

***Town of York ~ Village Study Committee
Meeting Minutes ~ February 4, 2016
York Public Library ~ Wheeler Room***

Present: Ron McAllister, Stu Dawson, Gloria Gustafson, Chris Hartwell, Joel Lefever,
Robert Palmer, Steve Pelletier, Scott Stevens, Dylan Smith, Pete Smith, Lew Stowe

Absent: Toni DeSoto, Dean Lessard

Guest: Deborah McDermott, Seacoast News

1. Chairman Ron McAllister called the meeting to order at 8:36am.
2. Meeting minutes for January 21st were approved with a correction to show that Stu Dawson had attended the meeting.
3. Ron informed the group that he had written the grant request to the Small Business Revolution as he had promised at our last meeting. If successful, this could result in a \$500,000 grant to support our revitalization activities.
4. Ron noted that he got a phone call from Ted Little volunteering himself and David Chase to help us educate the voters about our two referendum articles on the May ballot. Given their backgrounds, local contacts and political savvy, the committee was very excited about including them in the Buzz sub-committee's efforts. To this point, Robert suggested that we need "all hands on deck" for this educational effort and our entire committee should be actively involved, especially in regard to raising funds.
5. Our next challenge is organizing this fund-raising effort to cover the expenses of our educational program. This will require setting up a bank account and designating someone to act as treasurer to oversee it. Also, we should create a basic budget to help us establish our funding goals and track results. It was suggested that the account should be named "Friends of York Village."
6. Ron expressed concern that we understand what it means when someone says they "support" the village revitalization effort and that their intentions are documented. Robert suggested that we contact attorney Jim Bartlett, who has developed a statement of support for donors to sign during a previous fund-raising effort. Ron will follow-up with Jim.
7. The group debated whether the statement of support should be specific about each of the referendum items, or not. One is asking for about \$400,000 in order to obtain about \$3.2 million in federal and state matching funds. The other is a commitment to a capital expense of \$1 million of York funds. The overarching question is about support for the village Master Plan. Given that the group appeared to be equally divided on how specific the statement should be, Ron offered to draft a few samples for review at our next meeting.
8. One open question is whether we should include others beyond village business owners in our educational program and fund-raising activities or not.
9. Lew explained his plans regarding his approach to Cumberland Farms to review how the village revitalization effort would impact them, and what plans they currently have to revise their property. He stated that their philosophy seems to be "tell us what you want." Robert questioned whether Lew's activities should be part of our committee's responsibilities. Dylan noted that we should focus on how our plans for the "public realm" will impact them and just ask them to share any plans they have for their "private realm."

10. The group discussed several aspects of how the parking issues created by the Master Plan will be resolved in the future, including the potential for the town to purchase the Hodgin lot, the current planning for town hall campus improvements, the available town land between the Ice house and Coventry Hall, and the potential for acquisition of the vacant lot at the corner of Long Sands and Woodbridge roads.
11. Gloria noted that every business that she has talked with is very concerned about how long the construction will take and how it will impact their business. Pete commented that the answer Dean has provided in the past is that construction will be phased in such a way that only a small section of the roadway and sidewalks will be worked on at any given time, and each section under construction will have a clear transition point with the abutting sections not under construction.
12. Our next regular meeting will be at 8:30am on Thursday, February 18th at the York Public Library.

Meeting adjourned at 9:40am

Respectfully submitted,

Peter Smith, Secretary