

Parksley Downtown Revitalization: Get On Board!

Parksley Downtown Revitalization Project Management Team Meeting Minutes

October 4, 2018

Town Office, Parksley, VA

Management Team Members Present:

Wayne Marshall Jr., Mayor
Letitia Greer, Town of Parksley
Ellen Johnson, ES Railway Museum
Paul Muhly, Accomack County Supervisor

Management Team Members Absent:

Billy Graham, Business Owner
Cara Burton, ES Public Library
Dana Bundick, Resident
Elaine Meil, A-NPDC
Frank Russell, Town Council
John Aigner, A-NPDC
Mark Bowden, Accomack County
Harris Phillips, Business Owner/Acc. Co.
Supervisor
Tim Valentine, Business Owner

Other Attendees Present:

Dan Matthews, Town Council
Julie Nash, Town Council
Curt Smith, A-NPDC
Shannon Alexander, A-NPDC
Jeff Stauffer, Taste of Eden Farmers Market

The meeting was called to order at 5:33 pm.

Curt Smith initiated introductions and followed with a review of the agenda.

Minutes of September 6, 2018

No edits were suggested to the meeting minutes.

Staff Update

Committee Attendance Record –

The attendance record was presented.

Economic Restructuring Plan (ERP)

Updates on ERP Project Progress—

The following activities were reported as progress towards implementation of the ERP since the August meeting. These activities will be reported to DHCD to demonstrate that the group is working diligently to implement the ERP:

- Rail car improvements completed in October (painting, etc.).

- New signs installed at Paint It Pretty October 5, 2018.
- Painted façade at Town square building under new ownership.
- New banners hung on lamp posts around downtown during September

Participants were reminded to track all downtown revitalization expenditures, including for the Parksley Golden Spike Festival, as match for CDBG grant and façade improvement funding.

Physical Improvement Plan

Downtown Revitalization Project Mapping Session—

Curt provided a brief review of the main sites and projects included in the maps that were emailed to the Committee in September.

Brief discussion ensued regarding plans for the area between Jaxon’s and the new library. It was recommended that VDOT be contacted to request guidance for traffic calming alternatives for the alleyway. It was noted that Frank Russell previously sought such recommendations from VDOT. Curt agreed to follow up with Frank on the matter.

Curt will speak with property owners regarding the potential parking lot across from the Post Office.

Discussion ensued regarding the former Maddox Auto Store property. It was noted that this will become an increasingly visible and critical downtown property once the library opens. It was proposed that the property may need to be included in the project, as there have been improvements implemented in the last two years. No action was taken by the Committee.

Discussion ensued regarding “L: Wayfinding Signage”. It was noted that there is a base for a sign that had removed along Adelaide Avenue along the northern end of the Town Square. Dan Matthews agreed to check on permission of that location and report back to the Committee.

Discussion ensued about the parking area in the Town Square potentially to be removed and grassed. It was noted that the area in front of the Farmers Market would be ideal to remain as parking for convenience to customers, approximately 50% of whom are elderly. Star Transit has hung signs and using the area near the Farmers Market as a transfer station instead of just a stop as of September 2018. No major objections to this proposal were heard and Curt will make the adjustment on the preliminary downtown master plan map.

Designating parking spots near the new memorial in Town Square for Military Veterans was proposed.

Outdoor stage ideas were presented, reviewed, and discussed. Curt will look into Crisfield pavilions as potential examples as requested by the group. Curt will also seek costs from the Town of Exmore for their new stage.

It was requested that the parcels down the street from the Shirt Factory be included in the defined downtown area. Specifically, the parcel with the Tax Service and the parcel with the Confederate Monument should be included. It was determined that neither property would be defined as physically blighted and therefore would not be eligible for participation in the façade improvement program. Discussion ensued and it was agreed that the boundaries be adjusted to include those properties.

Curt reviewed five additional projects that were not included on the map during the September meeting. The Committee decided to add project locations for enhancing existing sidewalks and new landscaping. The Committee decided not to add locations for playground equipment, installation of decorative banners or flags on light posts as this was recently completed in September, 2018 and repainting existing crosswalks and curbs.

Enhance Existing Sidewalks and Build New Sidewalks – Reviewed map that identified parcels with needed construction of sidewalks and where existing sidewalks need repairs. Transportation Alternatives Program with VDOT requires 25% match. It was recommended that the Town pursue these funds for the majority of sidewalk needs, rather than DHCD, and focus on only the highest priority areas as DHCD funding will be very limited. The Committee requested that sidewalk projects along Bennett Street be prioritized. Specifically, repairs or replacement on the north side in front of the library and new sidewalks on the south side of Bennett. Needed repairs beside the firehouse on Dunne Avenue were prioritized as well.

Following discussion of downtown projects, the updated list of projects is summarized in the following table and maps:

Map #	Identified Priority Project	Preliminary Preferred Location	Comments/Concerns
A	Public Stage	In parking lot, roughly between railway museum and farmer's market	- Must consider egress for emergency situations - Must have adequate electrical capabilities for concerts - Convert blighted parking lot to grassy area
B	Authentic Railcar	Adjacent to current gazebo	To be used for small business
C	Railcar Kit(s)	Adjacent to current gazebo or across the parking lot in grass by railroad	To be used for lodging or business. To be competitive, must show a plan to attract business owners.
D	Water Fountain/ Splash Pad	In current gazebo area	Safety, water efficiency and cost concerns noted
E	Informational Kiosk	Current gazebo area	
F	Public Outdoor Art Displays	Jaxon's Russell's Bridal, & Parksley Art Gallery façades	Sculptures, signs, etc.
G	Upgraded Pedestrian Corridor	Vacant parcels along Dunne Avenue connecting to library	
H	Build New Sidewalks	Various downtown locations	Fill priority sidewalk gaps in highest pedestrian use areas
I	Establish New Crosswalks	-Four-way crosswalk at Cassatt Ave & Bennett St -Cassatt Ave at Catherine St -Cassatt Ave at Mary St	Preference would be to use decorative pavers for crosswalks instead of paint
J	Traffic Calming Techniques on Roads	Roadway between library & Dunne Ave	
K	Establish Additional Parking	In parcel behind gas station and/or beside old shirt factory	
L	Wayfinding Signage	-Corner of Bennett St & Dunne Ave -Intersection of Bennett St & library parking lot	

Map #	Identified Priority Project	Preliminary Preferred Location	Comments/Concerns
		-Corner of Cassatt Ave & Adelaide St (potentially use existing old signage base)	
M	Historical Interpretive Signage	-New grassy area by farmer's market/new stage --Former ballfield	
N	Upgrade Existing Street Lighting	-Vacant parcel adjacent to Club Car Café -Bennett St side of Jaxon's	
O	Vehicle Charging Stations	Near police station or in library parking lot	
P	Enhance Existing Sidewalks	-Bennett Street in front of the library -Beside firehouse	
Q	New Landscaping	-Adjacent to police station -Around the Town Office -Any area of the parking lot removed	

Figure 1 – Preliminary Conceptual Projects for Entire Downtown Parksley Area



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|---|---|---|-------------------------------------|
| A Public Stage | F Public Outdoor Art (sculptures, signs, etc.) | K Establish Additional Parking | P Enhance Existing Sidewalks |
| B Authentic Railcar (for small business) | G Upgraded Pedestrian Corridor | L Wayfinding Signage | Q New Landscaping |
| C Railcar Kit(s) (for lodging or business) | H Build New Sidewalks | M Historic Interpretive Signage | — Downtown Boundary |
| D Water Fountain/Splash Pad | I Establish New Crosswalks | N Upgrade Existing Street Lighting | |
| E Informational Kiosk | J Traffic Calming Techniques On Roads | O Electric Vehicle Charging Stations | |

Figure 2 – Preliminary Conceptual Projects for Parksley Town Square Area



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|---|---|---|-------------------------------------|
| A Public Stage | F Public Outdoor Art (sculptures, signs, etc.) | K Establish Additional Parking | P Enhance Existing Sidewalks |
| B Authentic Railcar (for small business) | G Upgraded Pedestrian Corridor | L Wayfinding Signage | Q New Landscaping |
| C Railcar Kit(s) (for lodging or business) | H Build New Sidewalks | M Historic Interpretive Signage | — Downtown Boundary |
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| E Informational Kiosk | J Traffic Calming Techniques On Roads | O Electric Vehicle Charging Stations | |

Blight Identification and Removal or Remediation Plan Report -

Curt presented the final list and a map of physically-blighted buildings from the Downtown Blight Working Group.

Discussion ensued regarding the former T-Shirt factory buildings. The initial exterior structural inspections identified major potential issues that would make the property ineligible for the façade improvement program and potentially prohibitive for redevelopment. If the property owner desired to have the buildings demolished, the costs should be sourced from an alternative grant (DHCD Industrial Revitalization Fund). It was noted that a cost estimate is needed for the demolition work for this and several additional properties.

Discussion ensued as to whether the Town has the power to condemn the buildings and move forward with demolition work. Curt indicated that the Town could adopt an ordinance to enforce the Property Maintenance Code included in the Code of VA although he learned that other VA localities have not done so due to various reasons. Paul Muhly indicated that he would talk to the Accomack County attorney about options for the T-Shirt factory and other buildings. It was noted that the Town needs to look into legal abilities with regards to buildings in disrepair that impact safety and adjacent properties.

Facade Improvement Program Guidelines Report -

Curt distributed the project fact sheet and the non-binding agreement that needs to be distributed to the identified eligible property owners.

Curt indicated that the Committee will need to select two buildings to have an architect design façade improvements and cost estimates during the planning grant stage.

Curt will continue to work with the FIP working group (Wayne, Frank, Paul) to solicit participation, but additional assistance will be needed from the entire group. Curt indicated that he would be hosting a booth at the upcoming Parksley Festival to inform the public about the downtown revitalization project.

Physical Improvement Plan Consultant Hiring -

Curt requested that 2-3 volunteers agree to serve on a consultant interview subcommittee. Wayne, Dan, and Letitia were approved as the subcommittee.

Ellen Johnson agreed to reach out to David Beringer about the potential to have architectural drawings done. Curt agreed to contact John Crockett with ESCC and Salisbury University about students capable of doing design work. Wayne agreed to reach out to John Chamberlain from Beacham Construction. Ellen will solicit potential assistance from the VA Cooperative Extension. Dan is to reach out to licensed architect that lives in Chincoteague, Laura Lint.

Schedule, next steps, and project responsibilities

It was reported that the first of two public hearings would not be held during the October Town Council meeting due to an advertising issue. Instead the first public hearing will be

held during the November 12 Town Council meeting meeting. The next Committee meeting will be on November 1.

The meeting adjourned at 7:47 pm.

Post-Meeting Action Items

- **EVERYONE: IDENTIFY SPECIFIC EXAMPLES FOR ALL DOWNTOWN PROJECTS AND COMPILE AS MUCH INFORMATION AS POSSIBLE REGARDING COSTS, ETC. AND BRING TO NOVEMBER 1 COMMITTEE MEETING**
- Shannon Alexander - Follow up with Tesla about electric car charging stations and reach out to alternative company as well. Research who pays for the electricity used at charging stations.
- Curt Smith, Frank Russell, Paul Muhly, Wayne Marshall, Letitia Greer and all other Committee members/partners - Reach out to blighted buildings property owners and supply Participation Statement of Interest form and information packet, Curt will email digital versions to the Town.
- Frank Russell – provide previous traffic calming recommendations provided by VDOT for the road between the back of Jaxons and the library. Curt to contact VDOT for new recommendations if Frank unable to locate previous recommendations.
- Paul Muhly - Look into County and Town legal options for dealing with derelict structures and potential demolitions.
- Dan Matthews - Check into permissions about use of existing sign base on Adelaide.
- Ellen Johnson – solicit potential assistance for architectural drawings and cost estimates from David Beringer and contact VA Cooperative Extension to explore possibility of providing design assistance
- Dan Matthews – solicit potential assistance from Laura Lint of Chincoteague for architectural drawings and cost estimates
- Curt Smith & Letitia Greer - Put out RFP for consultant.
- Letitia Greer – advertise first public hearing for November 1