

MACHIAS REVITALIZATION COMMITTEE MINUTES

April 12, 2019

9:00 at Sunrise County Economic Council (SCEC) Building

Present: Angela Fochesato, Chair, Ann Ball, Maine Development Foundation, Ken Young FDF Advisory Council, Christina Therrien, Machias Town Manager, Jim Jackson, member of the Re-enactors and the Historical Society, Kyle Winslow, Down East Coastal Conservancy, Bob Jean Down East Coastal Conservancy. Lynette Smith, County Wide, Bob Berta, County Wide.

Public Comment: There was no public comment

Chair Announcements: Angela stated that she had notified all the local newspapers about this meeting.

Minutes: March Meeting was cancelled.

Angela informed everyone that the ZOOM System being used today can be used as a confidential closed-circuit communication system. The system does allow you to record.

An introduction was given from Ken Young. Mr. Young will be the official Machias mentor for our downtown committee. He started participating in Maine Downtowns in 2002. He has been very active in Washington County and made many visits over the years.

Ann Ball spoke about the new program to provide additional support to downtown affiliates through the mentorship program. The mentor will participate in the monthly meetings. And help support our efforts.

In addition, Ann reminded everyone about the Build Maine Conference being held June 5 and 6 in Lewiston. It would be wonderful if someone from Machias could attend the event. There will be speakers from both in state and out of state that will address a wide range of topics related to healthy and accessible downtowns. Ann has more information on how to get assistance with the costs via a scholarship if anyone is interested in attending this year.

Ann reviewed some grant opportunities with the group. The first was through the National Park Service for historic restoration. What is exciting about this grant is that it can be utilized for bricks and mortar. There is about \$650,000 available and the grants range from \$50,000 to \$100,000 per applicant. The match is very minimal around 10%. A qualifying historic site could be owned by a municipality, non-profit entity, or by a private entity. She asked that we share this information with other groups in-town in hopes someone may be able to benefit from the funds.

The committee was then encouraged to talk about the next steps and to make a list. Christina stated that the committee had some discussion on the sidewalks but would need to review some items if the CDBG application is successful. (Sidewalks, Lighting, etc..) The Comprehensive Plan and the Downtown Plan are both over ten years old and must be updated in the near

future. There was some discussion on if there could be just one plan with a more in depth Downtown Plan within the Comprehensive Plan. Ann will check with the office of Economic and Community Development.

Angela wants to look at all access points in town for ADA compliance.

Ann expressed how vital downtown committees can be in connecting all the partners together. It is important that factual information is shared amongst all the parties. Communication and public outreach is important

Thoughts and efforts should be put toward looking at (Complete Streets) Meaning access for cars, biking, walking, etc.. Check with Eastport and Lubec on their efforts. There is funding available for studies of complete streets. The goal is to develop a policy or strategy to interconnect for both on road and off road sections. It is about moving people safely and sharing the assets. Look at including solar in the plans and electric car charging stations.

Write down some goals for the next year.

Some ideas were 1) the construction of the incredible edibles along the West Side Trail 2) Public restrooms at the parks or parking areas 3) banners and signs for Main Street. The projects should be very visible and let people know what the downtown committee is working on. It might be one event a year or could be one event a month.

MDF will start recording the training webinars at the end of April. There are 6 virtual trainings planned for 2019 that address topics that are very pertinent to the work being done in downtowns throughout the US. Each training is 45 minutes long. These may be watched online in accordance with people's schedules to allow for more participation.

Christina suggested that MDF could start a spreadsheet to track the projects and progress of all the Maine downtown communities and affiliates. When a community takes on a new project they could contact towns with previous experience on a type of project or development. It might help to avoid pitfalls or failures that happened elsewhere or we could build on the other communities successes.

MDF has a new website. Take a look at MDF.org. There was some question raised about angle parking. Ann would supply some information on angle parking for future meeting, Ken is planning to visit Lubec on April 25th and might stop into Machias time permitting.

Ann mentioned that the Bellevedere Grant applications are due June 1st. There is also some grant money available for electric car charging stations through Efficiency Maine. Christina stated there is an electric car charger station at the Water Street Parking Lot. The homework for the next meeting is to think about one visible public engagement opportunity for 2019.

The group adjourned at 10:32.