

**BELMONT VISION 21 IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE
MINUTES
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 24, 2017**

2018 FEB 13 AM 9:31

PRESENT: Members present: Chair Natalie Leino, Jennifer Page, Gang Zhao, Erica Zidel, Juan Montoya, Perry Haynsworth, Doug John, Kevin Dorn. Members not in attendance: Mary Power

I. CALL TO ORDER

Natalie Leino called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

II. UPCOMING ROUNDTABLE ON AFFORDABLE HOUSING/HOUSING PRODUCTION PLAN

Natalie and Jennifer advocated that the VIC members promote and attend the upcoming roundtable on affordable housing being sponsored by the Belmont Housing Trust that will take place at St. Luke's on October 28, 2017.

APPROVAL OF 9/26/2017 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of September 26 were approved unanimously.

III. CONTINUED DISCUSSION REGARDING BUSINESS COMMUNITY PROJECT

A. Updating and assessing the 2002 and 2005 economic development reports

The committee continued to discuss the potential project on engaging with the business community.

First the committee reviewed the discussion from the last meeting. Natalie reported that she met with the head of the former economic development advisory committee (EDAC). She noted that were the EDAC to be reconstituted, its mission would overlap with the project VIC is planning, but that it was not clear what the timing of any reconstitution, if any, would be. If the VIC does go forward with this project, the members of the former EDAC would be a good resource. Jennifer and Natalie explained the history of the EDAC to those VIC members who were not aware.

Next we discussed the existence of 2005 economic report and how it compared to the 2002 report that was discussed and analyzed during the September meeting. The possibility of updating the summary of the problems and recommendations of each report was discussed. The next steps for such a project would require two main objectives: (1) survey current Belmont businesses as to how they have seen the town make progress on the recommendations from the 2002 and 2005 reports (2) ask town officials what progress has been made since the reports and what plans they currently have in the category of economic development.

The VIC agreed that it would be best to reach out to the town officials first to give them the opportunity to give a full picture as to what has been done to date and what plans and ongoing projects they may have. Natalie agreed to reach out to Glenn Clancy, the town planner in the Office of Community Development, as a starting point.

B. Perform an assessment of other town governments

As an alternative (or secondary aspect of) the project, the committee discussed the possibility of performing an assessment of other town governments that compare to Belmont, to see how they organize and approach economic development projects in their respective towns. Examples would include Arlington, Watertown, Lexington as well as others. Doug discussed how a similar approach is being used to address the issue of expanding the number of selectmen.

As a result of these two discussions the VIC agreed to take a two pronged approach to the economic development project which would consist of two main activities:

- (1) Hold conversations with town officials to understand the towns progress and plans as it relates to economic development within the town.
- (2) Benchmark other towns regarding their own organizations and efforts related to economic development and town planning

Natalie agreed to inform Selectmen Adam Dash, who had attended a prior meeting and provided valuable input, on the path we would be taking.

VI. GOALS FOR NEXT MEETING

The committee then discussed how to split up the initial steps and came to the following assignments

- Gang and Juan would contact Ara Yogurtian, the Assistant Director of Community Development for Belmont
- Kevin and Natalie would contact Jeffrey Wheeler, the Senior Planner for the town of Belmont
- Doug would contact Roger Colton, a 20-year veteran Town Meeting Member, who served on the committee that put together the 2005 report and is likely aware of town history regarding town planning and economic development. Jennifer Page would do the same with Phil Thayer.
- Natalie agreed to draft a messaging plan, so that the committee has a common objective in approaching these town officials.
- Perry and Eric agreed to develop categories by which the committee could benchmark the comparable towns in the coming months

VII. OTHER BUSINESS

Next meeting will take place on Tuesday November 28, 2017.

VIII. ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at approximately 8:53pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Perry Haynsworth