

Parksley Downtown Revitalization Project Management Team Meeting Minutes
February 12, 2018
Town Office, Parksley

Management Team Members Present:

Cara Burton, ES Public Library
Paul Muhly, Accomack County
Wayne Marshall Jr., Interim Mayor

Management Team Members Absent:

Tim Valentine, Business Owner
Dana Bundick, Resident
Harris Phillips, Business Owner
Billy Graham, Business Owner
John Aigner, A-NPDC
Mark Bowden, Accomack County
Elaine Meil, A-NPDC

Other Attendees Present:

Curt Smith, A-NPDC
Shannon Alexander, A-NPDC
Dan Matthews, Resident
Julie Nash, Resident
Betty Farley, Resident

The meeting was called to order at 3:06 pm.

Community announcements

- Island House fund raiser for ES Library on March 17 (St. Patty's Day) tickets available at Book Bin, etc.
- ES Annual Tourism Summit registration open

CIG Planning Grant Schedule Review

- VDHCD indicated that the project grant funds could be pulled if the required materials from the Town were not submitted soon
- March 2019 final application due; Pre-application due in December 2018
- Plan is to begin to shift focus to developing detailed construction project plans and budgets during April/May meetings
- The preliminary CIG application budget from Planning Grant Report was reviewed

Side discussion: incorporate art/culture into grant application projects; improve area connecting downtown to library

Community Vision Statement

Meeting participants reviewed the two alternatives. The majority of participants preferred alternative one. Minor edits to the wording of Alternative 1 were recommended and those who

originally preferred Alternative 2, indicated that the edited version of Alternative 1 was satisfactory.

Alternative 1, with edits was presented as follows:

Parksley is a historic railroad town centrally located to water-access and regional attractions on Virginia's Eastern Shore. The walkable town square offers unique shops, restaurants, museums, memorials, and a year-round Farmers Market. Victorian homes dot the town's tree-lined streets. A state-of-the-art library and cultural center provide modern conveniences and genealogy research activities. Parksley's historic charm and Southern hospitality make it a great place to live, work and play.

Consensus was reached on this as the final vision statement.

Marketing Strategies

The tagline preferred during previous meetings was "Parksley: There's Only One". Discussion ensued regarding the existing ideas and the following new ideas were offered:

- *The Right Track to Historic Charm*
- *Mainline Through History*
- *Railway to Southern Tradition*
- *Historic Frontier of the Shore*
- *History Happened Here*
- *History in the Making*
- *Discover your/our History*
- *History on the Move*
- *Parksley, Get on Board*

It was requested that Curt Smith send an email to the Project Management Team members asking for preference of the existing preferred tagline and the newly offered taglines.

Discussion ensued regarding measures that could be taken to enhance participation in the project. It was suggested that the tagline, "Get On Board" would be an excellent tagline for the project. Meeting participants agreed and it was determined that the downtown revitalization project would utilize the tagline, "Get On Board" from here on.

Economic Restructuring Plan

Curt Smith presented the four goals identified during the December meeting. Previously identified needs and revitalization activity ideas from Spring 2017 meetings were then presented. Participants were then directed to take the ideas from Spring 2017 and group them in with their appropriate goal. Upon doing this exercise it was determined that two of the goals, "Improve & Enhance Infrastructure & Staffing Capacity" and "Enhance Public Safety & Accessibility", were very similar. It was determined that the two goals should be merged into one goal. Additionally, it was determined that an objective of the "Improve & Enhance Infrastructure & Staffing Capacity", "Lodging & Community Gathering Place", should be altered by removing lodging from the objective and placing lodging into an objective for the "Business Development" goal.

Following these changes, the updated Goals and Objectives identified were:

1. Improve & Enhance Infrastructure & Staffing Capacity -
 - a. Community Gathering Place
 - b. Historic Preservation & Promotion
 - c. Stormwater Drainage Repair
 - d. Aesthetic Qualities (Beautification)
 - e. Enhance Public Safety & Accessibility
2. Develop a Branding and Marketing Strategy
3. Business Development
 - a. Lodging needs
 - b. Enhance website

Additional needs that were identified but not yet directly addressed in the goals and objectives included:

- Need to revisit staffing capacity much more in depth.
- Strategies to capitalize on any future improvements to the rail infrastructure.
- Objectives focusing on retaining existing businesses.

Additional discussions regarding the Economic Restructuring Plan included:

- Adding language about the redevelopment of the Library building to the 'background' portion of the plan.
- Curt encouraged participants to generate ideas freely and ignore feasibility at this point. He explained that the next step will be to consider all ideas with regards to existing capacity, finances, etc. and develop objectives that may be attainable on short (<1 year), mid (1-5 years) and long (>5 years) time scales.

Discussion ensued on the necessity of engaging downtown business owners to develop façade improvement projects in order to have a competitive CIG application. Curt Smith indicated that feedback from the VDHCD staff indicated that currently identified CIG construction activities were too focused on Town properties and need additional buy-in from business owners. Participants discussed ways to recruit business owners into the revitalization project. Curt is to create a simple fact sheet with the benefits to participating. This will include possible projects and their associated maximum funding and any additional obligations to receive funding. Paul Muhly offered to take the fact sheet to each business owner.

Curt Smith suggested holding a working group meeting to focus on developing Economic Restructuring Plan goals and objective language. Participants committed to meeting on March 1 at 3:00 pm in the Town Office. This meeting will be in addition and not in place of the regularly scheduled full Project Management Team meeting in March.

The next meeting is scheduled for March 12th 3pm in the Parksley Town Hall.