

Meeting Minutes for Hardwick Downtown Commission
Zoom meeting
Monday, July 18, 2022

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

Meeting called to order at 9:05 a.m.

Minutes from June meeting approved (motion by Gary, seconded by Bethany).

Item #1 - Hardwick Progress Report, presented by Heather *See Attachments*

- Heather is proposing that we add certain municipally owned properties to the area being proposed for Downtown Designation.
- Her proposed map includes both sides of the street where possible, in order to maintain continuity in landscaping/streetscaping.
- Atkins Field is within a 5 minute walk of central downtown, and this is on par with other downtown areas, giving us a solid argument to include it.
- Heather has done extensive analysis to show that our proposed downtown area is well aligned with other, previously approved, designated downtowns.
- Assets, Challenges, Opportunities, and Future Direction:
 - The main points here flow across the chart - high traffic volume, traffic patterns, and challenges to navigating downtown; visual cues for guiding drivers, bikers, and pedestrians to and through downtown; community organization and involvement; connecting with LVRT; and improving housing development and availability. All of these are aspects of our town that are established or offer opportunity to improve and grow.
- Comments: There is a need to include the town garage (also the garage for the EMT crew and vehicles) in order to work toward necessary improvements.
 - The garage may, eventually, need to be moved to a new location, but the current lot could still be leveraged if it is included in the downtown map.
- Priority: Launch a PR/Education Campaign to shift perceptions of Hardwick, both internally and externally. Many established “truths” about Hardwick are not based in factual data. (e.g. It is generally thought that Hardwick is a low-income town, but census data shows that the median income for Hardwick is higher than that of surrounding towns.)

Heather will make her presentation to the Select Board at their regular meeting on Thursday, August 4, at 6 p.m. Downtown Commission members are encouraged to attend to support her proposal to move forward with our plans for applying for Downtown Designation.

Item #2 - Updates

- The Downtown Commission received \$10,000 in ARPA funds from the Select Board, thanks to Shari’s application in May.
- Updates about Co-op move and renovation to bank building.
- Shari would like to send a letter of support for the NEK Chamber of Commerce to apply for NEK Funds in order to update the Heart of Vermont website. Though the Heart of Vermont Chamber of Commerce disbanded and the website has not been updated in

several years, it remains a highly traffic site and could be an asset for businesses in our area, whether or not they are Chamber members.

- Katie motions to approve the letter, Tobin seconds. Approval granted.

Meeting adjourned at 10:03 a.m.

Next meeting to be held Monday, August 15, 9 a.m., at Birdsong.

*Attachments:

[2022.7.1 Hardwick Progress Report v.2](#)

[NEK Chamber Support LTR](#)