

Town of Middlebury Planning Commission (MPC)
Rotary Small Meeting Room, First Floor
77 Main Street, Municipal Offices
Minutes of September 27, 2018
Draft

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

Members Absent: none

Staff Present: Jennifer Murray

Others Present: Erica Quallen, Davis Saladino, Brenda Ellis, Christy Lynn, Bill Cunningham, Peter Schumer, Megan Brakeley, Faith Terry, Erik Remsen, Deb Sachs, Rob Carter, Robin Scheu, Jim Gish, Kathleen Ramsay, Heather Seeley, Adam Franco, Gary Winslett, Victoria DeWind, Bruce Burgess, Mary Alice Rath, Gary Baker, Irene Barna, Hudson Tilford, Barbara Saunders, Frank Winkler, Janet Winkler, John Flowers

1. Call to Order: Barbara called the meeting to order as warned at 6:45 pm.

2. Planning Commission Comments:

Jennifer asked if any other thoughts had come up for Steering Committee members since their last meeting. There were none. She asked if there's anything specific they want to share with the consultant about info to share or collect in this public meeting. Sam recommended we ask the consultant to explain that these are preliminary/concept plans as well as explain the process for developing final plans in the future.

3. Rail Platform siting project, Public Input Meeting #2:

Jennifer gave an introduction and Dave Saladino presented the survey results as well as an overview of concept plans for each of the four proposed sites. He notes that property acquisition was not included in any of the costs.

Gary Baker- would have liked more people within his neighborhood to have been contacted directly about the meeting.

Hudson Tilford- Why do you need such a large slab of concrete for a platform? Dave S. – Discussions with Amtrak/VTrans actually reduced the size from 500ft to 300ft.

Gary Baker- For Site 1, he is concerned about creating a path/connection from the platform to town and safety for track crossing.

Jennifer notes the platform at Site 2 is lower than the parking lot.

Gary Winslett- asked about the possible price of acquisition at Site 3, Dave S. said it really depends.

Megan Brakeley- Regarding the safety of Site 3, she said there are eyes on the site, as you can see it from Cross Street bridge. She has concerns about the narrowness of the access into

37 Site 3, and the proximity of existing buildings. Jennifer asked is re-using the existing access
38 road for the bridge project would be preferable from her perspective as an adjacent
39 landowner, and Megan did not think so.
40
41 Irene Barna – this is actually the site of the original train station
42
43 Dave Saladino noted that Site 1 ranked highest in the poll, and asked if those assembled saw
44 any disadvantages to Site 1.
45
46 Adam Franco- Site 2 had advantages- it’s a quick walk downtown, bus routes on Seymour
47 rather than detoured bus loop (bus entering Marbleworks then stopping on way out) for Site
48 1. Maple Street needs a sidewalk. Current design for Printer’s Alley doesn’t allow a Main
49 Street connection.
50
51 Rob Carter- asked for explanation of why the Marbleworks site was eliminated. Dave S.
52 explained it was because an agreement on parking couldn’t be worked out with the property
53 owner.
54
55 Frank Winkler- thinks the concept plans for the in-town sites might be undersized for long-
56 term parking. Is there enough?
57
58 Hudson Tilford- believes there is on-street parking capacity for serving Site 2. He noted 6
59 unoccupied spaces on Seymour in front of Coldwell Banker this morning. Counts 13 spaces
60 with the new on-street parking on Methodist Lane and on-street parking in front of the Bank,
61 which would defray lost parking in their current lot.
62
63 Chris Robbins- suggested adding a site for consideration that would be a “hybrid” location
64 somewhere on Seymour between the National Bank parking lot and the old train station
65 (County Tire). Several members of the audience postulated about what that might look like.
66 Jennifer said the Steering Committee would take the suggestion under consideration with the
67 help of the engineer and some mapping at their next Planning Commission meeting.
68
69 Christy Lynn- asked the consultant to explain the differences in accessibility for the various
70 sites
71
72 Frank Winkler- where do we get the money for property acquisition, how would we find that
73 money within the town budget? Kathleen explained there is currently no allocation of funds
74 for this project in the capital budget, so that question needs to be answered. Heather Seeley
75 offered that they would like to spend as little as possible.
76
77 Bruce Burgess- disagrees that town hall could be considered downtown. In defense of site 4,
78 he notes there is more parking and more room.
79
80 Adam Franco- is not in favor of Site 4, as it is a longer distance from downtown on foot and is
81 designed for vehicular-only access.
82

83 Rob Carter- thinks we should continue to consider Site 4 an opportunity

84

85 Faith Terry- wrapped up and summarized several comments made by others. She thinks it
86 important to select a site that affords us flexibility in the future.

87

88 Next steps- The Planning Commission will use this input to assess each site according to the
89 evaluation criteria, and prepare a final recommendation for the Selectboard's consideration
90 at the SB's first November meeting.

91

92 **4. Adjournment:** Meeting concluded at 8:30.

93

94 Submitted by: Jennifer Murray