

1 TOWN OF MIDDLEBURY
2 Downtown Improvement District Commission
3 Town Office Large Conference Room
4 Wednesday, November 30, 2022
5 Meeting Minutes
6

7 Commission Members Present: Amey Ryan, Adam Franco, Stacey Rainey, Lorraine Tobias, Bill
8 Cunningham, Dan Brown and Alternate Phyllis Stinson. Gary Baker was absent.
9

10 Town Staff: Town Manager Kathleen Ramsay and Director of Public Works Operations Bill Kernan
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 12:00 p.m.
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15 Approval of Agenda
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17 The agenda was approved as presented upon motion by Rainey, seconded by Tobias. The vote was 6 in
18 favor, 1 absent.
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20 Approval of June 21, 2022 Minutes
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22 Cunningham moved to approve the minutes and Brown seconded the motion. The minutes were
23 approved as presented with 6 in favor, 1 absent.
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25 Citizen Comments
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27 The Commission discussed the email received from David Silberman regarding his parking experience in
28 Woodstock, Vermont. He stated Woodstock uses ParkMobile meters in their downtown and failure to
29 pay a parking ticket is \$10. He furnished a photo of the ticket he received that indicates the fine is
30 waived with validation from any downtown business. He felt this was a very business and customer
31 friendly way to deal with downtown parking.
32

33 Ryan said she liked the concept of having a business validate a ticket. She said the businesses would feel
34 good about it because they wouldn't feel the customer was being penalized for shopping, and the
35 shopper would actually need to buy something to get the ticket validated, so she didn't really see a
36 downside to this process. She didn't feel it was a DIDC decision though.
37

38 The DIDC discussed options and whether or not there really was a parking problem in Middlebury, but
39 they felt it was worth investigating. Ramsay will discuss this with Police Chief Hanley and find out how
40 many tickets are given out annually. Ryan said if at some point it is determined to go with parking
41 meters, then the DIDC might consider assisting with the funding.
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43 Research on Wayfaring Signs
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45 Rainey said at the last meeting there was a good conversation regarding the need for signs to help
46 visitors find all the "nooks and crannies" of the downtown. She said after the meeting she and Tobias
47 did some research on what Middlebury had done in the past, what other municipalities are doing and

48 talked to two companies that design signs. She said one of these companies, Exit Design, would help
49 define the project and prepare bid documents to go to sign fabricators to make and install, but it is
50 costly and can as much as \$250,000. They talked to another company, Wood and Wood, and they are
51 more of a fabricator, but they do take towns through the entire process. She said both companies
52 indicated there are grant funds available for this type of wayfaring sign project.

53
54 Tobias said this project could be phased and they could choose to do the scoping study to define the
55 project, and Exit Design said that would cost between \$12, 000 to \$18,000. She said Wood and Wood
56 asked if this is a branding exercise and is the starting point to have Middlebury create a brand that could
57 link to the project.

58
59 Ryan said these prices seemed really high and Tobias said she felt Wood and Wood would be able to
60 provide something on a smaller scale. Rainey mentioned Waterbury, Danville, Montpelier, and
61 Vergennes who are doing similar projects, and they are about the same size or smaller than Middlebury.

62
63 Ramsay said it's a good idea to do the feasibility study, so we'd have a better idea of what we were
64 looking at for cost for future funding. Ramsay said there is a Municipal Planning Grant that might cover
65 something like this, and those applications would be due next November, and she thought visuals would
66 be useful when applying for grant funds. She asked the DIDC if they were interested in doing a Request
67 for Proposal (RFP) because we'd need to have 3 quotes unless they wanted to argue for a sole-source
68 provider.

69
70 Rainey said there appeared to be \$4000 in the DIDC budget for this, and Ramsay said that was placed in
71 the budget when they were discussing a kiosk, and the fund balance is about \$35,000.

72
73 Cunningham said VTrans did an intermodal sign study relating to buses and trains, so there are studies
74 available, and Town Planner Jennifer Murray might have information on these studies.

75
76 Ramsay reviewed the budget and said there had been \$10,000 set aside for a wayfaring sign/kiosk, solar
77 cell phone charging stations and wifi in Triangle Park. They discussed possible budgeting options and
78 what amount of money would be considered reasonable and what the next steps would be.

79
80 Bill Kernan said Waterbury was a multi-year project and they began with branding, so we'd almost need
81 a scoping study to find out what the business community wants, and it might be cheaper than a sign
82 plan.

83
84 Karen Duguay said there has never been a cohesive plan and the feedback she gets is that visitors are
85 confused because the signs all look different, so she thinks everything should look the same to make
86 things easier to find. Ryan said that sounds like branding. Branding was discussed and the advantages
87 of having one that is easily recognized.

88
89 Cunningham asked if it was pedestrians or drivers that are confused, and Duguay said from what she's
90 heard it's the people driving and trying to find things. Ryan said if what they're trying to do is direct
91 drivers to public spaces that might change the scope of the project. Duguay offered to contact someone
92 in Vergennes to see what process they went through for their signs.

93
94

95 Report on Mill Street Porta Potty Pilot Project

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97 Ramsay reported that after a “rocky” start with the porta potty (tipped over) there were no more
98 problems, but she isn’t sure how much it was used. Kernan said he can ask the vendor who services it
99 for an idea on how often it’s being used. Ramsay said the Porta Potty behind the Town Offices and
100 Library are heavily used and they are looking into keeping it there over the winter months. Kernan said
101 the Mill Street unit might not be as visible as it could be, and he thinks it sits back far enough it won’t
102 impede the snowplow drivers.

103

104 Wireless Internet in Triangle Park

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106 Ramsay said she is still working with St. Stephens church on the technology.

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108 Next Meeting

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110 The next meeting was tentatively set for Thursday, February 16, 2023, or if there isn’t enough business
111 for a meeting there could be an email update.

112

113 Commission Member Concerns

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115 Duguay said BMP as been doing the wreaths that go around Town for as long as she’s been Director, and
116 the Fire Department puts them up, DPW takes them down, and then the wreaths and lights are taken to
117 the Solid Waste Transfer Station, so while they’re beautiful, it is a bit of an environmental waste. She
118 has been looking into the possibility of hiring out the downtown Christmas décor, so at some point she
119 wanted to see if this is a project would be something that can be pursued as a BMP and DIDC project,
120 but at this time she doesn’t have any idea of how much it would cost. Ryan said even if you hire
121 someone you have to deal with waste, and she imagines it’s quite expensive. It was agreed to think
122 about it and maybe talk about it at the February meeting.

123

124 The meeting adjourned at 12:54 p.m.

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126 Respectfully submitted,

127 Beth Dow