

MEETING MINUTES
ST. ALBANS CITY DOWNTOWN BOARD
& ST. ALBANS FOR THE FUTURE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 20, 2012

5:30 PM
ST. ALBANS CITY HALL
100 NORTH MAIN STREET

APPROVED: DECEMBER 18, 2012

Board Members Present:

Elizabeth Gamache (Chair), Jeff Bean, Mike Blouin, Katy Collin, Peter Ford, Tim Hawkins, John Holzscheiter, Sandy Mayotte, and Jeff Young.

Board Members Absent:

Dominic Cloud (non-voting), Mike McCarthy, Laz Scangas, Jim Walsh,.

Staff Present: Chip Sawyer.

Public Present: Henry Demar.

1. Call to Order

Chair Liz Gamache called the meeting to order at 5:37 PM.

2. Downtown Program Update

Chip Sawyer asked if there were any questions about the program update. Jeff Bean asked questions about schedule for installing lights on the finished block of the Downtown Streetscape Project.

3. Update on financial status of St. Albans for the Future

Sandy Mayotte reported that there were no changes to the SAFF bank account.

4. Henry Demar – Downtown accessibility issues

Liz Gamache asked that guest Henry Demar speak on the issue of accessibility for Downtown businesses. Henry reported that many businesses are not accessibility to people with special mobility needs and that funds exist for making necessary accommodations. He reported that Leunig's and Ken's Pizza in Burlington had recently made accommodations and could be good examples. He asked that the Downtown Program work with property owners and merchants to make accommodations possible or at least be more accommodating with the portable ramp solutions that do exist at many businesses now. One item would be to look into grants.

Mike Blouin mentioned that there had been a ramp initiative in the past and wondered how many still existed. Henry stated that he is generally in favor of ramps and alert buttons that let the person outside know that a staffmember is on the way to accommodate them. But sometimes he has had to wait for unreasonable amounts of time.

Liz asked Henry his opinion of how the City was doing in this arena, including the Streetscape Project. Henry responded that he felt Streetscape should have raised the sidewalks in general to eliminate business step-ups. Chip Sawyer provided some background information on why that wasn't the case with the current project.

Liz directed City Staff to prepare a summary of accessibility issues, challenges, funds available, ways to raise awareness, and regulatory issues for the January meeting.

Jeff Bean mentioned that perhaps this could be the subject of a City grant program that matches federal funds.

5. Discuss storefront recruiting and stakeholder meeting on November 27

Chip Sawyer gave a general overview of the purpose and agenda of the scheduled 11/27 Downtown Stakeholder's meeting. Sandy Mayotte stated that she felt the announcement of the meeting helped to engender a sense of partnership Downtown.

6. Committee Updates

Motion by Tim Hawkins to table committee updates, due to time needs and lack of pressing updates. Seconded by John Holzscheiter and approved by unanimous vote.

7. Project Updates

Chip Sawyer reiterated project updated included in the submitted program report.

8. Update on Board appointment process

Chip Sawyer reported that there were 4 expiring Downtown Board terms and several interested candidates, including all 4 expiring members. The Board appointment process would be followed with an Organization Committee meeting, then Downtown Board recommendations and then a City Council vote in January.

9. Approval of Minutes – D&V

Motion by Tim Hawkins to approve the minutes of the October 16 Downtown Board meeting, as submitted. Seconded by John Holzscheiter with all voting in approval, excepting abstentions from Mike Blouin, Katy Collin, Sandy Mayotte and John Holzscheiter.

10. Other Business

Jeff Bean commented on the design concepts included as part of the recent RFP to design the core lot parking garage and asked if the Parking Committee should be reconvened. Tim Hawkins countered that the scope of that original process had been to discuss parking program needs and direction and not dive into fee structures or design details. That was for the City Council to decide.

Liz Gamache stated that an updated parking situation could be referred to the Downtown Board in the future, but that timing is important, and delay could be detrimental.

11. Public Comment

Henry Demar asked if a description of the Downtown Board appointment opportunity could be forwarded to him.

Jeff Young review the schedule of upcoming Festival of Trees events Downtown.

12. Adjourn

Motion by Tim Hawkins to adjourn at 6:30 PM. Seconded by Mike Blouin and approved unanimously.