

**Joint Meeting
Town Working Group
& Village Working Group**
August 2, 2017, 2017 – 8:15 a.m.
344 VT15 West

Members Present: Tim Yarrow, Co-Chair (8:22 a.m.); Susan Bartlett, Co-Chair; Dan Young; Ken McPherson; Jim Fontaine; and Richard Grogan

Members Absent: None

Others Present: Ron Rodjenski, Town Administrator

1. Welcome & Agenda Changes: Susan opened the meeting at 8:15 a.m. No agenda changes.

2. Review & Approve Minutes: Minutes deferred.

3. Open Public Comments: No public comment received.

4. Jackie Cassino – VTrans/ACCD Grant Program – Better Connections

- Jackie presented a brief overview of the program, which is a 90% State & 10% local match grant program, providing the group with a copy of the Springfield Master Plan that was just completed under the program. In past applications from Hyde Park that were not approved, Jackie offered suggestion for improving the ranking of the application: highlight stormwater issues, tourism goals, marketing of the Village and gateway transportation improvements. Jackie noted that conceptual design plans prepared by a consultant can be reviewed by the state staff during development of priorities which would help clarify feasibility and construction funding agencies, such as USDA Rural Development, the Downtown Program and Bike-Ped Program. State review of the draft Master Plan will increase the likelihood that the priorities are buildable & grant eligible. tions would happen during the development of the master plan, not after, so the Better Connections grant could raise the ranking of the upcoming grant applications. Better Connections also encourages local businesses and others to participate. (Tim appeared at this point). Jackie explained that State Historic Preservation Officer should be contacted to if removal is

- Jackie reviewed the prior application, noting that it was a great application with a high score (4th of 7 applicants); improvements in clarifying the “needs statement” such as preservation of historic character due to the Route 15 bypass, move the town office, connect to the LVRT for tourism, increase marketing, what has been implemented from past planning studies – community capacity and readiness to implement, technical assistance for what and what kind of marketing assistance, addressing strip development from Morristown, stakeholders and who makes up the VRWG and how will more folks be engaged under the grant (block parties, close roads for “pop-up” demonstrations of impacts of changes to road patterns, and many of the suggestions from the grant review committee are not too significant to add into the new application. Jackie explained that the hired consultant would do most of the work but the steering committee would direct the consultant. Focus on why now – and how quickly will changes be implemented.

- Jackie said that up to \$75,000 is a maximum and under \$30,000 would be a better match for the Municipal Planning Grant program. The increased funding is to raise the public participation level and bring in experts to ensure projects are put on a path toward construction/implementation. Jackie noted that the program does have the goal of working with small and larger communities, outside of Chittenden County, to develop master plans.

Jackie said that having extra words copied from the regional and town plan is not necessary – the linkage of the regional plan goals to specific project ideas, including how the capital planning can support the project ideas. For example, the capital plan supports the development of new sidewalks and the Master Plan will help prioritize those investments. Jackie noted that the needs statement should be upfront in the application text. Community visit program is a good start to build community capacity, similar to the Village’s Project for Public Spaces effort in 2013. How will the steering committee or another committee remain active to complete the Master Plan.

- Jackie confirmed that Village Roads Working Group could immediately start to engage the public to use that outreach effort in the grant application. The next grant round will be announced

55 in October, with \$200,000 program funds and expectation that there will be three awards.

- 56 • Jim asked about follow-up after project completion and Jackie responded that there is a follow-
57 up meeting in 6 to 8 months. Previous completed tasks are important to note in the application.
58 Ken asked how is community defined. Jackie stated that the community needs to define it, but
59 regular visitors to a community can also be engaged such as second home owners, LVRT
60 tourists and county government services. Ken stated that looking forward might mean projecting
61 trends where the residents may be moving the town to another character. Jackie noted that
62 Chester’s Master Plan had to consider the changing community and how do you engage all
63 interests – new comers versus long-time residents. Jackie noted that engaging more
64 stakeholders over the 18-24 month is important to identify the community’s priorities. For
65 example, how will investments bring tax base increases and will they be short-term or long-term
66 pay backs. Seth noted that housing types are a good example as an issue the needs to be
67 resolved; e.g. affordable housing, senior housing and market housing investments. Jackie noted
68 that the consultant hired will often come with a team to facilitate the community meetings.
- 69 • Tim asked if the program application requirements have changed, and Jackie noted that the
70 past applications have not changed much, but there is a new request that the application include
71 how projects will be completed and direction to clearly articulate the project need.
- 72 • Rob noted that the 2019 grant will include stormwater angle, but this next round for 2018 is
73 basically the same as the prior three years – transportation, marketing, tourism, address sprawl
74 pressure, intersection redesigns, and safety improvements. Jackie noted that this is “scoping
75 light’ with conceptual plans and prioritize future projects from the list in the Master Plan with
76 costs, funding sources and point of contacts to move priorities forward. Scott Robertson and
77 Jon Kaplan will be asked to comment on projects, as they fund design and construction.
- 78 • Susan noted that the Village has multiple layers of infrastructure being studied at the current
79 time and this grant would help pull a plan together. Susan did not think waiting a year is helpful
80 to the immediate needs, and Jackie noted that Brighton did make that case in their recently
81 awarded grant.
- 82 • Jackie noted that communication with key stakeholders is important to detail in the application.
83 Tim confirmed that it was having the right people at the right time in the project – such as John
84 Mandeville on Economic Development but not trying to keep everyone on the steering
85 committee. Jackie noted that having good connections with VTrans, local leaders and strong
86 committees is important; and Susan noted that this Working Group could be the leader to move
87 the community forward. Jackie confirmed without that leadership the effort can flounder and
88 having a small group or one or two individuals to provide voices of calm and consistency works
89 well, especially for post-grant improvements. Jackie encouraged that the application should play
90 up the joint group as a key component of the Town-Village future. Tim noted that the selection
91 committee relies on the materials in the grant to make their decision and staff can help with
92 input if application is close and the selection committee needs help breaking a tie. Jackie felt
93 that having success stories is helpful. Jackie offered that having plans on the shelf with no
94 completed projects is not helpful. Richard Amore will be the grant administrator.
- 95 • Regarding supplemental information to the grant materials, the State will accept hyperlinks so
96 the application can refer to text versus cut & paste it into the grant application. Jackie stated
97 that listing completed projects is key as well as explaining why some previously identified
98 projects were not pursued. Jackie noted that including success stories should be highlighted
99 and don’t include old plans if there was no action taken. Rob noted that if there was a proposed
100 project that was decided by consensus to not pursue, then that can be included as evidence of
101 community engagement. LCPC will assist in the new grant and Seth advised that this committee
102 could help improve the new application with specifying technical people to help during the
103 project, and community groups that will be pursued for involvement. The school bond vote, the
104 brewery and McMahan Chevy are all new to the Village since the last grant application. The
105 group thanked Jackie for her time.

106 5. Next Steps:

- 107 • Jackie will send the grant review committee’s notes to Ron with a copy of the Brighton
108 application. Ron will be the point of contact to share information and questions.
- 109 • The group agreed it was important to start the community outreach effort and working on

- 110 an application for submittal in January 2018.
- 111 • Ken noted that he will be meeting with the Greg Paus, Town Planning Commission.
- 112 • Rob Moore noted that the school is a stakeholder and Ken noted the bond was an
- 113 experience for the community.
- 114 • Next Meeting: September meeting.
- 115 6. Adjourn: Motion by Jim to adjourn, seconded by Ken. Meeting Adjourned at 9:33 a.m.
- 116 Submitted by Ron Rodjenski