

WASHINGTON PLANNING BOARD
Town Center Vision Subcommittee – Working meeting Minutes

September 5, 2018

Members present: Lolly Gilbert, Jim Crandall, Andrew Hatch, Ron Jager, Kevin Provencher, Bert Bodnar, Al Krygeris and Nan Schwartz.

Visitors: Penny Whitman and Jared Reynolds

1.0 **Call to Order** - The meeting was called to order by Co-Chair Lolly Gilbert at 10 AM in the Town Hall.

2.0 Gilbert asked for any corrections to the minutes, there being none, Bodnar made a motion to approve as written, Gilbert seconded the motion and all voted in favor.

3.0 Gilbert thanked Whitman and Reynolds for meeting with us again. She said the purpose of the subcommittee was to promote tourism, historic preservation, identify problems and look for solutions with community buy in. Penny asked if we identified any others for the subcommittee. Crandall said that we felt we should have one session and then look for others to join. Gilbert said she talked to a few people but meeting times are inconvenient. She asked if anyone else had talked to others. Hatch said he spoke with Blackwell's and they are interested but not wanting to participate. Gilbert talked to a business owner who said she is thinking of moving some of the business to town center.

Gilbert turned the meeting over to Whitman and Reynolds. Schwartz gave Whitman and Reynolds a copy of the current Master Plan. They said that we should keep talking to people and add new voices. Krygeris said the meeting time excludes younger people. Whitman said we could meet at another time. She spoke about the First Impressions program, which pairs communities. She felt that the assessment part of the program could be helpful to use to help us frame potential projects. Reynolds said that with the tailored assessment booklet, which talks about the 14 characteristics of a vibrant town center, it would help us assess ours. He said there are trade-offs but we can think about the village area, take the input and data to find the assets and opportunities, and then get community engagement to settle on good ideas.

Whitman said we should walk the downtown and make notes in the booklet, look for what is there and not there. Reynolds talked about the characteristics; this is not an inventory, it should lead to assets and opportunities. Whitman mentioned the entrance to town and the historic area; do you know you are entering the town center? Crandall asked about community art and what that is (murals or other public art). Whitman said artists are a point of interest for a town, Reynolds added community art installations are a draw. Hatch gave Whitman a card with information about the Artisan's group event in September and October. Reynolds said that there are opportunities for gardening and park upkeep; do we have a Garden Club? Schwartz said there used to be a group that was part of the Garden Club in Hillsboro but they have disbanded. Whitman talked about "Place making" and making the town a destination. Reynolds said we may come up with a range of projects; some can be expensive and require grant writing but some are smaller, quick things to do that make a difference and have impact. Gilbert mentioned through hikers and snowmobilers need a place to sit and have a cup of coffee and chat.

Whitman asked about East Washington and Camp Morgan; should they be included in our discussions? Schwartz said that they haven't been included at this point, just the town center area. Crandall said East Washington is neat and tidy. Schwartz said that East Washington doesn't have any business center; Gilbert added that the Eccardt Farm is the business center in East Washington. Krygeris said the town is divided, we have many bodies of water and the lake associations are their centers. He feels the Library, General Store and Post Office are places where people do gather.

Whitman said we should take a walk through town and fill out the assessment booklet now. Hatch

said we haven't yet completely defined the town center.

Jager said he doesn't want us to overlook the potential for a decent parking lot in the rear of the Town Hall. He said it needs to be coordinated to be attractive using plantings and careful arrangement. He thinks the access needs to be planned wisely and we shouldn't overlook that possibility. Crandall said it is the only logical place to park and it needs signage.

We left to walk and assess the town center as a group at this point.

When we returned Whitman said we could have 2 weeks to fill out and return the assessment books to her. It was decided that our next meeting date will be September 19th and we will gather the booklets at the meeting and Gilbert will deliver them to Whitman in Newport that afternoon. Whitman gave us extra copies of the booklet to give others a chance to fill them out. Schwartz will have them available at the Town Hall.

Whitman also gave us more copies of the "LoveSullivan" postcard for distribution around town, website and more information here:

<https://unhcoopext.maps.arcgis.com/apps/StoryMapCrowdsource/index.html?appid=f57fae9b93cf44f1ab7af72e2ea56b7f>

3.0 **Next meeting** – Wednesday, September 19th at 9:30AM in the Town Hall, meeting with Penny Whitman and Jared Reynolds from UNH Cooperative Extension.

Meeting adjourned at noon.

Respectfully submitted,
Nan Schwartz
Planning Board Secretary