



WESTPORTsm

DOWNTOWN PLAN IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE

Thursday, August 15, 2024, Approved Minutes

In attendance: Chair: Randy Herbertson; Members: Peter Ratkiewich, Donna Douglass, Jenna Petok (remote), Matthew Mandell, Maxwell Crowley (remote), Tom Kiely, Dave Briggs (remote), David Farrell, Al D'Amura, Mary Young (remote), Dina Upton (remote), Brian McGunagle (remote), Ken Bernhard (remote), and Johana Martell (remote); Staff: Sara Amaro

The Downtown Plan Implementation Committee held a public meeting at 8:30 a.m. on **Thursday, August 15, 2024**, for the following purposes:

- I. Opening Remarks – Chair
 - A. Overall Meeting Goals
 - B. Approval of Minutes (07/2024 Meeting)
 - Motion to Approve:** Douglass
 - Second:** Ratkiewich
 - Vote:** All approved, with Mandell abstaining
- II. Strategic Priority Review
 - A. Parking Lots Reinvention
 1. Downtown Lots Design Master Plan – Reconnecting the Riverfront
 - (a) Jesup and Imperial (Police Station) planning and public engagement
 - An RFP was assembled to conduct public engagement - preferably using an independent group, ensuring the reports are non-biased. There are eight (8) groups registered with the State of CT, none of which bid – potentially going to send the bid back out to the CT registered groups.
 - The goal is to begin public engagement this Fall. Once the first report is in, The Working Group will review the responses.
 - Public charrette not to include design work at this time. Purpose of charrette will be to listen to the public and hear their concerns/needs to help guide the next phase of the design.
 - An RFP was sent out regarding structured parking feasibility in downtown footprint. Possible locations to include – Police Station, Bay Street lot, Baldwin lot, and Avery lot.
 - Drones currently in use to gather data on lot usage. Information will be used to update the 2015 analysis.

1. Downtown Lots Design Master Plan – Reconnecting the Riverfront (cont.)

- In 2014 a mobility and parking analysis was done. An RFP will go out for bid to review and update upon the needs of today.
- M. Mandell requested the RFP's be placed before DPIC stating that the RFP for public engagement wasn't provided with sufficient time for review and the parking structure RFP wasn't provided before being sent out for bid.
- Interim work possibly to include adding handicap accessibility at the walkway from Deadman Brook to Imperial. Potential alterations include a lift and/or ramp. Suggestion was made to have both installed as this area is secluded and having only the lift could raise safety concerns (ie: if the lift stops working, there is an alternative option).
- Alternative suggestions on how to alleviate parking concerns included:
 - The Avery lot is for sale. A request to purchase the Avery lot can be brought before the Board of Selectwomen, acting in their capacity as the Local Traffic Authority.
 - Research comparable surrounding towns and how they manage employee parking.
 - A shuttle bus to transport people throughout downtown and to the train station. Although this was unsuccessful in the past, with today's needs this can potentially prove to be beneficial.

III. To adjourn the meeting.

Motion to adjourn the meeting: Kiely

Second: Douglass

Meeting adjourned: 9:28 AM

Randy Herbertson, Chair
Downtown Plan Implementation Committee
August 15, 2024