

MINUTES OF THE ST. ALBANS DOWNTOWN BOARD
100 North Main Street St. Albans, VT 05478
Meeting Date: April 15, 2014

Approved May 20, 2014

Board Members	Present	Absent
Elizabeth Gamache	x	
Laz Scangas	x	
Jeff Young	x	
Jim Walsh	x to 6:50	
Jeff Bean	x	
Mike Blouin	x	
Sharon Holcomb	x	
Katy Collin	x	
Pauline Cray	x	
John Holzscheiter	x 5:40-6:30	
Mike Mc Carthy Chair	x	
Open Seat		
Dominic Cloud Cty. Mgr.		x

STAFF

Martin Manahan, Director of Economic Development
 Chip Sawyer, Director of Planning & Development
 Robin Morrill, Minute taker

Guest : Rachel Kinney

1. CALL TO ORDER

Meeting called to order by M. McCarthy, Chair at 5:35 P.M.

2. Downtown Board Member Appointment Process

a. Consider candidate recommendations from Organization Cmte.

There are two candidates interested in seats. There is one open seat and the second seat of E. Gamache is open as soon as a replacement can be found. C. Sawyer introduced Rachel Kinney. Vesna Bozac could not be at this meeting, she is the owner of the Traveled Cup. C. Sawyer, E. Gamache, J. Young, & J. Walsh all stated that both candidates were strong candidates. E. Gamache stated how strong this board is, how confident she is, and that she is glad to have the new energy, and that she will remain available should anyone need her. Board members and staff introduced themselves to Rachel Kinney.

b. Make recommendations to City Council (D&V)

Motion by J. Walsh to recommend Rachel Kinney to the City Council for E. Gamache's

seat which will be opening later in 2014 and Vesna Bozac for the open seat with will expire in 2016, Second by L. Scangas with all in favor.

3. Presentation of Conceptual Design for Hudson-to-Hoyt Streetscape Extension Project.

C. Sawyer handed out copies of the 25% conceptual design of the Hudson-to-Hoyt Streetscape extension project. He would like to see this project happen in 2014. The project was approved by the Council on 4/14/14. City council wanted the Downtown boards input on the project. They are hoping to have the 85% conceptual plan in the next month or so. Chip discussed specific areas in the design ie: corner of Congress and main LED streetscape, bumpout moved out, widened east side of main street sidewalk from 5' wide to 10' wide, to extend the look from last years project through the end of the entire streetscape project. 5-7 Parallel parking spaces in front of Ace are changing to 10 diagonal spots. Locations for railings will be planned for and installed after the streetscape project is complete. Trees in front of Ace have been placed strategically to compliment the building. 8 LED lights will replace the two existing lights. The sidewalk will cross Ace driveway and continue by Penney's and a hand rail will also be installed and there will be a new crosswalk. The western side of Main street will continue with the soldier paver feel. J. Walsh asked if you would still be able to make a left turn off from Hoyt onto Main street and Chip said that it had not been changed. The alley between Reboot Computers and State Farm was discussed and the merchants need the alley for access. S. Holcomb asked about the time frame for the project and Chip said that he would really like it to be out for bid in July and possibly have it done in two months. J. Walsh is concerned that this will interrupt the raid. C. Sawyer said that we need to weigh the options and reminded everyone that we were under construction for the previous streetscape project during the Maple Festival. C. Sawyer said he would be hard pressed to say no to the project just because of the raid and feels that there is a way to make it work with all the competing interests involved. If we get the go ahead from VTrans and the Feds to do it this year we would deal with it without too much of a detriment to the Raid event. J. Bean said that he thinks the sidewalk should match the previous streetscape projects sidewalk in a section that it appears smaller on the design presented.

Motion by L. Scangas to approve the 25% conceptual plan for the streetscape project between Hudson St. and Hoyt St., Second by J. Bean with all in favor

4. Authorization for Chair to sign letter of support for Federal Street Project grant. (D&V)

Motion by J. Young to sign the letter of support for the Federal St. Project Grant. Second by J. Walsh with all in favor.

Discussion on \$1.5 Million Tiger Grant for Federal St. Project.

Motion by J. Young to direct the chair to sign a letter endorsing the grant application for the Tiger Grant for the Federal St. Project, second by J. Walsh with all in favor.

5. Consider request from St. Albans Arts Council (D&V)

J. Walsh said that the St. Albans Art Council is looking for a place to land. He expressed his

opinion that the City should have an arts resource and that at the present time there is not a commitment from the City to the Arts. He feels that the economic boost that the Arts can have on the city would be very beneficial. A subcommittee of Promotions or the Downtown Board would be beneficial for everyone. Arts in the Park will take place on May 24th and is a multi media event at Taylor Park.

C. Sawyer informed the board that the Arts Council is not an incorporated nonprofit and that they do not have liability insurance. When staff was presented with the request, they thought that the easiest way to become a board or subcommittee would be to be under the Downtown Board. J. Walsh said to have the City supporting the Arts Council would be beneficial in many aspects, it would also allow them to apply for grants. Arts Council consists of 10 members and they also have an advisory board of community members. J. Young feels that a meeting with the Organization Committee should meet with the Arts Council and then make a recommendation to the City Council at the next Downtown meeting. P. Cray requested that the Festival of Trees be included in Arts Council. J. Walsh said that if they are accepted that they would be interested in taking the Festival of Trees event on. M. McCarthy, requested C. Sawyer to set up a meeting with Organization. May 13th would be the next meeting. C. Sawyer to see if Staff can come up with a proposal to work out some of the details. L. Gamache very impressed with the Arts being a part of the economic development and cultural scene. If coming under the umbrella you must think about accountability measures, ie: members being appointed, publishing minutes, public meetings and activities need to be identified ahead of time so that there are no surprises with the insurance carrier.

Motion to recommend the Organization Committee to consider a proposal from the Arts Council to absorb the Arts Council under the Downtown Board by J. Young second by L. Scangas. J. Walsh abstained, remainder in favor.

6. Project Updates

a. Streetscape Projects

C. Sawyer discussed the panels & green banners, the supplier was saying there would be a delay. Chip was adamant with supplier that they would like them by the Maple Festival and is confident that they will be available for the event. J. Young said it would be a good idea to have costs for banner installation listed somewhere for those that may be interested in having banners put up for specific events. C. Sawyer, said he needs to check references regarding RFP for the hanging planters, once references are checked that will be under way. Regarding the masonry professional for sidewalk and or brick issues, only reference calls to make also. Spring and or break away holders for banners were discussed as solutions for trucks hitting banners at street light locations and supplier is manufacturing something specifically for this issue.

b. Core Lot Development

M. Manahan - The core lot continues to be on schedule. The frost is the issue at this time on the parking garage. Utility work to be done as soon as frost is gone. 300T crane to set up at the end of May. Trucks with panels staging at Fonda thru June, July & August. Windows in State Office Bldg. to start going in on the 1st week of May, and brick work to start the 2nd week of May.

Garage completion date November and State Office Bldg completion date for December are still on schedule. J. Young questioned the pole with the transformers and whether they would be above ground or underground. Marty said that they will remain above ground.

7. **Committee Updates**

a. **Design**

J. Young had a meeting with the architects & engineers have very productive meeting and feels that there will probably need one more meeting. He discussed the issues with the sidewalk in front of JC Penney and keeping in compliance with ADA. He also discussed plowing of the sidewalks, runoff and the placements of drains with the grades of the sidewalks and streets, bike racks, plantings and the planting systems etc.

b. **Economic Restructuring**

J. Walsh discussed three areas of concern; Brochure, Market Study & the French friendly program. Brochure is more website than actual paper, links providing content such as starting a business, process, contacts, signage, zoning issues with a basis for enticing people to feel comfortable bringing their businesses to town and to create business partnerships. We have discussed that we would like to have an inventory of space available both ground and Second floor. Pages for the individual businesses and survey type contact with merchants to see how they would like their businesses represented on the site. Keep aware that we should try to encourage the council to give incentives for businesses whether it be rents, site improvements or equipment for others. J. Bean said that the people coming from across the Canadian border are most likely to speak English, advertising to these folks is the thing that he feels is the most important thing to get them more involved in the community.

c. **Organization**

J. Holzscheiter has volunteered to be the Chair of the Organization Committee. C, Sawyer discussed the process of how the Organization Committee is made up. M. McCarthy discussed the need for a chair other than to run the meeting.

d. **Promotion**

C. Sawyer regarding the website and a new design that they will be presenting and that the site is coming along well. J. Young asked about a target date and Chip said that has not been discussed and that they were focusing on design.

8. **City presence in Maple Festival Parade**

C. Sawyer has reserved a spot that the beginning of the parade. L. Gamache said that the spot was actually reserved and that she had received a call stating that.

9. **Approval of Minutes – D&V**

M. McCarthy stated the times that he and P. Cray had entered the meeting of 3-18-14 were off by one hour.

**Motion by J. Young to approve as noted, second by M. Blouin
S. Holcomb abstained, with the remainder in favor.**

10. Other Business

M. Manahan said that Katy had invited members of the BFA community to this meeting and he had a meeting with Jeff Lyons and Chris Mosca as well as Gary Taylor and they talked about how they are going to be a part of the solution to the downtown parking. They put out a student body survey and we are waiting for the results of that. They currently have 254 spaces on campus, and only 2 are available for student parking. Parking enforcement is now on the street. The city is coming up with a plan, looking at changing the parking times on main street from 2.5 hours to 90 minutes unless parking in front of the park. Also the possibility of parking passes to give to the merchants so they can give a ticked customer a pass to waive the fee of the ticket. Discussion on spaces where people are parking yet they are not in an actual parking spot and the possibility of striping those spots so that those parking there would know that they are not legal parking spaces or make it a legal parking space.

11. **Public Comment**

No public comment

12. **Adjourn**

Motion to adjourn at 7:00 by J. Young, second by M. Blouin with all in favor.