

North Brookfield Downtown Development Committee (DDC)

Meeting Minutes

December 7, 2020

In Attendance:

Marilynn Borst, Sharon Donovan, Chet Lubelczyk, Ian McElwee, Jack McClintock, Ethan Melad, Sheila Orsi, Glenna Stocks, Gemma Wilkins

Meeting Opened:

6:37 pm

Approval of Minutes:

No minutes to approve

New Business:

GRANTS CURRENTLY BEING WORKED ON:

Eva Brown spoke about a grant - **TAP**. Experts come in and advise on the direction of FOTH/DDC goals. Eva suggested a group of four people to be involved and they are agreeable to participate. Rapid Recovery webinar (Wednesday) will help us set up for the TAP.

Marilynn is working on the local **Cultural Council Grant**. The grant will be applied for in the name of the friends, but the DDC is also included in there. Due on the 14th. Marilynn is just about done.

Ethan is working on **Rapid Recovery Grant** (due the 18th, Sheila to assist Ethan). The Rapid Recovery Planning Grant – not a monetary grant – it is for technical services for planning. Designed to help recover from Covid-related economic downturn. There are many aspects that apply to our goals. Projects Ethan is including: program to attract pop up retailers for vacant storefronts, window cleanup, projection lighting or logo projections on downtown buildings, placemaking investments to street, sidewalk and public places, facade improvements, and facilities for outdoor activities.

NEW OPPORTUNITIES AND MORE INFO ON COMPLETE STREETS FROM CMRPC:

Ian McElwee presented on ...

Winter Shared Streets – this is the second round of this grant. The grant is for quick implementation of temporary infrastructure that will allow for safe outdoor projects...\$5,000 – \$300,000...Also looking for permanent implementation of projects. We could benefit from permanent implementation of ADA compliant sidewalks, etc... Expanded sidewalks... Fixing

curb ramps... Biking, Dining Areas, Parking areas, Outdoor seating Outdoor dining. Projects that make use of streets, plazas, parking areas. Deadline is end of May 2021 for implementation/use of funds.

The program is open to creative thinking for ways to use the money that is geared towards residents to safely use outdoor spaces while staying socially distant. We can apply three times. We can be awarded once.

Project example: Temporary sidewalk build out in front of Congregational Church.

There is access to consultants who can advise us on these projects. CMRPC can help with the application phase. If our plan is funded, we can request technical assistance through CMRPC, and they will find a consultant best suited for our project. The application doesn't need engineering details, just needs a basic narrative, map, schematic, description.

Gemma Wilkins discussed **Complete Streets...**

Current concerns are design cost, area of focus, underlying issues with pipes. We need to think about all these elements and how to make it work with the grants available.

DDC is stuck on not being able to get the Engineer who will let us know how much it would cost to have Engineers bid on the redesign of the Main Street area. We need to figure out how to bid out the Engineers.

Gemma suggested we start with "temporary" design projects. We can do things like this now, without the engineering, so we have chances down the road to apply for these projects. For example: Temporary sidewalk build out in front of Congregational Church.

TIP program - <http://cmrpc.org/tip> – Gemma suggested our design projects fit both the TIP program qualifications as well as the Complete Streets qualifications so we have a better chance of receiving one or both. Chet discussed including Water/Sewer in the application but Gemma clarified it is not part of either of these grants.

Gemma suggested we think creatively. There are a lot of possibilities on how to use the funds. They are open to anything to enhance the downtown.

Sharon discussed possibility of using funding for projects at Senior Center. Ian suggested projects be "strung together" to help make that happen. Marilyn discussed using funds for a congregating area near the Town House.

Gemma emphasized the project should be a cohesive plan. Only one project can be applied for, but that definition is open-ended. Multiple projects can be strung together into one project if it is one continuous area. For Example: If the project is "Downtown Revitalization: to bring people into Downtown", that could include sidewalk improvements, a congregational area in front of the Town House, plantings, lighting, along with work at the Senior Center. It should sound like a

cohesive plan, to make the downtown area amenable to Covid restrictions and bring people down there despite the economic troubles we are having right now. The biggest thing is putting together that narrative.

Senior Center Survey – There are 55 questions on the survey. If there is a way to make it “digital-only” responses and still have a fair snapshot of the population it may be something we can implement. Gemma suggested talking to AARP to simplify the process. Gemma would like to get it off our plate. What is the easiest way to get it done?

Microenterprise Grant – Ian discussed the grant. They have resources to help businesses in NB. Send them Ian’s way and he will help.

BUSINESS BITES:

Ethan to be interviewed this week. This coming weekend Sheila will be at the Santa Parade and do a walk through with the businesses there.

Next Meeting Dates:

12/21/2020 – Next Meeting

Close of Meeting: 8:15 pm

Meeting minutes submitted by Glenna Stocks
Month, Day, 2020
(Approved at Month, Day, Year meeting)