

11-8-18

Downtown Committee Meeting Minutes

Downtown Committee Meeting 4: Housing, Parking, Transportation Part I

5-6pm

Town Office, Upstairs Meeting Room

Attending: Betsy Hopkins, Kris Davidson, Margaret Qualey, David Wylie, Gabe McPhail, Andy Dorr, George Kendrick, Hooper Brooks (virtually), Shelby Smith *Absent:* John Wasielewski, Holly Sault, Kathy Warren, Elin Elisofin

5pm Start

HOUSEKEEPING

Gabe reviewed the framework, mission, guidelines, purpose, format and process. *See 11-1-18 Minutes FMI.*

DISCUSSION:

Housing, Parking, Transportation Part I

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

Concepts - What's motivating us?	Considerations- What do we want to plan for / consider?	Questions- What do we need to know or decide?
Balance 3 Economies Highest and Best use of current parking?	Parking More Downtown Net Factory Property and Parking? Bike Parking Parking for Housing Access to Carvers from Backside Flea Market area Land and Float parking restrictions and permits	Should parking be the primary land-use in the Downtown area? Is the central parking lot the best use of a prime waterfront space? Would reducing/eliminating street parking make it safer for pedestrians? Should we reduce parking on Downtown to be only for ADA/elderly? Put in a 15-minute or 30-minute street parking limit? Do we want designated taxi and "public" transport parking spaces? Should the Town provide public parking for residences, or just for retail? Should apartments on Main St continue using street parking spaces instead of having an off-street space requirement?
Highest and Best use of town spaces	PW Garage (Site) Re-Use Parking Flea market space Community center SLR and stormwater management	Should the re-used site be used for public parking in the near term? Long term? How can we use the area for parking but not make it a parking LOT? (ground level of new facility used for parking?) How do we feel about turning that location into a higher-traffic intersection? Can/should the Town provide a subsidized space for functions/businesses without competing with other private entities?

<p>Safety, walkability, age friendly downtown access Retain/maintain Working Waterfront Balance 3 Economies Reduce traffic</p>	<p>Transportation Bike access Dock "Parking" & Float (3 uses - Commercial, outer island residency, tourism) Cruise ship launches-limit? Mooring access-more? Less?</p>	<p>Do we want to plan/encourage large-capacity transportation / discourage bringing cars to the island? Would that help ferry congestion? Encourage a water Taxi? Encourage a Land Taxi or van service, with downtown loading spots? Do we want/need sidewalks on both sides of the central Downstreet section? Should we carve out any resting/meeting spots along the sidewalks, or just focus on indoor meeting places only?</p>
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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	<p>Need more parking downtown Issues with parking at flea market Inconsistencies in width of street all along Main St.</p>
Parking	<p>"Carvers" lot: Selectman have recommended that Carver's parking lot not be used for any trap storage (to be enforced by harbor master) How many parking spaces are really needed downtown? "Park Once Management System" – isn't a huge issue on Vinalhaven</p> <p>Parking areas need to be clearly defined no matter where they are There is a seasonal need for more parking Time limits be put on parking spaces? Maybe in front of post office, but who would enforce it? Removing some parking spaces in front of businesses on Main St. could allow more functionality and safety of the sidewalks in front of those businesses Would make areas safer for pedestrians</p> <p>Could town WWF parking lot be better utilized? Already isn't enough room for working waterfront people in those areas Could definitely be marked better Greta's has a lot of traffic in there during the summer Would be hard to regulate/permit parking spots with the constant traffic in there during the summer Vendors selling in town parking lots - it's currently allowed, but should it be?</p> <p>Parking for residents on Main St. - currently they need park "off street", but it isn't enforced</p> <p>Potential - could the space behind Wes Reed's/Fuel Company be used for parking?</p>
PW Garage	Potential - Yellow house (behind PW Garage) - a potential parking area?

site Reuse	<p>Move current entrance so that it's no longer across from Water St.</p> <p>Would reduce some of the traffic in that area</p> <p>Makes it safer for pedestrians to cross the street</p>
Transportation	<p>Is there a way to work with MSFS to help discourage vehicles from travelling to the island?</p> <p>Could Zip Car (or alike) be part of the solution as a seasonal service?</p> <p>(We have Vinalhaven Car Rentals currently - local enterprise)</p>

	SLR
	<i>Improvements and changes must consider Sea Level Rise per the recs. SLR Committee</i>
Parking	<p>"Carvers" parking lot - prime waterfront area but is often very wet and is most vulnerable to sea level rise</p>
PW Garage site Reuse	<p>Good use could be for parking</p>

	Community, Cultural, Functional
	<i>Current and future</i>
General Comments	<p>What are the anchors of downtown? – Grocery store and post office</p> <p>What if they moved? How would it change the feel of downtown?</p> <p>Incorporating green space/resting spot with eliminating parking spots in certain areas could be beneficial</p> <p>Are sidewalks needed or wanted on both sides of Main St.? Not down the entire street, but possibly from Clamshell Alley to The Haven</p>
Parking	<p>"Carvers" lot:</p> <p>Is parking the best use for the current parking lot downtown? Serves a very important purpose: Working waterfront, parking, 4th of July central station.</p> <p>Would be really hard to sell a complete change of this area</p> <p>Important to know that this area serves more than parking in this community</p> <p>Part of it could be converted to green space/something else</p> <p>(Long range plan for Damariscotta is to eliminate parking spaces behind businesses and convert to more of a downtown function space)</p> <p>Are there conflicts with street parking and pedestrians? Is it a safety issue?</p> <p>Needs to be better defined for each – it's a free for all right now</p> <p>Yes, it is a safety concern, especially on corner near FIEC</p>

	<p>Speed tables would prohibit parking on the table which could be a designated place for pedestrians to cross</p> <p>Corner by legion hall is dangerous for both pedestrians and vehicles if there are any cars parked on the street there</p>
PW Garage site Reuse	Green space / multi-functional outdoor space, including parking
Transportation	<p>Would a “public transportation” system be helpful/useful? Down the road it definitely should be considered but maybe not during this first phase of discussions</p> <p>Is there really going to be a large influx in vehicles? It doesn’t seem that there will be</p> <p>Bikes:</p> <p>Should we encourage the use of bikes? Pedestrian safety is more important than focusing on bikes.</p> <p>We need more accessible bike parking. Widening sidewalk could provide space for more bike racks</p> <p>Create a safe way for bicyclists to navigate the road. More bike use could free up more parking for cars</p> <p>Issue: MSFS does not encourage bike use either b/c of cost</p>

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.](#)