

Town of Middlebury Planning Commission (MPC)
Rotary Small Meeting Room, First Floor
77 Main Street, Municipal Offices
Minutes of October 18, 2018
Draft

Members Present: Barbara Saunders, Chair, Sam Ostrow, Lucy Schumer, and Steve Terry, Todd Desabrais, Chris Robbins

Members Absent: Sarah Peluso

Staff Present: Jennifer Murray

Others Present: Adam Lougee (ACRPC)

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8 **1. Call to Order:** Barbara called the meeting to order at 12:10 pm.

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10 **2. Public Comment and adjustments to agenda:**

11 No public present

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13 **3. Minutes:**

14 Review of 8/16/2018 minutes- On a motion by Steve, 2nd by Sam, the PC voted to approve the
15 minutes of 8/16/2018 as submitted. Motion passed 5-0.

16
17 Review of 10/4/2018 minutes- On a motion by Todd, 2nd by Chris, the PC voted to approve
18 the minutes of 10/4/2018 as submitted. Motion passed 4-0.

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20 **4. Rail Platform project:**

21 PC reviewed the final results of the poll closed on October 5th. The results had not changed
22 significantly since the 2nd public meeting.

23
24 The PC then reviewed the consultant's responses to questions posed last meeting related to
25 the process of evaluating sites. The group decided to incorporate this additional info into a
26 larger conversation about each of the Evaluation Criteria. The group briefly discussed if it
27 made sense to simply go with the results of the poll, as they indicated a string public
28 preference for Site 1. Ultimately the PC decided to go with the original plan and
29 independently review each of the four sites according to the evaluation criteria using all the
30 information they have gathered thus far, using public opinion as another evaluation criterion.

31
32 Planning commission members discussed the evaluation criterion for each site, until
33 consensus could be reached on whether the site scored high (green), medium (yellow) or low
34 (red) for each criterion. Afterward, the group analyzed the results. There was a large
35 disparity in opinion between Sites 1 & 2 and Sites 3 & 4. Sites 1 & 2 ranked higher than sites 3
36 & 4 in all categories. The scoring exercise closely reflected the polling results, which
37 supported the validity of the survey.

38
39 Site 1 emerged as the top site after using the evaluation criteria to assess all four sites. The
40 engineer confirmed there will be a fence along the tracks on both sides, cutting off
41 pedestrians crossing the tracks. All agreed it will be very important to make a sidewalk

42 connection into the Marbleworks. During final design by VTrans, it will be very important to
43 understand the sidewalks and how they will connect in this area. Permission will need to be
44 obtained from property owners in the area to complete a connection.
45

46 Site 2 emerged as a second choice. It was even more walkable to downtown than Site 1, but
47 ranked lower than Site 1 in the capital cost, property availability and safety categories. It
48 would be harder to see someone on the platform for Site 2, as it would be approximately 5ft
49 lower than the grade of the abutting parking lot. Additionally, the National Bank indicated
50 they are not in favor of using use of their parking lot. It would be a more complex plan to
51 implement because of the various property owners involved.
52

53 The Planning Commission asked staff to prepare a memo to the Selectboard recommending
54 Site 1 as the preferred location, and Site 2 as a second preference. Barbara asked who the
55 staff contact would be for the next phase of this project, when VTrans prepares final plans.
56 Staff said that is unknown. The Planning Commission unanimously agreed that the Town
57 Planner should be the staff assigned to that project to represent the Town's interests in that
58 process. Adam expressed satisfaction with the project and the process, and recommends
59 pressing hard assistance with the Town's share because the selection of Site 1 over one of the
60 other more expensive sites saves the State a lot of money. Staff will have that memo ready
61 for the PC to review at their next meeting.
62

63 **5. Other Business:**

64 **Triangle Park and Printers Alley-** Barbara reported that Jim Gish will be present at the next
65 meeting (November 1st), to present current plans for Triangle Park and Printer's Alley.
66

67 **Next meeting of PC- November 1, 2018**
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69 **6. Adjournment:** Meeting concluded at 1:40.
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71 Submitted by: Jennifer Murray