

Meeting minutes for Hardwick Downtown Commission
Monday, September 19, 2022
Birdsong Beer & Wine, 9 a.m.

Present: Emily Hershberger, Shari Cornish, Katie Tandy, Sandy Scott, Tobin Porter, Gary Michaels, Nora DeMuth, Sally Anstey

Tobin motioned to approve minutes of previous meeting; Emily seconded.

Item #1: Action items from Heather Carrington's memo

- Name for downtown non-profit organization
 - Tobin will share document with our previous brainstorming session & Emily will create a word cloud to highlight important ideas & words.
- Changes to boundary map
 - Changes include removing Hazen Union and adding in the Health Center and dentist office.
 - Will include Atkins Field and swinging bridge (with some of parking area in front of Daniels Building); will not include hotel.
 - Commission agrees to give preliminary approval, with final approval contingent upon viewing map.
- Discussion of organizational structure for downtown non-profit
 - There are questions about how board members will be appointed; in Heather's document, it is indicated that the Select Board would appoint members, but the downtown organization should be separate from the Select Board.
 - There will be a need to advertise for board members, so that it remains open to new members and ideas, rather than becoming closed off based on the current board.
 - Mission statement: Shari will draft three options for review by email
 - Looking over other downtown organizations' mission statements, certain words stood out: Community, Cultural, Art, Vibrant/Vitality.
 - Short, clear statements are most appealing (i.e. Bristol Core - "To bring people together to keep Bristol vibrant, celebrate its history and plan for its future.")
 - Review of timeline set out by Heather
 - When will 501(c)(3) status occur?
 - Directors can stand as-is, as long as the current commissioners opt to continue as board members.
 - *Note from June 15, 2021 meeting: officers are:*
 - *Shari Cornish, Chair*
 - *Bethany Dunbar, Vice-Chair*
 - *Gary Michaels, Treasurer*
 - *Sandy Scott, Secretary*

Item #2: Pedestrian bridge update

- The site visit by the new architect & landscape designer has been postponed.
- The VOREC grant will cover park design on either end of the bridge.
- SE Group is contracted to design bridge and park.
- Two community open houses are planned for October (dates TBA) - discussion of design, abutment structure, and budget.

- The hope is to begin construction in spring of 2023.

Item #3 AWARE Fall Craft Fair

- AWARE has this in hand - commissioners encouraged to support and promote event.
- Perhaps next year the Downtown Board might be more involved and be able to coordinate more events to happen in conjunction with the craft fair.

Item #4: Downtown updates

- The Flower Basket has had to extend the closing date on the purchase of the Co-op building, but Nora hopes to move in as scheduled with Co-op Board approval.
- EV charging stations in town are on hold - Opie is working on this project.
 - Hardwick Electric has not prioritized charging stations, and it has been difficult to secure a location. The Buffalo Mountain Market's parking lot is no longer an option, as parking is full to overflowing.

Next meeting will be held one week early, in order to accommodate Heather's meeting with the Select Board - Monday, October 10, 2022, 9 a.m. location, Birdsong with Zoom option available.