



City Center Project Steering Committee

Tuesday, April 24, 2012 at 5:00 p.m.

The Visitor's Center

14 North Street

Claremont, NH

Meeting Minutes

I. Roll Call

Present: Marty Davis, Jason Farrell, David Putnam, Robert Tatro, Kristin Kenniston, Victor Bergeron, James Feleen, Gary Trotter, Tom Rock, David Messier, Keith Raymond

Absent: William Greenrose, Kristin Kenniston,

Staff: Nancy Merrill, Tracey Hutton, Katrina Spaulding, Kelly LeBlanc

II. Meeting Minutes

Approve minutes of March 22, 2012 meeting

Motion: approve minutes as presented

Made By: Mr. Tatro

Second: Mr. Farrell

Vote: Unanimous

Abstention: Keith Raymond, Tom Rock

III. Old Business

- Common themes of Focus Groups –CCCP Steering Committee Discussion

Ms. Merrill reported that the resident focus group had three groups of five participants. Mr. McCrory, UVLSRPC, is working on a summary of the meeting.

Mr. Davis, CCCP steering committee member and resident participant, stated that the format of the forum was a different approach with very active participatory groups versus a passive environment. There was energy and interest from the fifteen participants who were in attendance. The people who were present were committed to the cause.

Mr. Davis commented that some of the reoccurring topics were centered on an increase social interaction and infrastructure. The idea of creating more social activity was key. Sidewalks were widely discussed. Their importance and upkeep cannot be overstated. 'Bring back Green Acres' echoed through the forum. The residents agreed that a neutral space for general social interaction in the City was needed. Mr. Rock echoed the need for social activities and the arts. Mr. Farrell stated that the opening of the wine shop will bring about some of the 'Green Acres' flavor.

Ms. Merrill stated that the visitor's center green, Broad street park and Pleasant Street are all connected but one of the focus groups felt very separate. Mr. Rock stated the backs of the buildings aren't very attractive for people that might be enjoying the park to then go over and do businesses.

Chair Putnam stated that maintenance is key to keep the area attractive.

- City Center core parking

Chair Putnam asked if we are mandated to make the crosswalks ADA compliant. It is currently not known the degree of change needed. Sidewalks that have the Verizon pole force pedestrians to walk closer to the street. Gary Trottier suggested lit sidewalks similar to the Freedom Trail in Boston.

Mr. Lucier, resident of and business owner in the City Center, stated that lighting and access to the pedestrian bridge crossing is not efficiently marked.

Mr. Feleen suggested adding more crossings to make the city core a more pedestrian friendly environment.

Mr. Farrell asked if pathways can be painted or delineated.

The steering committee reiterated the need for employee/landlord parking designation. The question becomes how to enforce parking designations after the CCCP project is complete. Chair Putnam stated that in Hanover there is a Merchant's Association. They enforce compliance.

Mr. Folta, Ward III, stated that there is a downtown association: 'Heart of Claremont.' This is the successor to 'Main Street Claremont.' Mr. Trottier stated that there have been a number of associations, but with different ideas/goals. Increased involvement is needed but people tend not to want to be involved. Mr. Bergeron stated that the different groups do not want to work together and this needs to change. Mr. Trottier stated that the Heart of Claremont and the Chamber of Commerce have a strong relationship just as the Heart of Claremont and the City also has a strong relationship.

Mr. Raymond stated that there is an informational kiosk existing (near NeW Socials) and it is back to being updated.

Mr. Folta stated that more diverse civic opportunities are needed.

Ms. Merrill stated that the City has square footage parking data for the core of the City Center. The City is currently working on parking delineation which will contain the build out, existing parking, and potential solutions. All day parking in the City of Claremont is approx 150 spaces (62- parking garage, 25 Wall Street, 25-30 Broad Street, 25 – North Street). More efficient use of parking is needed.

Ms. Hutton reviewed ‘Shared Parking’ and the ‘Downtown Parking Problems’ handouts. Parking standards in the City are both outdated and excessive. Tractor Supply was approved for half of their required spaces. Some alternative parking proposals include sharing uses in residential/commercial areas (tenants at night, customers during the day); requiring only ¾ parking with ¼ left as open space. If more parking is needed at a later date, it can be revisited. This comes into place when there is a new use or redevelopment of a current use.

Mr. Rock asked what is done if there is a shortfall of needed parking. The Planning Board and Zoning Board of Adjustment can waive the parking standard. Alternative solutions are being proposed. Mr. Trottier stated that the city needs to loosen restrictions on business parking. The business success will fund the supply. Mr. Feleen asked if an owner can meet their requirements via public parking. The PB waiver and ZBA Variance are different for parking. This might be something that can condense into one board.

Ms. Merrill reported on the parking situation between Pleasant and Broad Street.

Zoning repurposed to mixed use:

Parking and the like is included in future zoning ideas

Common themes are consistent between the focus groups. The opportunity for new and contemporary uses is present.

The design charette will form into the zoning process. Mr. Rock asked about the proposed zoning transects as there are mixed areas of business and residents. Hybrid zoning would be a potential solution.

Chair Putnam asked if we are working with form based zoning and an applicant is looking to establish a business in a commercial/residential zone, what will they have to give up? Ms. Hutton stated this will be created from the design charette.

The zoning recommendations will reflect what the committee is looking to achieve.

Mr. Folta stated the Master Plan Land Use Chapter might fit into some of this group’s mission. Ms. Merrill stated that some of the Master Plan goals and recommendations would fit into the steering committee’s mission.

Mr. Bergeron left at 6:19PM.

IV. New Business

V. Other

- Update on Zoning Consultant

Ms. Hutton reported that 8 RFQ Responses have been received. The goal is to have a selection by next Monday and a decision within a week or two.

Mr. Trottier commented on the truck study stating that the conclusion was easy to see. Truck traffic downtown is clearly an impediment. Chair Putnam stated that when the angle parking went to parallel parking it was the sidewalks that enlarged. Ms. Merrill stated that the zoning consultants are a team that includes traffic specialists.

Mr. Lucier proposed a heritage trail as an easy way to foster understanding of the history of the area. Historical markers could be created that allow a person to walk the river bank and note the various building.

VI. Adjourn

Motion: to adjourn at 6:30PM

Made By: Gary **Second:** David M **Vote:** Unanimous
Respectfully Submitted by, Kelly LeBlanc