

Bi-Town Economic Development Committee
Thursday September, 4 2014 8:00-9:00 am

Attendance: Ryan Holton, Heidi Taylor, Ken Black, Carlo Pilgrim, Pat Weisbrich, Randy Terk, Rob Aubin, Dale Ribaud, Andy Robinson, Gretchen Havreluk, Laura Sibilia, Adam Grinold, Scott Murphy, and Sharon Cunningham

Approved minutes from August Meeting: Heidi moved the motion Ken 2nd passed

Next Project:

Discuss goals of the Mullin Report & FEMA Long Term Recovery Plan
See attached- discussion in italics.

Workforce Committee Update:

BDCC is working on surveying local businesses as to workforce needs.

Updates:

Wilmington- Gretchen reported on the popularity of the Wilmington Façade Grant. Working on streetscape design for the entire downtown. Managing five grants currently.

Dover - Ken reported they have received a sidewalk construction grant for \$328K that would start at Dorr Fitch Road to the south and also received a sidewalk scoping study grant for post office to fire house. Both of these grants are through VTrans Alternative Grants. Working on signing easements and construction would begin in the Spring.

Mount Snow- Not available

Hermitage Club- Dale reported they are up to 350 members and going well. The Hermitage Club made Inc. Magazine's Inc. 5000 List (fastest growing private companies) as well as the number one growth co in VT. Club House will have a soft opening on Columbus Day weekend and officially opening in December.

Sveds- CEDS projects are due on Sept 30th. Windham County Economic Development Program deadline is Sept 23rd.

Chamber- Working on the USDA Cohesive Branding project, VT Wine & Harvest Festival is Sept. 19th-21st, The Make a Wish golf tournament Sept 12th looking for golfers and sponsors and began planning for Bright lights.

Next Meeting is Oct 2nd at 8am

Heidi motion to adjourn

Respectfully Submitted,

Gretchen M. Havreluk

Excerpts from Mullin Report & FEMA Long Term Recovery Report *Applicable Bi-Town Committee Work*

August 2014

-High Speed Broadband /Fiber Optic and Cellular Service Connectivity (Mullin Report and FEMA Report) *Ken reported tremendous improvement; however the rest of the world is improving at a faster rate. Randy suggested that we stay active on this topic. Gretchen stated in order to draw technology companies we need to be advanced and in order to do that we need a collective front to get the better connectivity here in the Valley. Carlo suggested that we need a strategy expert to help guide us to move the project forward. Ken will contact someone at the state level to provide us with an update and suggestions.*

-Build on Vermont Brand Products (Mullin Report) *Wilmington has a store opening this fall called the Village Roost that will carry multiple Vermont products.*

-Keep in the Valley Campaign (FEMA Report) *This project fell as it was withdrawn from the FEMA Projects post printing the report.*

-Protecting Cultural, historical & topographical Character (Mullin Report)

Also included Site Design Standards for individual towns to work on Members of The committee felt that this is not a high priority and the towns can work on this individually; however pointed out that we should share our expertise on the subjects with each other.

-Partner with Mount Snow (Mullin Report) *Currently happening as well as including The Hermitage Club Bi-Town members feel that we are doing this well.*

-Long Term Capital Improvement in Infrastructure (Mullin Report)

Also included school needs for individual towns to work on Adam suggested that we collaborate closer with the fire & police departments. The purpose would be to save money and provide the towns with the best services. The time to work on this is when there is a need or attrition within the departments. Scott and Randy both agreed that they would be willing to have the discussion with the select boards.

-Technical Business Assistance- Improvement for entrepreneurs, create a workforce development group Integrate UVM Extension, VTSBDC, CCV and the Mount Snow Valley Chamber of Commerce (Mullin Report) Business Assistance Program (FEMA Report)

-Hire an Economic Development Planner (Mullin Report) *Done!*

-Diversified Housing Options – For seniors, special needs, local workers & young families (FEMA Report)

-Recreational Trail System Improvements (FEMA Report) *Work in progress!*

The Bi-Town Charge states that we should engage in Legislative/Political Activities Recommending to Select Boards positions towns may want to take regarding proposed legislation, Planning out strategies on how to influence legislation, and Implementing actions such as forums, etc. designed to give area influence with political leaders regarding economic development. (*This we do not do much of, if any*)

To decide on the next project, Randy feels that we need to have a separate meeting outside of the regular meeting to brain storm and triage the ideas. Laura commented that this group started out of a snowless winter to take action to help combat issues as this. There is more leverage together and also a reporting mechanism for what we are doing in our towns.

Adam commented that a steering committee has been working with the Chamber on a Cohesive Branding and Marketing Study that will hopefully be wrapped up in the next month. This group would be great to help in supporting that effort by taking back to the communities and promote the image.

Laura suggested having the two select boards get together to review the Bi-Town accomplishments; as well as talk about the branding and town led workforce development projects.

ACTION ITEM: Adam, Pat, Sharon, Andy, Laura, Randy & Jim will bring a proposal to the October meeting for presentation to the select boards.