

Machias Downtown Revitalization Committee

9/8/2017 Meeting Minutes

Committee members present: Angela Fochesato (chair), Christina Therrien, Gail Peters, Sandi Malagara, Rich Bard

Others present: County Wide Newspaper reporter (name?), Bob Berta, Valerie Preston

Angela began with a clarification that all committee members may vote on all matters.

Minutes – Gail made a motion to accept the minutes of the 7/14/2017 meeting. Christina seconded. Passed unanimously.

Waterfront Resilience & Renewal Project – There is a signed contract coming for the preliminary studies. Washington County Council of Governments will identify affected stakeholders and organize a public process

Yogafest will take place on September 23 from 9am to 12pm as part of the Machias Harvest Festival

The **Incredible Edible Gardens** project is currently stalled until we get clarity about what can be cleared near the shore at Bad Little Falls Park. Signage is ready to go. Angela has

The committee offers **thanks to Sally Ward** for weeding at Bad Little Falls Park before the Black Fly Ball to help the park look its best.

History Tour scripts are written and recording is under way. An app is in development. Angela will talk with the UMM GIS Dept. about a mapping project.

Bike Lending program is under way with donated bikes. These bikes are not always in the best condition, so Angela has looked for a source of newer bikes for the program. Walmart will give good prices on older models, which can be purchased with funds from the Healthy Main Streets grant. Winter storage for the bike fleet is needed.

Curb Cut Study – a grant has been submitted by the town for the Steel Hill sidewalk. Due to the expense of building retaining walls and engineering on the steep slope, only the hill would have sidewalk in this phase of the project. The connection with existing sidewalks farther up Court Street will come later.

Josh suggested that the town should consider a public process to select the design of new sidewalks.

New banner planning is nearly complete. Christina would like to make sure that they are ready to roll out next spring.

Murals on Main Street is tabled. We're hoping for a renewed vision after December.

Greenscape Committee held two planting days with committee members and the town Public Works crew. At Norm Nelson Park, they added a shade tree, 2 crabapples and 2 shrubs. On the second day, they added trees in front of Bluebird Restaurant, at the Water Street parking lot and on Colonial Way. The committee met on 9/7/2017 to plan further plantings. They have been careful not to cut live trees and are being mindful about the locations selected. More plants will be added to the Bluebird Restaurant location. Gail noted that dead trees that were replaced at the Water Street lot were dedicated "in memory of" individuals and that their families may request a new dedication of the replacement trees.

Dean McGuire will "adopt" the triangle at the Route 1/Court Street intersection this fall. For now, committee members are all pitching in to weed the triangle.

Sandi shared stories of visitors who have driven straight through Machias in past years stopping in at Expressions and then further exploring the town.

The **Blueberry Run** had 200 runners pre-registered and another 38 registered the day of the run.

The **Airport** is holding a raffle for a scenic flight for 2. A limited number of tickets are available for \$10. More trees have been identified as obstructions for airplanes. Three or 4 will be cut on Downeast Coastal Conservancy land across the river and some trees on the airport itself. New terminal construction will hopefully be complete by the 9/23 fly-in. The old terminal building will be moved out of the safety zone and will be used by the Civil Air Patrol. Work on the new access road begins in October.

The **Community Center** group is on hold. The people who originally brought the idea to the town pulled out of a town government process to keep the project as purely a building for walking out of the elements. They are continuing on their own.

The town is holding off on applying for a Recreational Trails Program grant for a hand-carry boat landing at the **park on Grove Street**. They will undertake a more comprehensive plan for canoe access to the Machias River up and down the river along with Nate Pennell and others. A grant for work on the courts and other improvements at the town park is due in November. The work will hopefully include a plan to deal with various drainage issues in the park so that the water-course can be a feature rather than a wasteland. A playground is also planned. Rich advocated for a "natural playground" that would have elements like logs to balance on, piles of mulch to climb and boulders to climb. Christina added ideas for boats to be included. Christina is holding off on repairs

with existing funds for the park because that money can be used to leverage much more funding if we wait until grants are awarded to spend it.

Christina suggested that committee members consider attending one of the Maine Development Foundation's **upcoming Downtown meetings**. There will be one in Machias on 9/21/17 at the Machias Savings Ban committee room.

Christina updated the committee on a grant submitted for renditions of what part of downtown could look like with a unified design – from On the Run to the Machias Hardware Store. If awarded and the renditions are done, the next step would be to apply for a grant to help businesses with façade work to match the designs.

Sandi moved adjournment. Gail seconded. Unanimously approved.

-Submitted by Rich Bard