

**Town Center and Library Committee
Minutes April 27, 2023**

Present: Josh Arneson, Laurie Dana, Jeff Forward, Linda Parent, Amy Wardwell,

Architects: Andrew McCullough John Hemmelgarn; **Grant Consultant** Diane Meyerhoff

Community Member: Karen Yaggy

I. Welcome and Public Comment - None

II. Additions or Deletions to Agenda

Laurie added Library information pertinent to site design.

Jeff also brought up the idea of how to make a request of the ARPA Committee and wondered if simply requesting funds for solar panels would be simpler. The architects stated that they do not believe that solar panels can go on the main Town Center roof but might be placed on the Post Office addition. More investigation by structural engineers is needed and this was in the next steps planned by Black River.

II. Items for Presentation or Discussion with those present

a) Discussion of Town Center renovation design and bond vote schedule

There was extensive discussion of the schedule and remaining work that needs to be done by both Town and Architects if we are to meet a November 2023 Bond Vote schedule. In reviewing the legal requirements & time needed to complete them it is clear that it will take about 2 months from the time the Bond Vote language is drafted and sent to the town attorney to the actual date of a Bond Vote. Review by the Town Attorney is required by the Bond Bank. Selectboard approval of both the draft language and any changes made by the Town Attorney will be needed in order to prepare for a vote. Andrew stated that there are about 12 weeks of work from now through cost estimating for them, once the big issues around space for police & for tenants are resolved.

A plan for a presentation to the Selectboard at their May 15 meeting was created which would require about 30 minutes with the first 10-15 minutes a presentation by the architects about the project thus far and the initial design proposal being made. There will be a site plan based on the draft design recommendation as part of that presentation as well as an estimated cost range.

In order to prepare for this, the architects will meet with Town Manager, Town Clerk, Planning & Zoning staff and any other staff to confirm the draft design for Town Offices. Josh will try to reach out to Postmistress to see if they can meet with her at that time to review the plans and clarify any next steps needed with USPS. This meeting should take place early in May.

There was also a discussion of how to engage the public in the next steps of this process and how this public engagement would move forward. There is definitely an opportunity, following the Selectboard meeting, for members of this committee to make presentations to various constituencies such as the Library Trustees, Senior Center Board and/or members, Historical Society, or to hold a general public meeting using these documents.

b) Discussion of grants

Our REIT Funded grant consultant, Diane Meyerhoff, joined us to review the document she has developed which includes a basic project statement that can be used as the basis for future grant application. Amy and Laurie will review this and forward comments to Diane. She also

included an extensive review of potential grantors to contact and/or research. The document was very thorough and contained a lot of specific information. In reviewing grant requirements, it became clear that we should pursue an Environmental Review (106 review) as this is a requirement for State and Federal Grants. Laurie mentioned that State ACCD grants also require review by an ADA Consultant. Jeff will speak with Black River about whether they can arrange for these. Several people have commented that this can take a while as there are specific contractors for each of these. Diane also recommended adding the Agency of Natural Resources to the list of potential grants.

Through our Preservation Trust of Vermont (PTV) Field Representative, we have an offer from Ben Doyle (the ED and Richmond Resident) to convene a funders' conference for the project. This would be one meeting with representatives from funders including, but not limited to, PTV, State Historic Preservation, State ACCD, USDA, and others. Diane & Jeff suggested adding VEIC and possibly VEDA. Laurie will reach out to Ben to start this process and learn more about scheduling. The materials being presented at the May 15 meeting will be a good start and this could be an in-person meeting for those able to attend with a zoom option to reach as many as possible. Diane thought that we might show the video of the presentation from the Selectboard meeting if it seems good. Laurie will explore whether this could or should be a public meeting.

c) Approval of April 13, 2023 meeting minutes

Laurie moved to approve the minutes from 4/13/23 and Amy seconded. Approved unanimously.

d) Other business

Laurie shared a communication from Jennifer Esser, Library staff member, that she had reached out to Stephanie Hurley who teaches a landscape design class at UVM to engage her students in a design for the library's "back yard." After some discussion, it was felt that there was not a good way to engage students in this project. Jeff commented that he thinks the students are already involved in the Rec Committee's Volunteers Green redesign.

Laurie also mentioned that the Library is participating in a Sustainable Libraries effort and there are recommendations related to Landscape Design as they relate to Sustainability. Laurie will get these and forward to John and Andrew. Jeff observed that, while we are not at the point of landscape specifics yet there are several community members with strong opinions about this issue. Laurie will get back to Jennifer about these decisions.

e) Items for next agenda – May 11 meeting

Review documents/plans for May 15 Selectboard presentation

Report back on Funders Conference, next steps

Architects report back on design meetings with Town Staff & USPS

8:00 PM IV. Adjourn