



**Town of Camden**  
**Minutes of the Meeting of the**  
**Downtown Network Board**  
**October 15, 2012**  
**3:30pm**

**PRESENT:** Co-Chair Oscar Verest, Co-Chair Peter Gross, Rick Bates, Pete Brown, Martin Cates, Deb Dodge, Jill Lang, Robin McIntosh, Barrie Pribyl, Meg Quijano, Lowrie Sargent, Town Manager Pat Finnigan, Code Enforcement Officer Stephen Wilson and Development Director Brian Hodges.

Guest: Don White, Camden Select Board

**ABSENT:** Erick Anderson, Bernice Berger, Ellis Cohn, Samantha Hill, Janis Kay, Sue Michaud, Liz Valente and Kipp Wright.

**1. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 3:30pm.

**2. Approval of Board Minutes**

*Rick Bates made a motion, seconded by Pete Brown, that the minutes of the September 10<sup>th</sup> meeting be accepted. The motion was passed by a vote of 9-0-1 (Dodge abstaining).*

**3. Updates on Planning Grant Applications for River to Harbor Walk and Public Landing**

Brian Hodges gave a brief update on the applications for planning grants to study the River to Harbor Walk and the best uses for the Public Landing. Hodges told the board that he had expected that we would have word by mid-October on whether these grants had been awarded to Camden but that he was still waiting to hear whether the funding had been approved.

**4. Adding Roster of Names to the Website**

Hodges asked the group for permission to list their names as members of the Downtown Network Board on the Town's website. He said that no contact information would be listed. Those who were present gave their permission.

**5. Old Business: Recommendation about Parking Gains**

Hodges said that press releases had been sent to local news sources regarding the impact of increased public parking and new directional signs in Camden. Martin Cates told the board that he had heard nothing but positive comments from citizens regarding the coverage that the parking improvements had received. Cates added that several people had made a point of telling him how much they appreciated having news about the steady progress on local issues, saying that it helps balance negative comments that often receive more press

attention.

## 6. **Project Canopy Tree Planting Grant Opportunity**

Hodges gave a brief history on Project Canopy Tree Planting in the Town of Camden, a project in which the Camden Garden Club has traditionally participated. A new Project Canopy Tree Planting grant application would be due on Monday, October 22<sup>nd</sup>, Hodges reported. He outlined the draft proposal to cover the planting of eight trees around town for a total cost of \$16,000, which includes site preparation and maintenance. The grant would cover \$8,000 of this, he said, with in-kind contributions of staff time, etc. totaling \$4,700 and a cash match of \$3,300 to be split evenly between the Town, the Garden Club, and the Camden Downtown Business Group. He summarized by saying that each of the three partners in the project would be contributing \$138 per tree times a total of eight trees.

*Pete Brown made a motion that the Downtown Network Board proceed with the Project Canopy Tree Planting grant application. The motion was seconded by Peter Gross.*

Discussion on the motion covered possible locations for tree planting as well as the importance of anticipating future Downtown Master Plan improvements so the trees would not have to be moved. The general consensus on locations steered toward less-trafficked areas of town that could use “sprucing up,” such as Mechanic and Washington Streets. Hodges told the group that eventual identification of tree planting locations would involve the project partners including the Garden Club, the Town of Camden, and the CDBG.

*A vote was then taken on the motion and it was unanimously approved.*

Hodges noted that letters of support to accompany the application would be helpful.

## 7. **Prioritizing Projects within the Downtown Master Plan**

Next the board reviewed the list of projects outlined on the Camden Downtown Master Plan Projects and Variables List that had put together by the Town staff. Hodges told the Board that the list was organized based on the four principles of the Maine Downtown Center (Organization, Design, Promotions, and Economic Restructuring), and that the projects had been grouped accordingly. Additionally, the projects were identified as to their duration and cost, as well as whether they were ready to be started at this time.

Hodges reported that it had been decided that CEDAC would be addressing the Tannery project since that was beyond the immediate footprint of the downtown itself. He will incorporate the view of the public landing from the harbor into the list. Also he said that repair of the waterfall had been added to the list since the time of the last DNB meeting. Regarding the latter, Barrie Pribyl suggested that a study might help us determine what’s required to fix the waterfall situation and who would need to be involved with this project. Pat Finnigan said that the Army Corps of Engineers would most likely have to be involved, along with the DEP and Inland Fisheries.

Oscar Verest said that the DNB should identify the highest priorities on the list to recommend to the Select Board, as well as those involving lower costs and those that could be funded by grants. He also urged the group to think ahead and consider what town policies may need to be amended in order to implement projects and potential changes

when the time comes.

Deb Dodge said that those projects that potentially have the highest impact should be considered at the top of the list. The timing factor was also discussed since some projects could get started before the spring when the Town hears from some of the grant applications that had been submitted. Steve Wilson suggested that the list be further broken down to indicate factors such as these. The group agreed that columns would be added to sort the projects by cost, economic impact or benefit, aesthetic impact on the town. Outside groups and organizations that could support the effort would be also listed, along with projects that would be identified as administrative priorities. Hodges suggested that an "assigned to" column be included as well to show whether oversight would fall for example to the Planning Board, the Historic Resources Committee, the Development office, or another committee or staff person.

Peter Gross noted that while grant applications for some important projects had been submitted, those items still should remain high on the priority list in case their funding doesn't come through. Gross added that the fact that those projects were chosen first for inclusion in applications suggests their position as among the top priorities. Some specific projects were discussed including the branding item under promotions and the work on the Opera House with its potential economic impact.

It was decided that Steve Wilson would get a spreadsheet together that would be distributed to Network Board members via email, and that members would then rate projects and return their ratings to Steve who would then collate them for the next meeting.

#### **8. Public Comments/Questions**

Donald White of the Camden Select Board spoke to the group about the upcoming vote on Articles VI and XI concerning the sign ordinance and non-conformance. White said that those who support these ordinance changes should say so publicly, and he expressed his opinion that the proposed changes would be very good for the community.

Martin Cates noted that he also hoped citizens would educate themselves on the contents of these articles and become informed so that they can vote on the accurate facts regarding the proposed changes.

#### **9. Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Downtown Network Board will be held on Tuesday, November 13<sup>th</sup> at 3:30 due to the fact that the second Monday of the month (the 12<sup>th</sup>) is a holiday.

Respectfully submitted,

---

Karen Brace  
Recording Secretary