

Parksley Downtown Revitalization: Get On Board!

Parksley Downtown Revitalization Project Management Team Meeting Minutes

December 6, 2018

Town Office, Parksley, VA

Management Team Members Present:

Letitia Greer, Town of Parksley
Ellen Johnson, ES Railway Museum
Paul Muhley, Accomack County Supervisor
Harris Phillips, Business Owner/Acc. Co.
Supervisor
Frank Russell, Town Council

Other Attendees Present:

Dan Matthews, Town Council
Kellee Blake, Accomack Co. Resident
Curt Smith, A-NPDC
Clara Vaughn, A-NPDC

Management Team Members Absent:

Wayne Marshall Jr., Mayor
Cara Burton, ES Public Library
Tim Valentine, Business Owner
Billy Graham, Business Owner
Dana Bundick, Resident
Mark Bowden, Accomack County
Elaine Meil, A-NPDC
John Aigner, A-NPDC

The meeting was called to order at 5:34 pm.

Minutes of October 4, 2018

No edits were suggested to the meeting minutes.

Staff Update

Public Hearing #1 Comment Review—

Parking & Stage/Rail Car Location: Smith reviewed the Public Hearing held Nov. 30, 2018. Concerns raised at the hearing included the loss of parking for elderly customers, which could negatively impact foot traffic into local businesses. To address this, Management Team Members identified as their preferred alternative locating the stage in the current farmer's market picnic area. They also identified situating the AirBnB and business in a rail car or kit on the existing railroad tracks as the preferred alternative for these components of the project, contingent upon Canonie Atlantic Co.'s approval.

Other ideas to address potential parking issues included:

- Incorporate the stage into the area currently designated as a splash pad;

- Kellee Blake raised an issue with the aesthetics of the stage at this location, which currently serves as an entryway to the town that sets the tone for Parksley as a well-kept community with green spaces.
- Construct the stage between the farmer’s market and war memorial; and
- Build the stage adjacent to the rail car, which would serve as a backdrop for the stage.
 - The business occupying the rail car could use the stage’s covered area for outdoor seating when events are not being held.

Paul Muhley suggested looking into federal funding for parking lot improvements, but no grants have been identified to date.

Kiosk: Management Committee members determined relocating the proposed kiosk location in front of Club Café would enhance pedestrian access.

Sidewalks: Management Committee members agreed to alter the proposed sidewalk adjacent to the railroad tracks so it forms a straight line.

LOVE Sign: Frank Russell informed attendees that Town Council is considering placing a “LOVE” sign in town. Muhley suggested playing off this with a “READ” sign in front of the library.

Project Management Committee Update—

The Project Management Committee to date has been an ad-hoc group. The Town Council unanimously passed a motion to formalize the Committee under the auspices of Town Council.

Call for Letters of Support—

As many businessowners as possible should sign Letters of Support, as well as the delegate, senator, governor and other non-governmental entities. Letters will be due no later than February. Smith will circulate a template letter of support for all to use.

CIG Application Next Steps—

The second Public Hearing will likely occur during the February Town Council meeting. The consultant’s designs will be presented during this meeting.

Committee Attendance Record—

The attendance record was presented.

Action Items

- Dan Matthews, on behalf of the Town Council, will draft a letter requesting Canonie Atlantic Co. to allow Parksley to locate the rail car business on the rail tracks, contingent upon moving the business, were the railroad to become active again.
- Paul Muhley will initiate discussions with Canonie Atlantic Co. regarding the possibility of locating a rail car business on the railroad tracks.
- Smith will add a step to the Revitalization Projects Continued Development document under “Authentic Railcar (for small business)” reading, “Host Canonie-Town of Parksley discussion.” This must happen during December.

- Smith will draft a template Letter of Support for local businessowners, government officials and others to sign and include in the CIG grant application.
- Smith will contact Julie Nash to develop a plan for Public Outdoor Art.
- Smith will contact VDOT for traffic engineer input on traffic calming measures.
- Develop a plan to incorporate Elizabeth Cady Stanton, who designed much of Parksley, into the grant application as well as the larger marketing strategy and infrastructure of the Town.
- Request consultant to get more information and costs about an informational kiosk.
- Request consultant to develop cost estimates for brick sidewalk with a pattern/design.
- Request consultant to develop cost estimates for all sidewalks/crosswalks/pedestrian improvements.
- Request consultant to evaluate best traffic calming measures and develop cost estimates for those measures.
- Request consultant to develop cost estimates for new street lighting.
- Request consultant to contact various electric car companies to evaluate if there are funding opportunities for charging stations available beyond Tesla, which is no longer providing funding to install stations.
- Request A&N Electric Cooperative input on whether grants/funding are available for lighting, with special considerations for energy efficiency, light pollution, etc.

Economic Restructuring Plan (ERP)

Updates on ERP Project Progress –

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

- The Town Council has formalized the Façade Improvement Committee and the Downtown Revitalization Committee.
- The Town Council has created a Blight Ordinance.
- Parksley is hosting its Old Fashioned Christmas event.
- A new art gallery is opening in December.

Physical Improvement Plan

Downtown Revitalization Projects Continued Development

Stage: Management team members agreed the stage should include a more open design and a raised floor.

Authentic Railcar (for small business): Discussions with Canolie Atlantic Co. must begin in December to explore the option of locating a rail car on the existing railroad tracks. Utilities along the tracks must also be explored.

Railcar Kits(s) (for lodging or business): Discussions with Canolie Atlantic Co. must begin in December to explore the option of locating a rail car/kit on the existing railroad tracks.

Splash Pad: Management team members removed the splash pad from the master plan.

Informational Kiosk: The consultant will research information and cost estimates for installing an informational kiosk. A second proposed kiosk was added to the Downtown's northwestern section.

Public Outdoor Art (sculptures, signs, etc.): Smith will contact Julie Nash to develop a plan to present at the next Management Committee Meeting.

Upgraded Pedestrian Corridor: The consultant will develop cost estimates for a brick sidewalk. Smith will work with property owners to establish public easements or purchase corridors for this project.

Build New Sidewalks: No updates.

Establish New Crosswalks: No updates.

Traffic Calming on Roads: Smith will attempt to contact VDOT to gather their input on traffic calming techniques. The consultant will examine best traffic calming measures and develop cost estimates.

Establish Additional Parking: This item was removed from the list, as new preferred alternatives for the location of the stage, AirBnB and railcar business would open up additional parking.

Wayfinding Signage: No updates.

Historic Interpretive Signage: No updates.

Upgrade Existing Street Lighting: The consultant will develop cost estimates for new lighting. A&N Electric Cooperative will be asked to provide input on whether grants or other funding is available for lighting, with special considerations for energy efficiency, mitigating light pollution, etc. Team members agreed lighting should be capable of holding banners.

Electric Vehicle Charging Station: The Library is interest in installing an electric vehicle charging station, as are Management Team Members. The consultant will contact various electric car companies to evaluate if there are other funding opportunities available, as Tesla is no longer financing new stations. Costs are approximately \$10,000 to install a charging station.

Enhance Existing Sidewalks: No updates.

New Landscaping: No updates.

All updated project locations are included in the following maps.

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
<i>Removed from consideration Dec. 2018</i> | 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>Removed from consideration Dec. 2018</i> | 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
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Figure 2 – Preliminary Conceptual Projects for Parksley Town Square Area

Blight Identification & Removal/Remediation Plan Report –

Staff will be providing a final draft of the plan to the Town for consideration for adoption.

Façade Improvement Program –

There are currently 30 properties eligible to participate in the FIP, an increase from 28 properties identified as blighted at the time of the meeting. Violet's Stiches and Floral Express were added to the list of blighted properties eligible for matching funds. Commitment forms have been received for five properties to date, with more expected following the meeting.

Physical Improvement Plan Consultant Hiring –

The consultant interview subcommittee reviewed and scored proposals and interviewed both applicants. The consultant will finalize the proposed improvement projects map, create street-view conceptual drawings for DHCD grant-eligible projects, and design renderings of a small sample of downtown properties eligible for the Façade Improvement Program.

The meeting adjourned at 7:25 pm.