

Vision 21 Implementation Committee
Meeting Minutes
November 17, 2005
Accepted December 1, 2005

The meeting was called to order at 7:10 pm.

Members Present: Austin Bliss, Donna Brescia, Vinnie DeNovellis, Meg O'Brien, Jennifer Page, Ann Rittenburg, Paul Santos, Paul Solomon

Members absent: Victoria Hasse, Sara Oaklander

Also present: Delores Keefe

1. Administrivia:

- Paul Santos moved to accept minutes of November 3, 2005; Ann seconded. Approved by unanimous vote.

2. Reflecting on our meetings:

In an effort to keep discussions flowing, Jennifer introduced the concept of maintaining a list, during the meeting, entitled "parking lot" for ideas that are raised that are not on task, but are important to return to for discussion. All agreed this would be helpful.

Jennifer asked group to answer two questions:

2.1 What has been engaging or effective?

- o Many felt that the review of history of Vision development was very helpful,
- o Identifying the different elements of the Vision and created a web of links between topics was helpful
- o Brainstorming session was energizing
- o Reading materials were helpful to some

2.2 What would be helpful to Jennifer in running meetings?

- o Jennifer should be more assertive in bringing people back "on task" when they go off on tangential conversations; other members are encouraged to help in this monitoring as well;
- o All need to monitor themselves to be prompt;
- o Members must read the minutes before the meeting, so no time is taken during the meeting to read the minutes;
- o Follow the time guidelines in the agenda, unless we agree that more time is required - Chair to monitor;
- o When giving reports, adhere to the time allotted;

- Once a topic/meeting is discussed, no need to discuss again at next meeting;
- We need an introduction to each topic for discussion, what the purpose of the discussion is and why it is important; we should limit discussion only to those topics whose purpose is clear.
- We should be purposeful about our meetings; with specific goals for each meeting

3. Next steps in our work: What shall we do as a group together? Before we focus on new initiatives, are there initiatives that this committee has started and that need to be continued – or for which we need some kind of closure?

Assessment of work to date: Jennifer proposed that we review each of the major initiatives (the five originally identified plus others that have developed) in order to determine if we can, temporarily, close them or if more attention should be directed to them.

- 3.1 Business – friendly initiative: 2 reports w/recommendations
- 3.2 Welcoming community: Welcome booklet, “Meet Belmont” event
- 3.3 Planning Regional/local
 - 3.3.1 Waverley Fire station (completed)
 - 3.3.2 Trapelo Road (on-going)
 - 3.3.3 Belmont Ctr. Plng. Group (on-going)
 - 3.3.4 Regional – Tri-Town Sub-area study (on-going)
- 3.4 Environmentally responsible: Environmental fair, Sustainable Belmont
- 3.5 Education – no action to this point
- 3.6 Public Information & Communication planning group – Report with recommendations
- 3.7 The Vision itself – How do we “touch base” with the community to ensure that the town continues to support the vision?

4. Assessing progress in implementing the Vision: Why assess ?

It was proposed (A. Rittenburg) that we consider a new framework for thinking about assessment of progress and action for the future. The “strategic plan” model of the School Committee was reviewed:

4.1 The School Committee develops a strategic plan that includes a variety of different elements: Articulated goals, improvement initiatives, ongoing improvement, improvement expectations

4.2 Discussion ensued:

- The committee may be evolving a new way of processing – is it time to revisit the way the committee functions?
- Definition of Vision committee –Not an executive committee, more of a steering committee which might produce a document that guides activities of another group or subgroup

- We must use our abilities to advise; we can generate spin-off groups to implement tasks we generate.

5. Agreement on next steps:

We agreed to undergo a complete assessment and review of work to date to determine which items are unfinished, what is ongoing, what can be temporarily laid aside? We will look at each of the elements of the Vision and spend some time looking at it in depth so that we can all fully understand what has been accomplished and what might be our next steps. Jennifer will lay out a plan for our next several meetings so that we will know what elements of the vision we will address at each meeting. These next steps do not preclude our developing a new approach to our work in the future.

4) Report by Paul Santos on the work of a group interested in getting a Farmers' Market in Belmont by next summer. (Relation to Vision 21: "environmentally responsible" and "small town atmosphere" goals)

5) Jennifer reported on invitation from Belmont Against Racism to discuss discrimination in housing. Jennifer noted that we would be interested in this discussion – meeting expected to happen in Spring 2006.

6) Next meeting of VIC will be Thursday, December 1, 2005.

Adjournment at 8:55p.

Minutes respectfully submitted by
Donna Brescia
Secretary Pro Tempore