

Sunderland Village Center Committee (SVCC) meeting

Minutes of Meeting January 4, 2023

1. In attendance: Lorin Starr, Chair, Liz Sillin, Geoff Kravitz, in person, Christyl Drake-Tremblay, Rock Warner, Jessica Skibiski, Kyle Snow, attended remotely. Invited guest Wayne Feiden, Director of the Center for Resilient Metro-Region at UMass, and Recorder reporter Chris Larrabee also attended remotely.
2. Meeting called to order 7:05 PM by Lorin.
3. Visioning – next steps. Wayne Feiden was invited by Lorin to come and speak to the group about how best to proceed toward getting community input about a vision for the village center. Mr. Feiden indicated that there are a number of ways to do “visioning” – but it must be community driven. As an initial matter, one needs what he called “ground truth” – meaning getting some external expertise that will provide clear analysis as to existing conditions as well as options for the community to consider. He indicated that for our village center we need perspectives from three different areas of expertise:
 - a. Transportation planning and an understanding of MassDOT process. Need to differentiate between “pedestrian” v. “vehicular” perspectives. Expertise in streetscapes and road design essential.
 - b. Landscape/streetscape planning – explore options to enhance but maintain safety with respect to the pedestrian and vehicular environments
 - c. Land use/zoning – explore options to enhance the kind of village center the community might want

Then we need good graphic presentations and realistic, if aspirational, goals represented. - Mr. Feiden recommends “short term intense teams” covering all the above disciplines but on a short-term basis.

Lorin emphasized that what we have been missing are site-specific visuals. As a result of the presentation from Mr. Feiden, it was decided that we need a team with the above-expertise represented, and that we would develop an RFQ – seeking proposals to determine qualified teams. (Mr. Feiden thought we would get a better response from an RFQ than an RFP). Mr. Feiden left the meeting at 7:10.

It was decided after Mr. Feiden left that we would develop the RFQ, identify some firms and get their qualifications, and seek visual representation of how different transportation, landscape/streetscape design, and land use/zoning changes would impact the center of town.

4. Minutes: Minutes of August 24 were unanimously approved as amended, Minutes of October 19 were approved unanimously.
5. MA DOT Rt 116 sidewalk project. The delineated bike lanes still not painted. Geoff indicated that a letter is being written to legislators – the project as completed was not what we were told was going to be put in place.

6. 47/116 Intersection project. DOT and Beth at FRCOG both know that the VCC has funding to do a study relating to the village center.
7. School Street With funding approved, the plan is to focus on finishing plans for that project.
8. Riverside Park. There were bidders for the bathroom project – unfortunately the low bidder made a math error.
9. Sanderson Place. As of January, no one has moved in yet – an emergency radio repeater in the building needs to be installed, and once in place, people can begin moving in. Hope that will be in the next few weeks.

Meeting adjourned 7:40 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Liz Sillin