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Acton 2020 Implementation Committee ~ Minutes

Date: January 9, 2013, 7:00 pm

TOWN CLERK, ACTON

Location: Town Hall, Rm 204

Attending: Kristen Domurad-Guichard (Planning Dept); Margaret Woolley Busse, Celia Kent (minutes-taker), Charlie Mercier, Mike Shailer, Kat Hudson; John Sonner (BoS liason); LATER Doug Tindal, Bill Mullin (Fin Com), Charlie Aronson (VVC)

1. Minutes approved from 12/19/12.

2. Review draft website

Reviewed multiple pages of the web site projected on screen. Mike will chip away at suggested improvements. Some specific comments:

- Re ongoing management
Kat wondered if there might be another volunteer who'd be interested in just being the web master. Charlie asked whether it made sense at some point to shift the web site to a more user friendly set up (google site?) so that multiple people can edit. But acknowledged it would be a lot of up front work to shift it over. All agreed we weren't ready to do that now.
- *Home* page – Margaret will edit graphic (will get from Sahana)
- Add a link to the implementation plan (perhaps call it Action Item Database, 237 action items organized by goal and objective) Invite people to review and comment.
- Move *News Archive* to *Archive Phase 2*.
- Mike suggest *News and Events* be combined with Blog page so it can be edited by more people
- Ctee discussed whether should use facebook or twitter to announce events and how those communication tools should be used as opposed to the web site and the blog. To be continued...

3. FinCom and Budget Saturday Debrief

Roland presented to both BoS and FinCom at Budget Saturday using a streamlined version of current ppt. He summarized the responses to the presentation in an email to Margaret (included in packet) so she was prepared for her presentation to FinCom. Eight of nine members were there (Maryann Ashton not there but was at Budget Sat). Margaret suggested that three members seemed supportive, two others needed more information, and three others seemed unlikely to support the funding request.

Discussed Improvements to the presentation: be clearer about what project will accomplish, more information about the earlier study and what has changed since then (i.e. no sewers earlier, no traffic light, different land ownership, more condos now and affordable housing at old school building...).

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(Doug Tindal [FinCom], joins meeting)

Doug suggest:

- Need to reassure people that the investment they made in the earlier plan is still of use. We're not redoing the plan, we're recycling, adapting it to new conditions.
- Strong supporter of 2020. Concerned that things not all in place to be successful with Kelly's' corner request and that it could harm our effectiveness for other things. Currently, doesn't think the votes are there in FinCom to support it. EDC not supportive. Is it possible to describe the project as something we can do incrementally and/or for less \$?
- Make sure we bring people in with "street smarts", not just engineers and designers.

(Bill Mullin [Fin Com] and Charlie Aronson [VOC] join meeting)

Bill suggest:

- The budget request and Kelley's Corner plan should be presented by an elected official, with Margaret, Roland and other 2020 members serving as referential resources.
 - Kristen cautioned that can't promise a specific look. Bill – but a political person can share a personal vision. An elected representative of the people needs to own this project, something like "I'm tired of Kelley's Corner looking like this. In 4 years, this is what it could be..." and then turn to Margaret and Roland for specifics, the referential point people. A selectman's job is to think about the future – can go out on a limb on articulating what Kelley's Corner should look like. "We are going to improve safety, improve aesthetics, make this the gateway into Acton that we all want." Someone needs to be comfortable saying what the end state is. "I have a dream".
 - We also need to be clear that we will put the necessary time into making the project a success.
 - Doug suggested we concentrate on the most readily sellable ideas, things that are the most attractive have to bubble to the top, and someone needs to state clearly that he/she believes in it. We should also offer some key assurances of likelihood of getting from the 277,000 to the \$3M, articulate the different stages of "if you build it they will come" (the first stage being the State, second being the developers).
4. Prepare for Presentation to Board of Selectmen on 1-14-13
- John and Kristen will work with Margaret on re-shaping the presentation to BoS. Send them the current version as background information and let them know they will see a revised version on the 14th.
 - Discussed what would we need to do to plan for town meeting:
 - Reach out to Gina Manalan (former leader of the opposition to the last plan) Recruit her or someone from that neighborhood for 2020 Committee
 - Line up at least one neighbor and one business owner who can speak in favor of the KC proposal at Town Meeting
 - Local businesses - Invite a bunch of business owners to get their feedback on what they would want

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- Decided not to host a public info meeting other than scheduling a dry run of the presentation. Make sure invite former 2020 members. Early March.
- Something to Beacon

There was some committee discussion about timing and strategy. Margaret expressed concern that we haven't had enough time to prepare to make the case at Town Meeting. Charlie commented that he wasn't convinced that we would definitely lose momentum if we didn't seek the funds this year. Should we be focusing on strengthening the committee, learning more, stakeholder outreach? Committee decided that we should just ask the BoS: We work for you, here's what we think is the next step, do we start it now? At minimum, we should use Town Meeting to present status and talk about next steps and get them ready for request for next year. If the BoS indicates they support the plan, then we may need to have weekly meetings.

5. Administrative update

Charlie can't meet on the 30th. Margaret can't meet on 23rd. Will see if we can reschedule for next Wed 1/16?