

MONTPELIER DOWNTOWN COMMITTEE:

Minutes 9/5/13

Kevin C., Phayvanh, Kim, Steve, Bob, Claire, Phil, Mary

Kevin: Council Update – wants to see 3 – guidelines, workplan, general budget – 40,218.94. That’s our charge. We need goals, objectives, priorities whether we will fund proposal or not. Prioritize proposals. Plug responses and present to council re: our process and decision-making. We have to review guidelines to see if proposal fits. Decide if we will fund and what is the plan.

REVIEW OF GOALS

Phil: Question of improve downtown and what is marketing? To improve downtown district is different than to increase volume of sales by businesses located downtown. Drawing that distinction as alternative way to look at guidelines.

? tourists, new businesses and central vt residents.

Steve: to “raise” funds? We are appropriating and leveraging funds – not raising – change wording to reflect this clarification.

4- Nurturing? Nebulous definition. Statement of development, expansion. Use # 5, clearer than number 4.

Phil: Promote vs provide

Four goals...

OBJECTIVES:

Keep general not specific. Keep open to accept proposals.

Phil: Maximize and then sustain a high quality streetscape program within the downtown improvement district.

Steve: Beautify the downtown. Capitalizing on community events

Phil: Questions re: #3

Steve: #3 leverages local, state and regional. Works with partners to reach out beyond our borders. Two different goals.

Kevin: #3 Puts the onus on proposal to seek other sources.

“attractiveness” vs. “appearance” – CHANGE to “aesthetics”

PRIORITIES:

Kevin: this is how you leverage the multiple proposals that come through. Maybe there is a balance. It seems crazy to pay too much for one thing when you can get cheaper elsewhere.

Phil: Encourage participation

Steve: We may weight or grade each of these priorities

Kevin: Read through the list and rank on level of importance:

- 2- Priority will be given to projects that leverage other funds
- 1- local to Montpelier
- 3- presents a deliverable in 1 year
- 4- evaluate via metrics
- 5- specific city goals
- 6- sustainability
- 7-conditions on monies – leveraging other funds
- 8 – market outside of Montpelier
- 9- user-friendly website
- 10 – street furniture, flowers, decorations.

Caution on #1, caused problems when we lock ourselves in to local only

Claire: “have shown an effort to source locally, but not necessarily committed to local”.

Kevin: Consider local procurement.

Karen:

Claire: I want to be able to say, “have you looked locally?”

Phil: maximize

Steve: local can be misunderstood , ex. “Barre”

Phil: Lets look – of these 10 what is our principal priority. Mine would be #6. Do we need a DID for 10 years?

Agreed. 6 is #1

Claire: #4 important, Steve, yes, Phil: What metric – how do you demonstrate that flowers enhance anything? Kevin: You would have to attach a survey. Steve: IF there is an ability to capture a metric, in proposal, how would you do so? Claire: Streetscape is a priority. Do we need the word “metric”? Phil:

Phayvanh: It may not be a metric, but we can get gardeners to evaluate “flowers” but may not give a hard number.

Kevin: Do you want this to be #2? NO

Steve: I like number 2 as #2

Kevin: #3 – gives a time frame. Agreed.

Phil: Use word “provide” rather than “present”.

Karen: We don’t know city council goals

Kevin: We post every June

Karen: I don't think that's our priority.

Kevin: you are appointed by city council, to suss out and present back to them priorities.

City Council: Closing off Elm street – example.

Claire: It does not come under our objectives

Steve: It may.

Kevin: If all priorities are met

Steve: Clear and concise communication of city council goals to help in prioritizing.

Phil: Provided that 1, 2, 3, etc are met. Clearly articulated,

Claire: I don't want to have to refer to city council's 8 goals every time we consider a proposal.

Phil: Not objectionable.

Claire: I would not put at number 4

Phil: 7 is duplicative of 2 – strike. Yes.

City Council: Clarification. We don't want projects that are one offs.

Steve: of "longterm" sustainability vs. environmental

Claire: 9 and 10 seem okay as goals, objectives. Not priorities, but objectives.

Kevin: 10 could be a priority, but seems duplicate of other.

Strike 9 and 10

Leaves us with 1,4,8,5 to prioritize

Steve: If we're going to weight, is there anything that would help us to prioritize one over another? Is anything missing?

Karen: #4 may not be measurable but we can write how we feel.. I understand term,

Kevin: when faced with two proposals, one that has a quantitative measurable metric, vs qualitative...

City council: if we get 2 flower proposals.

Karen: You're not on the board...so I thought we were....

Kevin: We're all appointed

Karen: But city council does not have a vote

Kevin: City council needs

Karen: but we have opinions too that we need to discuss

Kevin: But Jesse can inform re: city council's intention

Jesse: will continue to sit to be a communication liaison to council. Let's consider and act as advocate.

But don't want to sit silently for two hours,

Karen: don't mean to make you feel uncomfortable.

Jesse: I vote Wednesday. You vote today.

Karen: Thank you for clarification.

Steve: Having been through public granting and awards process. We need to be able to score because of criteria which protects us and city council for clear understanding.

Kevin: ultimately city council makes appropriation, DID advises.

Claire: Are flowers and websites part of City Council?

Kevin: Yes. You'll always find a city council vote that will meet your goals.

Steve: what if we said we would collaborate to create goals annually? Let's work to accomplish, instead of top down

Phil: Except our jurisdiction is finite. City council's is infinite, compared to ours. I don't want to hammer out 8 goals. What if we gave priority to projects that demonstrate: benefits, success, results, etc.?

Kevin: If you say you're going to give priority to these projects,

Phil: #4 is evidence of what we can do.

Claire: but we will change wording.

Phil: What if city council's goals had nothing to do with downtown district, then we can't give any priority to that?

Kevin: yes, but you're always going to be kind of meeting the CC goals because we're supportive of downtown.

Jesse: this committee builds a stronger case if we meet the goals and state it. Idea of consideration, "we meet a city council goal" helps.

Claire: Change wording of #4- no demonstrable metric of "trashcans".

Phil: Priority given to projects that are able to demonstrate benefits.

Claire: I don't want to make a priority of non-demonstrable benefits.

Which is priority? 2000 visitors or trashcans? (example of Steve Capitol Plaza)

Jesse: on marketing side I think committee wants demonstrated benefits.

Claire: we can still look at it, but metrics have more importance than other

Steve: We need metrics – we are accountable. We don't need metrics on trashcans, but we do need metrics on marketing projects that DO create metrics.

Kevin: Marketing vs. streetscapes?

Steve: Agreed, very difficult to measure.

Kevin: If we have two presentations, having the "measurable" helps to evaluate.

Steve: Events are not necessarily marketing. Metrics are helpful here. If they can demonstrate revenue, numbers, attendees, etc. Provide as a condition of after the event.

Kevin: They will give us numbers - better

Steve: Caution against specifics

Claire: How do we phrase it so we're not giving priority to marketing projects.

Phil: #4 REVISION "with regards to marketing efforts priority will be given to projects that have a demonstrable metric to evaluate the project benefits...."

Karen: Montpelier Alive?

Kevin: If we keep MA in here, they get priority – an independent nonprofit. Important distinctions. Working within a legal framework. If you put one organization in your guidelines...

Karen: Do we then cross out #8.

Claire: It will raise issues. WE are not an arm of Montpelier Alive.

Phayvanh: I like the intent of #8 because we are aligned with MA.

Kevin: The whole goal is to support any organization that supports downtown. Take out #8.

5 is 5, 1 is 6,

Phil: Number 1 to become number 5. City council already has their own toolkit in which to achieve their own goals. So, priority...

Claire: work on wording of #1. There's one other issue. What if proposals come from a local organization vs outside. Okay... define local.

Kevin: My opinion, you're already far down on the list of priorities....

We source it locally... to procure

Mary: can we define local as "Montpelier-centric"

Kevin: with all things being equal...

Steve: Does that need to be spelled out or can we use as discussion when doing analysis of proposals

Phil: I think it's extremely important to define "local". I think it's valuable and is a statement about what a downtown development district does.

#5 - Priority will be given to projects that maximize the use of suppliersthat are local to Montpelier.

Yes, okay.

MOVING ON....

Kevin: Most of the rest is administrative – how things are done. Keep waiver. If comfortable with administrative piece, I'll fill in and forward around and will send a final draft for all review before it goes to city council.

Jesse: do we have a budget?

Kevin: No, they asked for guidelines, workplan....

Sept 26 date changed to 11th. See if workplan looks right for next 3 months. (Affirmed)

Once the city council approves = we will issue an RFP for remainder of funds.

Steve: Looks fine. Does this fit city council's schedule?

Jesse: Councilors want to see whole plan before money is allocated. And they want to be accountable to new committee's plan. Review of brochure, If voters didn't approve, we shouldn't fund it. Conveying the carefulness of funding this money for first year.

Claire: \$18,000, committee, \$5000, council approval for holiday funds. Council will review other \$13,000.

Phil: We're supposed to have budget. Do we have enough. ? 10 required.

Budget: \$40K How do we want to assign between streetscape and marketing?

Flowers + Holiday.

Steve – challenging to put that into percentage of budget without seeing proposals, we need to see.

Phil – opposed to any percentages without seeing proposals

Kevin: Outline of workplan budget presented. Of \$40,218.19 -

Steve: We could make a budget if we had a fixed list of proposals, but we don't.

Kevin: They want to see that this is a budget not a slush fund.

Jesse: CCouncil needs budget to see that allocations are sensible. 150% increase

Kevin: Of the 40k we are willing to commit X to _____ because this is the first year. Do you want to see physical improvements or marketing? Budget is subject to proposals we receive and we will ask council for a waiver as needed.

Phil: Should we leave funds outside of streetscape and marketing? To allow for opening of other proposals.

Steve: Can we make this part of the RFP process – streetscape, marketing and events?

Kevin: No proposal shall exceed X percent of total percent spent on streetscape, marketing...

Jesse: If we don't get "event" proposals, we don't spend the funds. Bad design. Do we want to say, it's our first year, we want to focus on streetscape, for example. Or we could say we want...

Steve: mix of physical infrastructure and promotion of/

Mary: Use funds – fuller support for one vs. other. 40k doesn't go far.

Steve: We're here to look at applications

Phil: We did express support for flowerscape. We leave balance of unexpended funds for other proposals. This is our first year. No traction. Won't spend if applications aren't valid.

Steve: We won't spend max if proposals aren't valid.

Jesse: City council wants thought.

Steve: Would be happy to talk to city council. We look at proposals and look at best use of dollars on state level.

Jesse: We said to voters this was for streetscape and marketing, more than 50% in first proposal set alarm – are we meeting city mandate. We just need to explain. Is this enough thought to explain support of one vs. other.

Steve: Say to the council...here are our proposals. Here's the mix...

Phil: What if we said "up to 50% to flowerscapes, Does city council supercede our proposal? \$23,000 on capitol improvement projects to support sustainable capitol expenditures for 1x improvements?

Steve: October RFP. We're trying to catch up?

Claire: Are we locked in?

Phil: I don't think so...City Council has rejected our first proposal.

Kim: Consensus that there is a larger amount for streetscape, but not determined how much.

Jesse: heavier expenditure to streetscape, still include marketing % as it is a mandate

Steve: We have goals, we will issue RFP, we can't look in crystal ball to know what will come in.

Jesse: comfortable with presenting a narrative budget

Phil: So reboot. That means to me the earlier commitment to fund holiday \$18K, is no longer our commitment – without goals, is ineffective.

Claire: I just wanted clarity. I don't disagree.

Phil: distilled decision through goals, still make same decision

Steve; agreed. Now weighted.

Phil: how do we express our budget?

Kevin: I will send a narrative budget. All please respond. Budget, guidelines.

NEXT MEETING: TUESDAY, OCTOBER 1ST, 8:15 A.M.

Adjourn

DRAFT