

**Meeting Minutes for Hardwick Downtown Commission
Front Seat Coffee
Monday, April 18, 2022, 9 a.m.**

Present: Shari Cornish, Heather Carrington, Gary Michaels, Sandy Scott, Bethany Dunbar, Katie Tandy, Emily Hershberger, Tobin Porter

- Motion to approve minutes from January, February, and March meetings by Gary; seconded by Bethany.
- Heather Carrington introduced - first time meeting in-person!
- Review Hardwick contact list ("key stakeholders"), suggestions made; Bethany will turn this into a Google spreadsheet that can be shared and updated with new contacts as they come up.
 - An intern from Cornell will be working for the Town Manager this summer, and the town will soon hire a part-time Community Development Coordinator; both of these people will be able to work on Downtown Commission projects.
- Shari will look into available studies on Hardwick to give Heather more background info - Alison Lowe should have this information.
- At our next meeting, Heather will present her progress to date, which will include her understanding of the town's strength's, weaknesses, and vision, based on what she has heard from key stakeholders.
 - Opie & Shari will take Heather for a site visit of the downtown, showing key locations, issues, and challenges.

Banners: The second set of banners is coming together (waiting for artwork from some organizations). The goal is to have them printed and hung before Spring Festival.

Winter Placemaking Grant (AARP) - The electrician will begin wiring poles April 25. This cost came in under the original bid, so there may be extra money to purchase lights to replace those damaged by a truck over the winter.

- Shari needs a photo of the colored lights to include in her final report to AARP.

EV Charging Stations: Three stations to be installed - via a state-funded program - at Buffalo Mountain Market.

- Hardwick Electric Company (HEC) is planning to charge a fee for use of charging stations that other electric companies (such as Green Mountain Power) are waiving, which will make charging in Hardwick more expensive than anywhere else in VT.

- The Select Board is encouraging HEC to reconsider this fee, and residents are welcome to attend HEC meetings, where they can voice their opinions on this matter.
- Emily will speak to the Market's project manager about this issue.

Co-op Transition: The Co-op/Buffalo Mountain Market hopes to make the final move to its new location in mid to late May.

- There are four parties interested in purchasing the Co-op building on Main Street, and the Co-op has chosen to take a first-come approach. Nora DeMuth (Flower Basket) is the first party to be given consideration as a buyer.

Downtown Paving: The Planning commission did a study around pedestrian safety and presented their findings to the Select Board. The board approved most of the recommendations for changing crosswalk patterns downtown, but order delays and cancellations resulted in the town not having the paint recommended for use on the street. On top of that, there is word that the paving project - originally planned for this fall - will actually begin in May.

- The timeline for the paving project is unknown.
- The majority of the work is meant to take place at night.
- Work will continue east on Rte. 15, to Rte. 16.
- Heather suggests adding more blinking lights at crosswalks; Shari says that one will be installed near Poulin's.

Other Business

- The town has applied to be nominated for an appropriation of federal funds (\$1K) toward a water/sewer project; this would cover the \$1K it is expected to go over original budget.
- The Yellow Barn project has received a quote for \$19K, well over the original bid amount. Alison Lowe is working on this project.
- The pedestrian bridge project still needs a new architect.
 - SE Group of Burlington is currently looking it over; a design is needed before the project can go out for bid. Funding is in place, but as noted above, construction prices are going up.

Meeting adjourned at 9:55.

Next meeting will be Monday, May 16, at 9 a.m. at Front Seat/Birdsong.