do early design of Elm St improvements, which they approved. The proposal then goes to the RTM. Board of Finance was supportive of efforts - encouraging symbiotic relationships with downtown merchants. Utility costs are a big factor in the cost estimate.

G2. Dewey saw an early draft of downtown maintenance report and the group is still working on it.

W3. Three grant applications were submitted to the CT Department of Housing. Westport was awarded 650K to do 2 of the projects. There is now \$250,000 to do a study of Dead Man’s Brook. Also, \$400,000 to conduct a master drainage plan study, which hasn’t been done since 70s. 100% of the grants are federally funded and no town contribution is necessary. There is a third application outstanding for a flood audit for downtown. We have 2 years from the award to complete the work. The master plan absolutely helped us to win these grants.

M8. Waiting on specs for what DOT will allow for bus shelters. Rotary is ready and willing to help fund shelters. Lois will need info soon in order to get funds for this year. Gene Cederbaum offered to help to move this project along and join the working group. Working group should meet in the next month to move this project forward.

M3. Improve the traffic situation at 1/33. There’s a text amendment in front of P&Z and the public hearing closes tonight. Commission could vote tonight or within 65 days. Melissa spoke

in support of those items in the text amendment that are part of the master plan. The First Selectman also spoke in support.

P4. Toquet Hall/HHS. Melissa will meet with parents resource committee to talk about the group partnering with DPIC to look at funding sources and community involvement to make downtown more friendly to teens. Kevin Godburn, Youth Services Program Director, spoke to provide details on the space. The lease expires in 2023. A kitchen is much needed, as well as soundproofing. A student discount partnership is launching next week. Starting with restaurants - high school kids can come to participating restaurants and get 10% discount. There is a logo on windows of participating businesses.

P2. The master plan illustrated sidewalk gaps and a goal of filling in as much as possible. Looking for grant opportunities that can help us achieve this. Melissa asked who is made aware of grant opportunities. Jonathan Steinberg forwards some to the selectman's office. We should maintain a dynamic list of annual or semi annual grants so that we can anticipate them better. Perhaps have an intern to create a master list of applicable grants or outsource to a grant administrator. Grant writing is a working group that could use more people.

Randy Herbertson, a downtown business owner, offered to help with Westport's marketing.

Melissa, Dewey, and Pippa attended the bus study meeting. Committee is happy to help work on expanding transit service.

The next meeting will be held on February 4th, 2016 at 9am.

Meeting adjourned 10:20pm.

Recorded by Jessica Newshel
Downtown Planning Implementation Committee