

SDAT/AIA Steering Committee
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
WEDNESDAY, August 31, 2016
7 P.M. PARK & REC. HOUSE (7 Mountain Road)

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

MEMBERS ABSENT: Mike Novak

ALSO PRESENT: Bill Butterly, Kathy Doyle, Bill Geddes, Hiram Peck, members of the Press

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

Ms. Sherer invited Mr. Geddes to summarize the activities of the Arts Alliance for the Committee.

Mr. Geddes advised that the Arts Alliance was formed as a non-profit organization to serve as an arts council serving Woodbury and the region in June 2015. Since its formation, the Arts Alliance has helped organize several arts events in Town, including the Van Vleck Show with Flanders Nature Center and a tour of the studios of 18 clay artists in and around Litchfield County, including four in Woodbury, that is to take place October 8-10, 2016. The Alliance is planning an Art Show to be held on the North Green in June 2017.

Mr. Geddes noted that the Alliance is working with a number of local and regional partners, including CTAW, local restaurants, and Region 14 to identify opportunities for local artists to show their work and to promote student art. Mr. Geddes noted that the most common comment from Woodbury artists is that they have to go to Washington to show their work, and would like to show it in Woodbury.

When asked, Mr. Geddes suggested that the Committee investigate the pros and cons of having a Town Commission of the Arts. He noted that Newtown had an independent arts commission for approximately 10 years and now has a Town Commission on the Arts; it would be good to know what Newtown's experience has been. Mr. Geddes also suggested the Committee explore the feasibility and desirability of establishing an Arts Center in Town.

Following Mr. Geddes' presentation, the Committee members agreed that the Arts Alliance is actively pursuing many of the recommendations set forth in the AIA report for support of the arts and artisans, and that there is nothing further that needs to be done at this time. The Committee will revisit the recommendations on the arts and Mr. Geddes suggestions during 2017. Mr. Peck noted that one even the Committee or the Arts Alliance might wish to explore is the creation of an Art Stroll or similar event, in

which different businesses on Main Street would display the work of different artists. Ms. Tyrrell suggested that the churches on Main Street might also be appropriate venues for such an event.

Mr. Donato then reported on the activities of the BEDC. Mr. Donato noted that Shakesperience had been a success, and that the BEDC is going to try to get Litchfield Magazine to print an article about Woodbury. Members of the SDAT Committee suggested that the BEDC might also want to try to get articles about the Town in Yankee Magazine and Connecticut Magazine. Mr. Donato also stated that the BEDC would like to see some recommendations from the SDAT Committee that are more business oriented. The Committee suggested that the BEDC consider the suggestions listed in the section of the AIA Report titled Market, and asked whether the BEDC had any specific suggestions for the Committee.

Mr. Donato and Mr. Clarke advised that the BEDC was concerned that there would be overlap between the BEDC and the SDAT Committee, and did not want to duplicate effort. They suggested that the BEDC take on the responsibilities of a Chamber of Commerce, and focus on marketing.

Mr. Peck suggested that the BEDC designate one person to serve as liaison for people looking for commercial opportunities in Town. This person would know what grants are available, know what commercial properties are available, generally know the history of the commercial properties available, understand Town regulations, and understand tax programs available, and would therefore be able to help newcomers assess options. Mr. Peck also identified several possible sources of grants.

The Committee briefly discussed the recommendation that the Town consider allowing non-visible property expansion or larger commercial developments to attract certain retailers. Mr. Clarke noted that he did not believe there were any properties within the study area that would be suitable for larger commercial development than the current zoning regulations permit, due to wetlands, water and septic considerations.

The Committee next discussed the draft SDAT Report. Ms. Cheatham noted that the Committee had not discussed the Bicentennial Green, and suggested that the possible rehabilitation of the Bicentennial Green be included in the Committee's report. The Committee elected not to include any recommendation regarding the Bicentennial Green in the Report, but agreed to discuss the possible rehabilitation of the Bicentennial Green further in a future meeting.

The Committee discussed whether sinking the power lines on Main Street should be included as one of the recommendations in the SDAT Report. After discussion, the Committee members agreed that the Report should reflect that no determination has been made as to the feasibility or desirability of sinking or otherwise eliminating the power lines on Main Street, but that the research should be done.

Following this discussion, upon motion duly made and seconded, the draft Report as amended by this discussion was approved. Ms. Sherer undertook responsibility for revising the report and forwarding it to the Planning Commission and the Board of Selectmen.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00pm

Filed subject to approval

Kathryn Sherer

RECEIVED & FILED
IN WOODBURY, CT

This 12 day of Sept 2016
at 2:05 o'clock P M
Jane L. Cook
Town Clerk