



Discover the Jewel of the Maine Coast

Camden Downtown Network Board – minutes May 12, 2014, 3:30pm

PRESENT: Co-Chair Oscar Verest, Co-Chair Peter Gross, John Arnold, Pete Brown, Martin Cates, Deb Dodge, Samantha Hill, Cindy Lampley, Robin McIntosh, Meg Quijano, Town Manager Pat Finnigan, Code Enforcement Officer Stephen Wilson and Development Director Brian Hodges.

Guests: Don White, Camden Select Board; Meg Barclay, Camden Historic Resources Committee; Bill O'Donnell, Alternate Code Officer

ABSENT: Erick Anderson, Bernice Berger, Ellis Cohn, Staci Coomer, Flint Decker, Dave Jackson, Jill Lang, Barrie Pribyl, Amy Rollins, Lowrie Sargent, Jennifer Temple and Kipp Wright.

1. Call to Order

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

2. Approval of Board Minutes

Pete Brown made a motion to accept the minutes of the March 10, 2014 meeting. The motion was seconded by Deb Dodge. It was unanimously approved.

3. Historic Districts

Meg Barclay of the Historic Resources Committee presented ways that the Downtown Network Board could partner with her committee to promote economic development. She described their efforts to expand Camden's historic districts, specifically in the Bay View Street area as well as the area on Mechanic Street where the old theatre is located. She described benefits to building owners of being included in an historic district such as receiving tax credits when they restore their buildings.

Barclay suggested that the DNB & the Historic Resources Committee could co-host an event where building owners and tenants would be invited to learn more about historic districts. She said that a historian could attend to speak about aspects of the community worth preserving.

Secondly, Barclay told the group that the Planning Board had previously floated the idea of a

historic preservation ordinance change by the Select Board which had not been sent forward to the Town. DNB members spoke about ways to educate the Town on placing stewardship of the community's historic resources as a priority. It was agreed that an event to familiarize building owners & tenants with these initiatives could be considered for a September or October timeframe.

4. **DNB's 2nd anniversary**

Peter Gross said that currently, as the Downtown Network Board celebrates its second anniversary, the time is appropriate to take stock and set direction for the Board's work.

(a) Time and date of meeting

Alternate meetings times were suggested and the Board took a straw vote on whether early morning or mid-day would work best. A morning meeting was more popular, and it was decided that the next step would be for Brian to poll the whole Board via email. The group felt that Tuesdays or Wednesdays would be the preferred days to meet.

(b) Establish and Populate Two Committees

Brian Hodges said that there are two remaining committees which a Downtown Network Community is required to form and populate. Currently, the Organization Committee requirement is met by the Downtown Network Board itself, and the Economic Development Committee requirement is fulfilled by CEDAC. The remaining two committees that form the Maine Downtown Center's required structure are Promotion and Design, Hodges explained. He suggested that the Board consider establishing and populating these committees at this time. Citizens at large should be brought in by Board members to fill these committees, he added, rather than Board members trying to take it all on. Also, getting citizens involved would bring in new energy and ideas, he noted. He said the process might be for Board members to recommend potential committee members.

Pete Brown brought up the idea of holding an open meeting so that those invited to join could become familiar with the work of the Downtown Network Board before committing.

Pat Finnigan suggested that a Design Committee could tackle parking issues that face the Town, and that a Promotions Committee could work on the Tactical Urbanism project that is already underway. Meg Quijano and Pete Brown would serve as liaisons to the Promotions Committee since they are already heading up the Tactical Urbanism effort.

Members present agreed to bring forward names of potential committee members before the next DNB meeting.

5. **Tactical Urbanism Report**

Meg Quijano said that she, Pete Brown and Brian Hodges had walked the town to look at locations to begin Tactical Urbanism projects. They had decided that the three best locations would be: (1) the alleyway next to Cappy's leading down to the Public Landing, and (2/3) the corners where Chestnut Street and Route One meet, one adjacent to Camden National Bank, and the other on the side of Chestnut Street that borders the Village Green. Quijano said that no parking spaces in any of the locations would be lost by this plan.

Deb Dodge also noted that the side of the Montgomery Building is visible to people who enter Camden from the south on Route One. Steve Wilson informed the group that the stairs next to the Post Office were going to be taken down and that the Postmaster may be open to improving the area on the other side of the Post Office.

John Arnold made a motion to support Tactical Urbanism projects at these three locations. Deb Dodge seconded the motion. It was unanimously approved.

Names of people to get involved in the tactical urbanism project were discussed, including the neighbors of those spots. Hodges said it would be good to get the tactical urbanism project before the Select Board for their consideration in the near future.

6. **Parking**

Peter Gross opened a discussion on promoting the all-day parking available behind the Knox Mill. He said it's important that employees, residents and tourists use the lot more frequently so that the owner will continue to make it available to the Town. Pete Brown commended the Police Department on distributing informational flyers to increase awareness of the all-day parking.

Improvements in signage were discussed as were incentives for employees to use the lot. Cindy Lampley noted that if someone from out of town parks back there, there are no directions for getting to Main Street from the lot. She also brought up valet parking to benefit a charity as a possibility.

Oscar Verest pointed out that to park at the public landing is a relatively low cost at \$10 for a ticket, and that the Town might vary the amounts of parking fines in different areas of Town. Deb Dodge suggested that a good digital parking map of Camden's all-day parking locations could be created and linked to by the websites of businesses and downtown stores. It was also suggested that the parking locations be put on Google Maps since people use it while driving to find directions.

Meg Quijano said that the Parking signs could be moved and increased in size to make them more visible and effective. Pat Finnigan noted that more lighting may be needed in the all-day lots.

The group felt that work on the parking projects would belong in the area of the Promotions Committee. Gross said that everyone should forward suggestions for people who might consider joining the committees to Brian Hodges as soon as possible.

7. **Visitor Center Representatives Visit to Camden**

Robin McIntosh said that six Visitor Center directors from the Maine Tourism Association were recently given comprehensive tours of Camden and Rockland.

8. **Public Comments/Questions**

There were no public comments.

9. **Next Meeting**

TBD

Adjourn

Pete Brown made a motion to adjourn the meeting. John Arnold seconded this motion. The motion passed unanimously and the Board adjourned at 5:10.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Brace
Recording Secretary