

Quarterly Town/College Lunch
Town Hosting – Middlebury Inn
Monday, September 17, 2018 -- 12:15 p.m.
Meeting Notes

Attending: Middlebury Selectboard Members Brian Carpenter, Nick Artim and Victor Nuovo; Town Manager Kathleen Ramsay; Middlebury College President Laurie Patton, David Donahue, Special Assistant to the President & Director of Community Relations, and David Provost, Executive Vice President for Finance & Administration.

Bridge Replacement Project Update. Brian Carpenter gave a brief update on the Downtown Bridge Replacement Project, noting that a public meeting on the landscape design of the park in Printers Alley and Triangle Park will be held on Wednesday, September 19 at the Town Offices.

Economic Health Committee – Charge & Timeline. Brian reported that the Selectboard appointed an Economic Health Committee. Noting the uptick in retail vacancies in the downtown, Laurie Patton suggested that inviting retail developers to a forum to share insights on attracting retail to Middlebury might be informative and beneficial. Laurie also noted that the College is considering ways to attract students to the Downtown more frequently and is open to suggestions in that regard.

Downtown Master Plan. Brian Carpenter said that the Town is eager to proceed with master planning in the downtown and will apply for grant funding for the project, which is estimated at approximately \$50,000, one more time. If the grant application is not successful, Brian said that the Town will consider other approaches to moving the effort forward, perhaps with a fractional approach and the use of volunteers.

Cross Street Bridge/Local Option Tax Surplus. Carpenter said that the Selectboard, working with the Infrastructure Committee, is in the process of developing a proposal to allocate a portion of the Local Option Tax/Cross Street Bridge Fund Balance above what is needed for debt service and maintenance of the bridge for other uses for voters' consideration at Town Meeting. Potential projects of mutual interest were discussed, including the long-planned Exchange Street roundabout (which could/should be funded by the State Agency of Transportation, Brian noted), a sidewalk/path on Exchange Street and Downtown Master Planning (with the latter two also eligible for state grants, Brian said).

Rail Platform. David Donahue mentioned the Town's current community survey on the rail platform location, noting that one of the four locations in the survey is on College-owned property, near the hospital.

Transportation. Nick Artim mentioned a trend toward ride-sharing in lieu of buses in rural areas as a potentially more financially- and environmentally-sustainable way to meet the need for public transit.

Education as an Economic Driver. Victor Nuovo would like to discuss the College's potential role in the education of students of all ages as an economic driver/attraction to Middlebury. Laurie Patten said that a pilot project of two intergenerational classes, expanding on efforts already under way at the College, could be discussed.

Workforce Development. David Donahue reported on the recent Addison County Workforce Development Stakeholder Summit, noting in particular the central role of affordable housing and childcare in the discussion of workforce development.

Next Meeting Date. The group agreed to exchange dates for four meetings in the coming year in December, March, May and September.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kathleen Swington Ramsay
Town Manager