

SDAT/AIA Steering Committee
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
WEDNESDAY, JULY 27, 2016
7 P.M. PARK & REC. HOUSE (7 Mountain Road)

MEMBERS PRESENT: Bob Clarke, Sue Cheatham, Mike Novak, Kathryn Sherer (Chair), David Taylor, Mary Tyrrell, Kippy West

MEMBERS ABSENT: Joe Donato, Dick Leavenworth

ALSO PRESENT: Kathy Doyle, Hiram Peck, Barbara Perkinson, Tom Zissu, members of the Press

Ms. Sherer called the meeting to order at 7p.m.

Ms. Sherer noted that her goal for the meeting was to develop a list of 3-5 short term goals and one or two long term goals that the Committee would recommend the Town implement from the recommendations made by the American Institute of Architects team in the SDAT study report.

Ms. West advised that she had discussed the suggestions relating to making Main Street more walkable and bikeable, telling people about the Town and taking various actions with respect to the North Green, Post Office Green, Town Hall Green and Cannon Green with Jennifer Miller of the Parks and Recreation Department.

The Committee discussed various options for parking at the North Green. One recommendation was that Green Circle be made one way going from Main Street to Pleasant Street, and that parallel parking be permitted next to the Green on Green Circle. It was also suggested that the Town consider cleaning up the area that is sometimes used for parking next to the Green on Pleasant Street. Mary Tyrrell noted that this area used to be the location of the watering trough, and was then the trolley stop, but there are some restrictions applicable to this area due to the placing of the telephone pole and DOT requirements due to the proximity to Route 6.

The Committee next discussed possible uses of the North Green. Ms. West noted that the North Green might be well suited for brown bag lunch events, such as small concerts or talks, but that the Park and Recreation Department does not have sufficient resources to develop such programming at this time. Ms. Tyrrell noted that the art galleries in Town might be willing to work together to organize a "pop up" style art show that could be held on the North Green or at various sites along Main Street including the North Green. Ms. West suggested that one of the Committee's objectives for 2017 might be to develop appropriate programming for the 2017 season. For 2016, the Committee agreed that the Town/Park and Rec. might want to look into either moving picnic tables from Hollow Park to the North Green for the Fall Festival or borrowing

smaller tables and chairs that could be used to provide a place to sit and eat during the Fall Festival.

The Committee next discussed the recommendations regarding the Post Office Green. Ms. West noted that the benches could be rearranged once a desired arrangement is agreed upon. She noted that one item that might be considered for a "sculptural element" is an outdoor chess table. Installing additional lighting might be a longer term project. Mr. Clarke questioned whether solar powered lights might be viable; Mr. Peck confirmed that they might be, but this will require investigation.

The Committee discussed the desirability of making informative walking tours available. Mr. Peck noted that cell phone walking tours have become quite popular and don't require signage. It also was noted that pdf versions of existing brochures and maps could be posted on CT.visit.com. The Committee agreed that both of these avenues should be investigated further.

With respect to the Green by the Town Office Buildings, identified in the SDAT report as the Town Hall Green, Ms. West noted that re-landscaping is currently in process. Mr. Peck noted that DOT and its consultant, AECOM, are considering changes to the intersection of Main Street and Route 317, and will provide recommendations to the Town after a traffic study is completed.

Ms. West and Ms. Cheatham reported that, because of its status as a memorial site, many people in Town do not want to see Cannon Green disturbed.

The Committee then turned to the section of the report titled Arts and Artisans. Ms. Sherer noted that she had exchanged messages with Bill Geddes of the Arts Alliance, and that Mr. Geddes had advised that there are activities planned, and that he would be happy to attend a future meeting to provide further information. Ms. Sherer then asked for the sense of the Committee regarding the proposal that the Town establish a formal Arts Commission. Several members of the Committee felt that it might be best to defer taking action on this recommendation as an effort to obtain approval to establish an Arts Commission recently failed to pass. Mr. Clarke noted that the motion failed by only one vote, and that it might be best to pursue this promptly, with more communication. The Committee agreed to consider this further.

Mr. Peck then provided a report on some traffic calming measures. Mr. Peck noted that DOT now allows 11 foot wide lanes, and that some cities and towns in other states are experimenting with lanes that are 10.5 feet wide. It is possible that the DOT will allow experimentation with 10.5 foot wide lanes in Connecticut. DOT will not restripe lanes until the road is otherwise due for resurfacing. Mr. Peck will find out when Main Street is due for resurfacing.

The Committee also discussed the possibility of painting bike lanes along Route 6. Mr. Peck confirmed this might be permitted by DOT. He noted that the bike lane/shoulder cannot be more than 8 feet wide under DOT regulations and that, as with lane widths,

nothing would be done until the road is resurfaced. Mr. Peck also noted that in order to get a formal bike lane established on any road, it would be important to show that there is a significant amount of biking on the road in question and that people are interested in using the shoulder for biking. In this connection, it would be very helpful to have a local bike club involved.

The Committee next discussed the possibility of sinking the power lines on Main Street. Mr. Peck will discuss this with contacts at Eversource, and noted that the last time he raised this question with them, for another town, the cost was \$4 million a mile. This figure does not including the cost to reconnect each home and business along Main Street to the new underground lines. Ms. Sherer noted that it would be important, in exploring the feasibility of this project, to understand the total cost and also to identify potential sources of funding other than the Town. She noted that the National Trust for Historic Preservation has grant programs that might be a potential source of some funding. Mr. Peck noted that there may be economic benefit to sinking the power lines, and that there may be information available from other towns that have done that.

With respect to Connectivity, Mr. Zissu reported that the Shade Tree and Sidewalk Committee is conducting a survey of existing sidewalks with the assistance of Kathy Castagnetta, to map the existing sidewalks and identify areas in need of repair/ replacement. Ms. Sherer noted that the proposed new sidewalk in front of the Town Office Buildings that was discussed at the Committee's prior meeting is on hold due to the possibility that DOT will make changes to the intersection with Route 317 that will affect the sidewalk. Ms. Tyrrell reported that she had discussed the possibility of installing pervious sidewalks with Sean Hayden. Mr. Hayden advised that pervious sidewalks are made with new materials that cost approximately four times the cost of concrete and that the longevity of these materials has not yet been tested in New England. In addition, these materials must be treated with salt, not sand because sand will clog the material. Too much salt also will clog the material, and a special attachment has to be used on a plow to avoid damaging the material. Mr. Hayden also noted that the Town would not see a significant benefit from the use of a pervious sidewalk material as the Town sidewalks generally are not in wetlands areas.

Concerning Housing and Development, Mr. Clarke noted that the Zoning Commission is considering changes to its regulations to facilitate development of lower cost housing, as the asking price for the vast majority of homes on the market in Woodbury today is over \$300,000. A joint meeting of the Zoning and Planning Commissions was held on Tuesday, July 26 on this topic. In addition, Ms. Castagnetta is working on identifying properties that would be suitable for lower cost housing.

Ms. Cheatham noted that there have historically been incentives available through the Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation to upgrade historic homes. That funding had dried up, but her understanding is that some of that funding has now been restored, and she is working to set up a workshop where residents can obtain more information.

The Commission preliminarily agreed on the following short term priorities for implementing recommendations contained in the SDAT Study:

1. Explore means of making Main Street more attractive to pedestrians and cyclists, including:
 - a. establishing guidelines for sidewalk construction
 - b. completing the sidewalk survey
 - c. reducing lane width to 10.5 feet

2. Develop/update marketing efforts, which might include any or all of the following:
 - a. changes to the Town website
 - b. use of social media
 - c. creation of smart phone app tours
 - d. creation of Town maps with information for different "trails" such as historic sites and antique stores
 - e. a "welcome wagon" for new residents

3. Develop programming for the Town Greens/Main Street Corridor, which may include:
 - a. Fall Festival
 - b. "Pop Up" Art Show
 - c. Christmas Festival
 - d. Looking at seating on the North Green, Post Office Green and Town Hall Green
 - e. Develop a parking program for the North Green

The Commission preliminarily agreed that exploring the feasibility of sinking the power lines on Main Street, including cost and available funding, would be a long term priority.

The Commission will finalize its recommended priorities at its August meeting and forward its recommendations to the Planning Commission and to the Board of Selectmen. The Commission agreed to target mid to late September for a town-wide meeting to present the SDAT Study Report and call for volunteers to help investigate/implement the various recommendations.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45pm

Filed subject to approval

Kathryn Sherer

RECEIVED & FILED
IN WOODBURY, CT

This 2 day of Aug 2016
at 8:37 o'clock A M
Linda J. Carl
Town Clerk