

Meeting minutes for Hardwick Downtown Commission Monday, August 15, 2022

Present: Shari Cornish, Tracy Martin, Bethany Dunbar, Tobin Porter, Emily Herschberger, Katie Tandy.

Called to order 9:05. Minutes from July meeting approved. Tobin motion, Emily second

Item#1 Introduction Tracy Martin. Hardwick's new Community Development Coordinator and future roll in working with Downtown Commission. Most recently was the section chief for Historic Sites for state of Vermont, did that for 7 years.

Tracy is still feeling new and a bit overwhelmed by everything happening in Hardwick. Her office is in the municipal building. The job has started with going to a lot of meeting. A lot of the work relates to DownTown. Opie is her boss. She is excited and has lots of relevant background.

Item#2 Heather's presentation to the selectboard August 4: went well, the board seems supportive. Did not have a lot of big questions: mainly a couple about the boundaries, can Hazen and the Health Center be included in the Downtown map? Heather's analysis was well done and fascinating.

Item#3 Downtown business update.

- Downtown Commission was awarded \$10,000, Shari is hopeful to make a second application.
- Swinging bridge: Opie is meeting with new architects. Due to have two designs to consider by the end of August with a public participation factor for making the decision
- Bemis building restoration: it has been really hard on Galaxy Bookshop and might not be done until the holidays or later. Can the Downtown commission help Galaxy somehow? A pop up event? Ordering online? Ordering online is still possible, the books can be picked up at Birdsong.
- Flower Basket is closing in early Sept.
- Bank building has been bought (along with Richard's Citgo) by Jimmy Goldsmith of Blue Donkey. Food truck permit suggest they might do that fairly soon.
- General discussion of housing opportunities on town properties
- Hardwick might be able to get a Neighborhood Development Area (residential designation that could help developers similar to the downtown designation. Fights against sprawl, 9 communities have them so far (info. From Tracy)
- Fall events: Maybe co-op grand opening and Flower Basket combo? Combine with Open Studio?
- Atkins Field event on Friday had a successful turnout (more than 400 I don't have the exact number- BD) Next year maybe could have things happening in downtown at the same time? This event coincides with Open Farm Week around Vermont.
- Tracy and Shari will go to a downtown retreat in Grand Isle at the Lake House September 20 and 21. if anyone else is interested let them know.

Date of next meeting is September 19 at 9 a.m.