



City Center Initiative Committee
Tuesday, December 16, 2014 at 5:15 p.m.
The Visitor Center, 14 North Street

MINUTES
Approved 2/17/2015

Present: David Putnam, James Feleen, Thomas Rock, Roselyn Caplan, William Carpenter, Angela Biggs, Kelly LeBlanc, Timothy Frisch, Melissa Richmond
Absent: Marty Davis, David Messier, Catherine Lacasce
Staff: Nancy Merrill, Director of Planning & Development; Zachary Williams, Business Development Coordinator; Kurt Beek, Project Manager

The meeting was called to order at 5:15 PM.

Chairman Putnam asked that the items under “New Business” be taken up first to accommodate Kurt Beek.

Motion: To accept the agenda as amended.

Made by: Mr. Carpenter **Second:** Ms. Biggs **Vote:** Unanimous in favor.

I. Meeting Minutes

• **November 20, 2014**

Corrections to the 11/20/2014 minutes were as follow:

- Correct Marty Davis’s name in the “Members Present” section;
- Change “K. Proctor” to “D. Henry” in Section II.

Motion: To accept the minutes as corrected.

Made by: Mr. Carpenter **Second:** Ms. Biggs **Vote:** Ms. Richmond abstained; all others voted “aye”; motion carried.

II. New Business

• **City Center Transportation**

Project Manager, Kurt Beek, was present to give an update on the projects listed below.

○ **Main Street**

Mr. Beek gave the following details as updates on the Main Street reconstruction project:

- The project is being funded by a special appropriation through Jean Shaheen’s office,
- The funds are Federal Highway money dispersed through NHDOT;

- The city has hired McFarland-Johnson Engineering from Concord to assist in design and oversight;
- The project limits are from Union St. to Opera House Square;
- The intent of the project is to reconstruct the existing pavement, replace roadway base with new materials, construct new sidewalks full length on at least one side of the street; add ADA sidewalk ramps, new signs, striping and lighting;
- Surveying has been done on the entire length of the project;
- Geotechnical consultants have done borings to determine the sub-base;
- A “local concerns” meeting has been held with a good turnout of residents and business owners who live or travel along the corridor daily;
- Comments from the meeting are being incorporated into a conceptual design, which will hopefully be completed within the next couple of months;
- It is hoped that the final design will be done by spring and construction can begin next summer.
- There are some storm water drainage issues that will be addressed as part of this project. The project is limited by funding constraints to those areas that DPW has identified as the worst.

Mr. Beek addressed questions and comments from the committee and audience. Concerns expressed by the committee were:

- Safety of pedestrians crossing the street between sidewalk segments;
- Plans for reconstruction of the sidewalk on the south side of Main, between the Moody building and the Mills;
- Coordination with the Hotzero project;
- Access to the maker space.

Mr. Beek said he would return to the Committee with the conceptual plans when they are completed.

○ **Safe Routes to School**

- Funding for this project comes through a grant written by the Planning & Development Department;
- The amount of funding was less than what was applied for, resulting in changes to the original project
- New sidewalks will be constructed on the entire south side of Belding Street from North to Hanover and a short segment on Myrtle Street from just west of Mulberry Street;

- The city has hired DuBois and King Engineers to assist in design, permitting, and construction oversight;
- A “local concerns” meeting has been held;
- Surveying and conceptual plans are underway;
- The project also includes new signing, handicapped-accessible ramps, crosswalks and striping;
- This project is the result of School Travel Plans created for the three elementary schools through the Police Department and UVLS Regional Planning Commission;
- Lighting is not part of this project.

Mr. Putnam asked that they review the City Center recommendations for sidewalks and signs. There are three types of sidewalks recommended; cobblestone with granite curbing; concrete with granite curbing; and asphalt with granite curbing. The group discourages asphalt curbing.

Mr. Beek said they were planning on granite and concrete for Main Street if funding allows it. If necessary they will use asphalt sidewalk but will keep the granite curbing, because this is an entrance to the city. If necessary they would resort to a molded concrete curb to save money.

Mr. Putnam asked that the sidewalk be concrete with granite at least from the garage to Opera House Square. Mr. Beek agreed to that.

Mr. Putnam said that due to the limited funding, if they must choose between lights and sidewalks for the rest of the way, he asked that lighting be given priority. Mr. Beek said he would pass that on to the engineers.

There were no other questions or comments.

- **TAP (Transportation Alternatives Program) grant**
Ms. Merrill said that this application has been given highest priority for the region by the UVLS Regional Planning Commission Transportation Committee. The application was written by Mr. Beek and Mr. Williams, Business Development Coordinator. It is not yet funded.

Mr. Beek said NH DOT has combined Safe Routes to School, Scenic Byways, Rails to Trails and other similar programs into one program called TAP for allocation of Federal Highway funds.

Mr. Beek is anticipating a January award date for the application. This project requires a 20% cost match from the city. The estimated cost of this project is \$600,000. The project involves:

- Re-doing the surface of the trail from Pleasant to Chestnut;

- Adding sidewalks on East Street;
- Better defining the parking area on Pleasant Street and adding lighting, signing and pavement;
- Crossings at Chestnut and Broad will have pedestrian-actuated lighting added;
- Rights-of-way purchasing where needed;
- (Mr. Williams added that these improvements are on a section of the trail that ATVs do not use, so their waiver application will not be affected.)
- Erosion issues will be addressed;
- Some culverts will be replaced;
- Ditches will be better defined;
- Drainage issues will be addressed;
- Some brush will be cut to allow in more light.

Comments and questions from the committee included:

- Pedestrian access to the trail from Bond Street and other locations near the Community Center;
- Possible lighting of the trail.

There were no other questions or comments for Mr. Beek.

Motion: To approve as presented by Mr. Beek the Main Street transportation project; the Safe Routes to School project; and the TAP grant application project in their current state of planning and the Committee fully supports these endeavors.

Made by: Mr. Carpenter **Second:** Ms. LeBlanc

Bernie Fulta objected to the word “approve” in the motion.

Motion: To amend the motion by substituting the word “approve” for the word “affirm”.

Made by: Ms. Biggs **Second:** Mr. Carpenter **Vote:**
Unanimous in favor

Vote on the (original) motion: Unanimous in favor of the motion as amended.

III. Old Business

- **City Center Business**

- **Signage – update**

Ms. Merrill distributed a “pre-draft draft” of a sign ordinance. It is a combination of parts of the Woodstock and Keene sign ordinances. She asked members to review it at home and submit comments to deForest before the January meeting. The committee expressed concerns about enforcement, yard sale

signs, and the eventual removal of nonconforming signs. A new draft will be available at the next meeting.

- o **Parking Audit – update**

The data collected by the staff and volunteers has been submitted to the consultants. Recommendations are expected within possibly eight weeks.

Under current parking regulations, the 2nd and 3rd stories of the buildings in the city center can't be built out. It is hoped that the recommendations will assist with this.

Anomalies are acknowledged at the Opera House and Bordon lot near the Common Man.

- **City Center Energy – discussion**

Ms. Merrill said PSNH will be coming to the January meeting to talk about their energy efficiency programs. Also, a representative of the Jordon Institute will be coming to talk about the CPACE program.

Ms. Biggs said she would like to see the city adopt a policy of requiring full cut-off lighting to preserve the night sky. She gave abundant details as to why this is important. She will submit a written document of her findings for review at the next meeting.

- **City Center Neighborhoods – work group**

Ms. Merrill said the work group has met. The Adams were not in attendance, but Ms. Lacasce and Mr. Davis were there as were Mr. Derrick, Ms. Duncan Cooley, Mr. Williams, and Ms. Merrill. Ms. Merrill said she was not certain where the committee's facilitation work and their active engagement in the neighborhood initiative – where that ends and the Habitat (for Humanity) work begins. When Habitat begins raising money for a survey, then the work becomes solely Habitat's and not the committee's. Habitat's work is not the city's work. She is very concerned that confidential information from the Habitat survey would have to become public record if the work group is considered a city subcommittee.

There were mixed opinions from the committee members and there was much discussion.

Motion: The City Center Initiative Committee is acting as a facilitator for non-profit groups coming into the city to make improvements.

Made by: Mr. Carpenter **Second:** Ms. Richmond

Motion: To add, "We do not have a City Center neighborhood group subcommittee" to the motion.

Made by: Ms. Richmond **Second:** Ms. Biggs **Vote:** Mr. Feleen and Ms. Caplan voted “no”; all others voted “aye”. The motion carried.
Vote on the (original) motion as amended: Mr. Feleen voted “no”; all others voted “aye”; the motion carried.

IV. Other

There was no other business discussed.

V. Adjourn

Motion: To adjourn the meeting.

Made by: Mr. Rock **Second:** Mr. Carpenter **Vote:** Unanimous in favor.