**Destination Groton Committee**

**Meeting Minutes**

**2/23/2022 6:15pm**

**Present Via zoom: Greg Sheldon, Julie Platt, Jeff Gordon, Mairi Elliott, Joni Parker-Roach**

**Also Present: Paul Funch 6:15-6:30**

**Katy Coburn 7pm-7:45pm**

**Meeting opened by Greg Sheldon at 6:15pm**

**Brings to the front of agenda- Letter to Selectboard in Support of Trails committee**

Greg Sheldon: Introduced Paul Funch from Groton Trails committee to discuss our support of Nashua Riverwalk improvements

P. Funch- States all support is greatly appreciated and that he has received multiple other letters of support from other Town Committees

A map showing the new trail and where it connects was shown. Mr. Funch states that the intention is to Name the trail the Marion Stoddard trail

He discussed cost and grants involved to offset the cost to the Town.

**Motion: (made by Jeff Gordon) To send letter of support to the Selectboard**

**2nd by Julie Platt**

**Roll Call Vote unanimously in favor: J. Gordon, J. Parker- Roach, M Elliott, J. Platt, G. Sheldon**

**Review and Approve Minutes from 2/17/22**

**Motion: accept minutes from the previous week**

**All in favor: J. Gordon, J. Platt, J. Parker- Roach, G. Sheldon, M. Elliott**

**Discuss letter from David Wang- Groton School student**

G.Sheldon asked if we want to invite the student to offer his expertise in town development and hear what he proposes to do for the town.

**All agree- will invite David Wang**

**Discuss letter in support of Bates Property**

**Katy Coburn of Conservation Trust Joins meeting**

K. Coburn describes the need to improve the crossing over James Brookand making an ADA acceptable trail option

G. Sheldon asks about additional parking spots at the location

K. Coburn states the goal is to double the amount of parking available there

Discussion of a future cross walk once sidewalks have been extended from main st. to Groton Hill Music center

J. Parker-Roach suggests that the view from the top of that trail may deserve a map at the top to point out what you can see. Historical and Geological features alike.

K. Coburn states that her committee has discussed a “passport” for kids to collect stamps on ads they travel our conservation land and trails.

She also mentions that her committee has created a Map for sale of all trails and conservation areas

J. Gordon mentions QR codes at certain areas for people to get information of where they are along a trail

K. Coburn states we need a centralized location for

J. Platt asks K. Coburn to join the advisory committee and J. Parker-Roach joins in

K. Coburn asks about time commitment and states she will consider joining

**Motion made by Greg Sheldon to send a letter of support to Select Board for funding this project- 2ND by J. Gordon**

**Roll call vote unanimously in support – M. Elliott, J. Platt, J. Parker- Roach, G. Sheldon, J. Gordon**

**Short Term goals:**

**Job Description:**

G. Sheldon reports no new news from his contact in Ayer

JPR- reports the same on her contact from Concord

**Advisory Groups:**

G. Sheldon reports no replies from letter sent to committees at this point

J. Parker-Roach- States she is trying to get Sheila Harrington scheduled to meet with us as well as Stuart Ikeda from Concord

She states Ellen Hardy from Westford will join Advisory

**Public Forums:**

J. Parker-Roach- revisits the idea of World Café style meetings for our forums. She describes the process again and states her partner Pat can help run the meeting.

G. Sheldon states we should look at traditional forms of public forums, he also mentions that he will determine from Mr. Haddad if we have a budget for our committee

Next Action: Set dates- determine lead time needed for banner at town Hall, Draft Groton Herald Announcement, consider facebook outreach announcement and Senior center mailing lists

**Long Term goals:**

**Infrastructure:**

**Powerlines and Transportation**- Greg Sheldon will take lead- Bruce Easom has volunteered his expertise

**Traffic, Parking, Sidewalks, Signage:** Julie Platt and Joni Parker- Roach will take lead

**Monuments, Restrooms and Rest Areas-** Mairi Elliott and Jeff Gordon will take lead

**Discussion on Infrastructure Funding:**

Travel and Tourism grant for marketing is past the January 19 deadline but we can work towards it for 2023 fiscal year

G. Sheldon will reach out to M. Haddad for guidance on applying for Destination Development Grant from Office of Travel and Tourism

**Commercial Growth:**

Have identified 6 open commercial spaces in Downtown area that are listed –

J. Gordon mentions there may be more available on station Ave and that the building that houses Dunkin’ Donuts and Lavender is going to be renovated and perhaps a second level added

Judy- mentions that the Water’s House owned by John Amaral could be a useful place

J. Platt asks about the buildings at the end of Hollis St.

J. Gordon mentions the building next to Murphy’s Insurance may be vacant

G. Sheldon- suggests we all look at the Town center overlay guidelines

Generated by Tim Hess

Judy mentions that the houses that LA owns on main st. may be being sold and moving students across the street

**Town Events:**

Will contact Groton Channel for their master list of events

G. Sheldon would like to capture all main events so we can look for gaps in the schedule and create events when needed

M. Elliott- we should find a way to automate or let business’ update the main calendar with their own events

G.Sheldon mentions that 8 years from now will be 375 year anniversary of Town

**Marketing:**

Working Slogan: Welcome to Groton, Welcome to Historic Groton

Press relations- J Parker-Roach states her business partner can help us write any press releases or public relations articles.

Promote 5 National Historic sites, create Town Map, Tours, Promotional videos

J. Gordon discusses the ability to SEO embed in the videos to help searching on internet

He spoke to the Production company to get cost on bulk video spots for business, he states he was quoted approx. $300/per video which includes producing intro and outro

Businesses to pay for themselves

G. Sheldon will pursue his contact in Sturbridge for marketing

J. Platt- states that in the Regional Tourism Council we are listed in the Johnny Appleseed Trail system – 26 communities

Discussed

Judy Mentions that we can request out of cycle funds from specific committees

Tasks: Start getting commitments from businesses to do the video

Julie and Joni to organize a meeting with Town officials

**Finance:**

G. Sheldon will start a discussion with M Haddad on all possible avenues of funding

J. Platt will Start an excel sheet for all grants available to us

And will put on a google drive and make shareable

**Discussion on Earl Carter Collection:**

G. Sheldon and J. Gordon visited and tell the committee members about the expansiveness of the collection. They state that Mr. Carter would like to find a way to display it better for the community

They describe a need to protect this collection

Many items regarding Groton School and Lawrence Academy- discussed bringing representatives from each to discuss options for display at the Schools

Goal: Bring collection to history center or find other locations, determine how to finance

J. Platt states she cannot attend next meeting

Meeting ended