

1 TOWN OF MIDDLEBURY
2 Downtown Improvement District Commission
3 Town Office Large Conference Room
4 Tuesday, November 13, 2018
5 Meeting Minutes
6

7 Commission Members Present: Amey Ryan, Gary Baker, Adam Franco, Lindsey Fuentes-George and
8 Becky Dayton. Steve Dupoise was absent.
9

10 Town Staff: Town Manager Kathleen Ramsay and Community Liaison Jim Gish
11 Also Present: Karen Duguay of Better Middlebury Partnership.
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13 The meeting was called to order by Chair Amey Ryan at 12:01 p.m.
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15 Approval of Agenda
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17 The agenda was approved as presented upon motion by Baker, seconded by Franco. The vote was 4 in
18 favor, 2 absent.
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20 Dayton entered the meeting.
21

22 Approval of Minutes
23

24 Franco moved to approve the minutes of September 18, 2018 minutes, and Baker seconded the motion.
25 The minutes were approved as presented with 5 in favor, 1 absent.
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27 Citizen Comments – None
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29 Public Hearing on DIDC Budget for FY20
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31 Ryan said Community Barn Ventures have a purchase contract on the Stone Mill building, and they have
32 some ideas for what they want to do with that space, and they are requesting \$2,500 from the DIDC for
33 exterior seating. She said they will retain a restaurant on a lower level, the main level will be a
34 community market for small groups of startup businesses to have a presence in downtown without
35 renting space, there will also be a shared office space on the next level, and the top level will be short-
36 term housing units. She said they also propose creating a nice outdoor seating area on the side facing
37 the art gallery.
38

39 Franco said their plans sound like a valuable addition to the community, but in terms of DIDC funding
40 any improvements, he wants to be sure these are outwardly targeted for the community not inwardly
41 targeted for their own space. He thinks the placement of this space needs to be clearly welcoming and
42 targeted to the public.

43
44 Ramsay said usually at a public hearing you gather possible ideas on how to use the funds, and then
45 there is discussion and a decision at a later meeting.
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47 Ryan said the DIDC has designated funds to other requests in the middle of a fiscal year, so suggested
48 going back to Community Barn Ventures and have them return later in the year with their request when
49 they have plans for this space. Ramsay said when Landworks designed the Town space in Mill Street, it
50 was to try and mimic the Marble Works side of the pedestrian bridge. She said perhaps some of the
51 ashlar blocks left over from the tunnel project could be used for furniture in this space.

52
53 Franco used the picnic tables at Marble Works as an example of privately owned items that serve a very
54 public function. Ryan pointed out they are very community minded and there is a community
55 component of their space. Franco said he wants to be cautious about the impression of the space.
56 Ramsay also said they should be mindful of setting a precedent.

57
58 Franco said the Walk-Bike Council of Addison County and the Safe Routes to School program have been
59 working on a bicycle parking inventory in town to find where there are prime destination spaces with
60 inadequate bike parking, and many of those are on private property, such as the Marble Works. He said
61 the study has not been completed, so there is no idea of what amount to request at this time.

62
63 Karen Duguay said the downtown WiFi project is very up in the air at the moment, and she doesn't think
64 the Neighbors' Together group will be coming to the DIDC for funding at this time. She said there are
65 some at this time who are uncertain about the value of the project.

66
67 Baker moved to close the public hearing, and Dayton seconded it. The vote was 5 in favor, 1 absent.

68
69 DIDC Budget for FY20

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71 Baker moved to adopt the DIDC budget for FY20 as prepared. Fuentes-George seconded the motion,
72 and it was approved with 5 in favor, 1 absent.

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74 Review and Adopt Strategic Document

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76 Ryan said there had been a couple of changes to this document that reiterate the DIDC is the vetting
77 source, not necessarily for idea-generating.

78
79 Franco moved to adopt the Strategic Document, and Dayton seconded the motion. The Strategic
80 Document was adopted with 5 in favor, 1 absent.

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85 Next Meeting Date

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87 Ramsay said if they didn't want to set a date now, she could reach out and schedule a meeting when
88 there was a need to.

89

90 Ryan said postcards had gone out to all the property owners in the DIDC regarding this hearing, yet no
91 one had attended the meeting. Duguay said she isn't quite sure why there isn't more public
92 participation in this current economy. Dayton said mail is not always the best way to get the attention
93 of business owners.

94

95 Dayton said she tries to speak as a Commission member at these meetings, but one thing she'd like to
96 see as a property owner is a collaborative to coordinate a flower program in the downtown. She's seen
97 it done in other places, and when the arrangements are all coordinated, someone maintaining them and
98 it has a standardized aesthetic, it looks great. She said the planters done by Neighbors' Together looked
99 so nice downtown this summer, and she also thinks it would take a burden off some of the downtown
100 businesses. Ryan said the dead flowers in the window boxes in front of the vacant storefront where
101 Clay's had been look awful, and she had contacted the realtor to ask if the owner was going to do
102 something about it. Ramsay said some places do displays in empty storefronts that say things like "This
103 space is full of opportunities", and with all the vacant properties there are downtown this might be an
104 option. Ryan said she and Duguay met with the realtor of the Clay space about something like that, and
105 they're willing to work with them on it. Fuentes-George said she had also seen an empty space with
106 historical displays on the town, which made it not look so empty walking by. They also discussed how
107 DIDC could help fund these flower and window displays, such as having the owner participating in cost.

108

109 Dayton also mentioned the snow removal after a storm and suggested some funds to support snow
110 removal that goes beyond the service the Town provides. They spoke of a possible part-time position
111 for someone through the Town or contracting the work out.

112

113 Adjournment

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115 Dayton moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Franco.

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117 The meeting adjourned at 12:33 p.m.

118

119 Respectfully submitted,

120 Beth Dow