**Meeting Minutes - Destination Groton Committee (DGC) Meeting**

**Meeting Date:** August 13, 2025

**Attendees:**

* **Committee Members:** Greg Sheldon, Joni Parker-Roach, Brian Bolton

**Meeting Summary:** The August 6 meeting centered on advancing the **Groton Town Center Visioning Process**, particularly the design of the community survey and public engagement activities. Members emphasized the importance of clear communication about the project’s scope, balancing historic preservation with future growth, and addressing traffic and safety concerns. Additionally, grant opportunities were highlighted as a critical support mechanism for implementing future projects.

**Key Takeaways**

1. **Visioning Process Communication**: Ensure clear messaging about scope, priorities, and growth vs. preservation balance.
2. **Survey Design**: Questions must be carefully worded to avoid ambiguity and encourage actionable input.
3. **Traffic Calming**: Strong agreement that improving safety on Main Street is a high priority.
4. **Dog Park Proposal**: Interest in exploring a fenced dog park with potential training and off-leash areas.
5. **Scenic America Photo Contest**: participate in the photo contest highlighting Groton’s scenic beauty.
6. **Funding Opportunities**: Grants will be pursued to fund future projects and initiatives.

**Discussion Summary**

1. **Visioning Process & Communication**

The committee reviewed the **two-page visioning process document**, stressing that project communication must balance enthusiasm for growth opportunities with respect for Groton’s historic character. Concerns were raised about developments such as Four Corners and the CVS Plaza, with a focus on framing these as opportunities for smart, community-driven planning. Clarity and accessibility in language were emphasized to ensure all residents understand the goals.

1. **Survey Design & Public Input**

Significant discussion was devoted to the **resident survey**. Members noted that questions about traffic, safety, and growth need precise wording to avoid misinterpretation. The survey must highlight key issues (such as traffic calming and downtown safety) while also capturing broader community aspirations. The committee agreed that Mark’s feedback on the draft would be important.

1. **Traffic Calming & Safety**

Traffic and pedestrian safety on **Main Street (Route 119)** emerged as a recurring concern. The group agreed that immediate attention is needed, with both short-term fixes and longer-term planning on the table. This was identified as one of the highest community priorities.

1. **Community Engagement Initiatives**

Several engagement ideas were discussed:

* **Groton Weekend for Yankee Magazine**: Proposed for May 2026, designed to coincide with the spring bloom.
* **Scenic America Photo Contest**

1. **Funding Opportunities**

The committee reiterated the importance of identifying and pursuing additional **grant funding** to support both the visioning process and related initiatives. Grants would be especially critical for projects like traffic improvements, event support, and community amenities, particularly for other parts of Groton that are not Main Street.

**To-Do List**

* Circulate **visioning process document** for Mark’s review and feedback.
* Finalize and test survey questions for clarity and accuracy.
* Develop structure and promotional plan for a **photo contest**.
* Research and pursue additional **grant opportunities** for funding support.
* Brian Bolton – continue to reach out to author Don Ryan on LinkedIn re: potential collaboration.