

Infrastructure Committee Meeting Minutes

March 28, 2017

6:00PM

Members present: Diane Ifkovic, Kate Anderson, Lynne Cooper, Peter Sonski, Sean Moriarty, Patrick Pinnell, Mike O'Brien

Also present: Lizz Milardo, Liz Glidden

Members absent: Mike Fortuna

1. Call Meeting to Order

Selectwoman Milardo called the meeting to order at 6:02 P.M.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

The pledge of allegiance was recited.

3. Approval of Agenda

Sean Moriarty inquired if public comment could be added to the agenda. Selectman Milardo responded it can be added to the agenda once the positions have been nominated/appointed.

4. Election of Chairman, Vice Chairman, and Secretary

There was brief discussion about nominating members. Kate Anderson motioned to elect Mike Fortuna as Chairman; Peter Sonski second. Sean Moriarty motioned to elect Lynne Cooper as Vice Chairman; Peter Sonski second. Peter Sonski motioned to elect Kate Anderson as Secretary; Lynne Cooper second. Selectman Milardo noted she would speak to Mike Fortuna (who was absent from the meeting) about his nomination and willingness to proceed.

5. Discussion of Committee's Mission Statement and Scope of Work

Discussion of the committee's mission statement scope of work covered a variety of topics.

Liz Glidden opened the discussion. The Town submitted for a BAR (Brownfields Area-Wide Revitalization) Planning Grant on March 27 for ~\$165,000. The grant could cover topics such as infrastructure, branding/marketing, tourism, the River, pedestrian plan, HES, TIFs, etc. Liz stated the Infrastructure Committee would act as a steering committee for the grant if awarded. Liz noted the Infrastructure Committee could oversee the implementation of planning and grant administration specific to infrastructure.

Points raised by Patrick Pinnell included town-wide opportunities, small business support, highway infrastructure (speed limits), and downtown-centric projects vs. town-wide projects.

Sean Moriarty questioned if the committee's focus is just the Village Center or town-wide. Selectman Milardo responded that the committee can start with the economic centers. Tylerville has a lot of moving parts right now; Higganum has uncertain changes coming and needs more attention. Selectman Milardo noted both village centers have empty spaces and that the focus on Higganum Village does not and should not exclude other areas, and that a prioritized list should be developed.

Sean Moriarty noted the committee's mission statement should be a balance between being too narrow and too broad. Liz Glidden proposed defining what infrastructure is. Liz's examples included broadband, fiber networks, sustainability, wastewater, traffic/roads. Patrick Pinnell equated infrastructure as the "actions" or "verbs" happening in town.

Lynne Cooper moved the discussion to start defining what the committee is or will be working on. What is meant by infrastructure? How can it impact Higganum and Tylerville? General discussion of different components of infrastructure followed. These include alternative power sources, wastewater, networks, lighting, roads, sidewalks, parking.

Peter Sonski inquired about clarifying the role of the committee. Is the committee advisory only? Selectman Milardo confirmed the committee is an advisory board to the BOS. Selectman Milardo envisions the committee putting together a plan that identifies what the town is lacking, what does the town need (e.g. wastewater, parking), what's available to help the town grow, how can we connect disjointed pieces (Cove, HES, etc.), while making sense of all available information stored in many places. Sean Moriarty reaffirmed the intent of the group is assess infrastructure needs and make recommendations, but with no authority to make decisions. Patrick Pinnell noted some matters can fall between committees, and Sean Moriarty mentioned having liaisons between committees.

At this point, Lynne Cooper summarized what had been discussed so far. The committee is advisory and will provide suggestions/advice to the BOS. The committee will research what exists, compile information, assess what we believe is the right way to handle while focusing on developing vibrant economic centers. Lynne talked about developing a plan to achieve these items and what are specific topics we want to address. Patrick Pinnell noted this will be the management and intercorrelation of various components and not to exclude residential (e.g. Scovill). Liz Glidden commented she wasn't sure if "plan" was the right word and "action items" might be a better term for what the group wants to achieve. A brief discussion about the future of HES entailed.

Lynne Cooper summarized that the committee will develop a set of actions and activities that align to promote development in Higganum as a vibrant economic center. Kate Anderson mentioned she felt including the POCD in the committee's mission statement was important and that EDC had just written a mission statement that mentioned the POCD.

A member of the public inquired if he could ask a question, and the group agreed. The question was raised if the committee will be assessing population density and can it handle/support increased businesses? Lynne Cooper mentioned the recently adopted POCD encourages Haddam as a destination drawing tourism to town that will also support the businesses and the POCD has data to support. General discussion followed.

Closing/Action Items: Lynne Cooper will send versions of mission statement for the committee to review and develop thoughts. Sean Moriarty requested public comment be added to the next meeting agenda. Selectman Milardo noted meetings will be the 3rd Thursday of every month.

6. Adjournment

Sean Moriarty motioned to adjourn. Mike O'Brian second.