



City Center Project Steering Committee

Tuesday, March 27, 2012 at 5:00 p.m.

The Visitor's Center

14 North Street

Claremont, NH

Minutes

I. Roll Call

Present: Marty Davis, Jason Farrell, David Putnam, Robert Tatro, Kristin Kenniston, Victor Bergeron, James Feleen

Absent: William Greenrose, Tom Rock, David Messier, Gary Trotter, Keith Raymond

Staff: Nancy Merrill, Tracey Hutton, Kelly LeBlanc

II. Meeting Minutes

Approve minutes of February 28, 2012 meeting

Motion: approve minutes as amended

Made By: Mr. Davis Second: Mr. Farrell

Vote: Unanimous

Abstention: Mr. Bergeron, Mr. Feleen

III. Old Business

- Common themes of Focus Groups and Reports from the Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Regional Planning Commission

Chair Putnam informed the committee that they are looking for common threads and should state what is important for future discussion on these items.

Ms. Merrill reported that both raw data and data gathered via the list of discussion points will be given to the consultant.

Parking:

Q: What do we want parking to look like in 10-15 years?

The committee reported that parking is inadequate and insufficient. An additional parking garage behind Twisted Fitness could service tenants, business owners, and those who pass through to the main corridor. Ms. Merrill asked about how the board feels about metered parking to assure time limits are upheld. Chair Putnam stated it is a long standing enforcement and education issue. Business owners and their employees often park on the street (all day) and should not be doing so. Mr. Tatro stated that a garage would be ideal (versus an open lot) as most people would be willing to pay for a good parking spot.

Mr. Feleen stated that before he started working in Brown Block, he had no idea the amount of truck traffic

that went through the City Center. Rerouting trucks away from the first block of Pleasant Street would be ideal in addition to one-way diagonal parking and one-way traffic. It is essential to increase pedestrian friendliness.

Traffic flow influences parking. Mr. Feleen stated, for example, that the barber has issues because people will not stop for his services due to a lack of close parking. This might be a common issue for other businesses. Ms. Merrill stated there are approximately 50 all day parking spaces on the West side of Pleasant Street. Mr. Feleen stated when the streets were patrolled the parking situation was improved. Mr. Bergeron commented that Pleasant Street is a state highway that cannot be changed without state approval.

The current parking garage is accessible to the City Center. Additional lighting and fixing the sidewalks/improved walking conditions would increase usage.

Mr. Tatro stated the left hand side of his lot is deeded to but there are 5 or 6 parking spaces with weeds, trash and vacant cars. Deeded parking spaces are the responsibility of the business owner and at this point, these are wasted spaces. These are deplorable parking lot conditions.

Mr. Farrell stated the universal parking symbol sign would be beneficial when usage is in question.

Ms. Kenniston commented that because there is nothing bridging the parking garage and downtown, the parking garage might be underused. Ms. Merrill stated there are also 25 spaces on Wall St. /CVS (the right corner of CVS) that are for public use.

A map of available parking will be created for the next meeting.

Mixed-Use

Ms. Hutton clarified the definition of mixed use for the committee as 'residential/non-residential use in same building or multi-residential uses in the same complex or development (i.e. retail, restaurants, light manufacturing). The Claremont Ordinance does not allow for a mixed-use without a Variance.

Mr. Tatro stated if you have mixed-use, people living in the downtown will also utilize the businesses. Mixed-use works hand in hand (retail and residential). Mr. Feleen stated the current demographic of those living downtown might not be essential to what is proposed. The residential environment must be geared to a certain clientele.

Objectives: to create opportunities for residential growth, professional use and retail use.

Mr. Folta asked if the categories of uses are in chart form. There is no full chart.

Permitted uses: Commercial, residential, industrial, and institutional.

General Uses: Retail, light industrial, professional offices, social service agencies are all permitted downtown. This could impact the demographic.

The City Ordinance does not define technology related businesses.

Ms. Merrill stated the zoning consultant will come in and offer some solutions to the issues.

Mr. Putnam read the following segment from the December 2011 Downtown Idea Exchange Article provided in the committee packets, '...creating an environment that will be attractive for business requires making it attractive to employees. This means "creating places where connections can happen, where

productivity and creativity increase and where the professional networks foster collaboration and innovation.’

The following items will be gathered for the next CCCP meeting: (1) a parking map, (2) answered questions about parking enforcement, and (3) the truck study summary.

IV. New Business

- City owned property in the City Center

PR and advertising for the City is generally found in commercial, business or real estate journals. Ms. Merrill stated that the map overlay depicting City owned property is important to keep in mind over the next few months as discussions progress. Two lots on the City Owned Property list are being used as part of the parks system. It would be beneficial to get them off the City owned parcel list and transferred to the parks system (Monadnock and Barnes Park).

Motion: recommend to the council in April that this committee approves transferring and merging these two parcels to their respective Parks.

Made By: Ms. Kenniston

Second: Mr. Feleen

Vote: Unanimous

Residents Focus Group - April 14, 2012 - 9am - Marion Phillips Apartments

V. Other

- Update from staff on zoning consultant

Proposals due Monday, April 2nd and will be reviewed by Nancy Merrill, Tracey Hutton and a third party reviewer.

- 3-D Modeling

Nate LaVanway, Director of Technology SAU #6; Dr. Middleton McGoodwin, SAU #6 Superintendent; Scott Pope, Machine Tool Instructor; Nancy Merrill Director of Planning & Development and Tracey Hutton, City Planner met last week to discuss the 3-D modeling project. Boris Menkor from Tom-Tom will assist in training, potentially conducting a train the trainer so those individuals can pass the learned information along.

All interested students can participate in the course as community service if the course does not fit into their schedule.

Mr. Folta commented on Alex Ray’s proposition to explore a biomass facility. Presumably this would go where the River Walk was proposed if that happened.

Mr. Bergeron recommended showing the marketing video at the next meeting.

VI. Adjourn

Motion: to adjourn at 6:28PM

Made By: Mr. Tatro

Second: Mr. Farrell

Vote: Unanimous

Respectfully Submitted by, Kelly LeBlanc