

11-1-18

Downtown Committee Meeting Minutes

Downtown Committee Meeting 3: Town Facilities & Capital Improvements Part II

5-6pm

Town Office, Upstairs Meeting Room

Attending: Betsy Hopkins, Elin Elisofin, Kris Davidson, Margaret Qualey, David Wylie, Gabe McPhail, Shelby Smith *Absent:* John Wasielewski, Holly Sault, Kathy Warren, Hooper Brooks

5pm Start

HOUSEKEEPING

Gabe reviewed the framework, mission, guidelines, purpose, format and process including:

Goal Statement

Maintaining our economic vitality while sustaining the year-round community is both our primary concern and goal.

Sustainability

“Meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs...” Sustainability is multi-layered: Environmental, Economic, Cultural, Civic

VH Sustainability

Previously-identified VH Values that define sustainability:

- Supports and strengthens our year-round community
- Values our heritage (lobstering and independence)
- Sustains island diversity, including people of all ages
- Enhances our sense of community and civic engagement
- Protects the island’s natural resources and beauty
- Prioritizes small, locally owned and home businesses
- Includes a thriving Main Street

3 Economies

- Fisheries/Marine
- Tourism
- Year-round

Ongoing Considerations

[*See 10-18-18 Minutes for details*](#)

Geographic Scope

Ferry Terminal to Library

Maps

On walls of room for reference

Main Themes

- Highest and best use
- Flexibility and accessibility
- Safety
- Age friendly
- Nothing to negatively impact working waterfront
- Low impact tourism

- Year round “vibrancy”

Meeting Purpose

Working within our framework, generate questions, thoughts and suggestions around specific projects and considerations involving Town Facilities and Capital Improvements that could be future possibilities.

Format & Process

1. Review definitions concepts and considerations. What’s missing?
2. Identify what we need to know, all the questions that come up.
3. If suggestions for addressing questions are easy to identify, get them up there!

DISCUSSION:

Town Facilities & Capital Improvements Part II

Part II of the conversation about Town Facilities and Capital Improvements focused on the concepts, considerations, and questions listed below.

Concepts - <i>What’s motivating us?</i>	Considerations- <i>What do we want to plan for / consider?</i>	Questions- <i>What do we need to know or decide?</i>
Safe, efficient, and easy movement of people in and through downtown	Streets (Complete?)	Do we want to encourage more use of bikes in the downtown corridor? Other areas? What would that require for CIPs? Are there currently any unsafe zones for pedestrians on Main St? Can/should we address that issue? Would we want to encourage more taxi, ride share, or public transit options? If so, what would they need along Main St. for capital improvements?
Support fisheries diversification Carvers pond access-tourism, fishery Reduce flood insurance	Backside Development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Shared use on Backside-three economies share ● Aquaculture- kelp lines ● Flood mitigation through wetland construction ● FEMA maps 	How do we plan for the three main economies to have shared use of the Backside area? Public access points? Will there be more kelp lines or shellfish farms in the pond in the future? Would this type of flood mitigation work? Permissible? Is/will the town pay to contest FEMA maps? Are there examples of towns offering some sort of subsidy to flood insurance that satisfies mortgage requirements?
Wayfinding and encouraging higher-value tourism	Signage	Should all Town facilities and wayfinding/signs look the same, with graphic standards? Should there be historic/heritage site wayfinding?
Highest and best use of facilities	Town Parking Lots Flea Market area Buildings Public Outdoor	How much parking is actually needed within the Downtown area (for retail, services, housing, events, dock access)? Do we need outdoor gathering spaces, or should we focus on inside locations?

	Spaces/Parks	Where could the Flea Market go if that field wasn't available? Should it be at a public area? Parking lot? Park? Should the Town purchase more lots/spaces for public outdoor space/parks/access? Would we ever want Town offices shifted to a downtown Main St location?
--	---------------------	---

The information generated during this conversation is represented below in relation to our ongoing considerations.

	Zoning, Code, Ordinances
	<i>What should be retained, what should be altered? Added?</i>
General Comments	(for Parking conversation: Need more parking downtown Issues with parking at flea market)
Complete Streets	Too dangerous to ride bikes on sidewalk down Main St. – walk bikes only Need space on street though – too crowded on street Currently no bikes allowed on sidewalks, but not enforced; 1/no visible signs Cyclists are considered vehicles rather than pedestrians
Backside Dev.	DART recommends bike/pedestrian traffic out behind Main St., but a lot of commercial activity there and would not be safe for public to be back there as it is now Must be considered by building/property owners in the area Needs to be considered by DEP Will have to be made bigger back there because there really isn't much space now “Make bigger” meaning a wetland or actually filling in land? More earth because there isn't enough Seems like a HUGE undertaking
Signage	Needs to be consistent throughout town Need to be specific to the town of VH / VH brand Signage could be answer to bike parking in areas Yes– wayfinding signs Traffic Calming – speed limit signs
Town Lots, Spaces, etc.	Potential with development behind the fire station? Too steep Should town acquire more land? – flea market field?

	Broadband
	<i>Downtown infrastructure should include cable for future BB use</i>

Public BB?	Town should consider “free” public BB access
-------------------	--

	SLR
	<i>Improvements and changes must consider Sea Level Rise per the recs. SLR Committee</i>
Backside Dev.	Flood mitigation wetlands an option, but HUGE regulatory obstacles to overcome - even worth trying?

	Community, Cultural, Functional
	<i>Current and future</i>
Complete Streets	<p>Putting bike lane in plan could “sink” whole idea of complete streets “A designated pathway” for bikes, not necessarily a bike lane Bike lanes part of complete streets–NOT high priority but definitely should be a consideration for engineers Bike lane could go from Ferry to Bank, but could we fit bike lanes downtown? Remove parking in front of businesses? NO – Would be difficult for elders and physically disabled to access businesses with no street side parking</p> <p>Unsafe zones for pedestrians – currently anywhere that there is crossing, specifically when the sidewalk/pedestrian lane switches sides of the road Creating a passenger lane directly from ferry terminal is more of a priority for safety reasons</p> <p>Need for Traffic calming – ferry terminal, library Speed tables (would plow take it out?) Let engineers give some options on how to calm traffic down to increase safety</p>
Backside Dev.	<p>Planners saw many opportunities in Net Factory space Good short term backside development plan– Some green space to sit and look out at water Can be the start to a long-term solution for that area “Well defined and well designed” Could be multi use green space – flea market could be there which would have more space for parking “Net factory” – 3rd floor space of that building could be ground floor space for access to library</p>
Signage	<p>Better signage is necessary Town Design/Brand – something true to VH Could compliment a walking tour that may be created in future through Chamber – partner with Chamber? Signs tend to get stolen. Structural design to prevent this?</p>

	Paint on the road could make a big difference for pedestrian safety
Town Lots, Spaces, etc.	<p>Need more space for people to sit along Main St.</p> <p>Look at transitions rather than destinations throughout downtown (resting space from ferry to downtown - across from Candy Co? John W's property?)</p> <p>Potential green space by "theatre" which is part of Indiana's estate</p> <p>Town to have any connection with Robert Indiana's estate and plan?</p> <p>Asking to use that temporarily could be an insert into a long term more formal connection</p>

	Historical
	<i>What historical aspects are relevant/ essential?</i>
Signage	Historic wayfinding

	Values Alignment
	<i>Do all recommendations align with Sustainable VH Values?</i>
Complete Streets	<p>Want to encourage and provide safe bike riding options for YR community</p> <p>Would benefit all 3 economies – safe for pedestrians, accommodate commercial zone, provide safe option for bikes</p>
Backside Dev.	No commercial kelp activity in Carvers pond currently - launching access made available, acquire right of way?

This information will be referenced in upcoming discussions and will lay the foundation for recommendations and further research.

6pm Meeting Adjourned

View the PDF powerpoint for this meeting by [clicking HERE.](#)