

## Downtown Committee Meeting Notes

February

Town Office

Attendance: Kris Davidson, Andrew Dorr, Elin Elisofon, Betsy Hopkins, Holly Sault, Kathy Warren

Via Conference Call: Hooper Brooks, John Wasielewski

### Call to Order

Update of Participants – John Bubier will no longer be working directly with the Downtown Committee. We will be using data, outlines, and basic structure prepared by John as our working document. With his departure, the committee will be working together to complete the Master Plan by Memorial Day, 2018.

Review of goals for meeting – We will start working through the Vinalhaven Downstreet Master Plan Committee Working Document. Our work will not proceed through the document in chronological order but rather proceed in sections that are relevant in nature to each other.

### Action Sheet

**History of VH** – With an account of VH's history already written into the Comprehensive Plan that was written in 2013. With the information being current and relevant, the committee will use the history for the Master Plan. Hooper noted that the information regarding the downtown be reviewed to make sure it is up to date for the plan. Committee members are asked to read through the plan which can be found on line to review.

**Study Area Definition** – The study area for the plan is as follows: Ferry terminal to Union Church. The committee was asked to think of words or phrases that best describe the study area – words that define what you think of and see as you travel from the ferry to the church. These words will help to paint a picture for the plan, help in the formation of mission and vision statements, and help to gain focus on why this plan is important. The following list was compiled from the members and is a working list (in no particular order):

- Unembellished working community
- Residential
- Working waterfront
- Visually extraordinary and exceptional
- Hidden assets
- Peaked roofs
- Natural beauty
- Authentic
- Honest Vision

- Independent
- Resilient
- Practicality
- Resourceful
- Frugal
- Multi-Use
- Adaptive
- Fishing Industry
- Elements of Sustainability – community and sustainable
- Down Street Business that meet the needs of year round, seasonal, and tourism residents

**Streetscapes and Public Places** – There are 11 bullet points in the State of The Downtown draft that focus on the landscape, accessibility, and usage of the defined study area. These are:

1. Streetscapes and the use of complete and shared streets
2. Sidewalks and safety
3. Traffic calming
4. Pocket Parks
5. Accessibility to commercial and mixed use zones
6. Safe crossings
7. Handicapped Accessibility
8. Shared space for walkability while preserving
9. commercial access
10. Bicycle lanes
11. Public spaces study and review spaces to be used in the Downstreet
12. Timeless

The committee members were asked to individually choose 5 – 7 that are deemed necessary to the future of the project and the study area. It was suggested that the focus look at what we do not currently have so that the committee can work to ensure a successful plan that allows for proper planning and growth. The relationship between the “now” and the “future” is pivotal to the proper planning for the downtown. The committee chose the following from the list: Streetscapes and the use of complete and shared streets, sidewalks and safety, traffic calming, Shared space for the walkability while preserving commercial access, and public spaces.

**Historic Buildings and Components** – VH is very lucky to have a rich history with buildings/structures that are just as relevant to the future as to the past. These buildings not only enhance the aesthetics of the island and help to define the historical success of the island, they are also important in the landscape of the future. It is easy to focus on the “business district” in the center of the study area, but the entire area contains buildings that have served multiple purposes throughout history. The committee was asked to help identify these buildings and ways to best “reconstruct” the history of each. It was decided that the VH Historical Society along with longtime residents would be the first contact points to help build a working picture for the plan. Holly is to contact members from these groups for input.

**DART** – The committee was asked to review proposals made the DART study in 2017. Understanding that not all of the study was relevant or attainable for VH, there were some outstanding components and ideas that could be used in the building of the Master Plan. The members offered the following (in no particular order): Footbridge, cohesion of groups vision, width of streets and sidewalks, multi-use of areas, Net Factory plans, reminder of what VH has, Clam Shell Alley picnic table and public use space, inspiring viewpoints, multi-use spaces, public parks, green space, traffic tables, vibrancy, mixed use spaces, development fund, community center, interesting development potential

For the next meeting, committee members are asked to think about the following:

VH in a regional context – how can VH’s role be defined for our importance, leadership, and possible roles from a regional context among the surrounding island communities

Public spaces – where they would best work and what they might look like

Zoning – needs and allowances

Preserving buildings – what we could and should do

Next meeting – Wednesday, March 7<sup>th</sup> – 4:00 p.m.