**Destination Groton Committee**

**Meeting minutes-Post Public Forum**

**May 22, 2022**

**Attendees: Greg Sheldon, Jeff Gordon, Julie Platt, Joni Parker Roach, Mairi Elliott**

**Members of Public: Judy Anderson, AJ Saball, Patrick Parker-Roach**

GSheldon Opens meeting after Forum clean up. Asks “What did we hear and learn?”

MElliott leads with emphasis on the equestrian community in town and that is an asset that we need to highlight more specifically. JGordon agrees.

Discussion on how we can incorporate the equestrian community into events. JParker-Roach feels strongly against horse drawn carriages.

JParker-Roach also express concern over people not knowing much about the arts community in Groton or the accessibility of her gallery.

GSheldon mentioned that he didn’t hear much about the money the town gave us or about Groton Hill.

Judy Anderson points out that she believes that heart of the concerns are still traffic in it’s current state.

JGordon brings up the GBA report and that has solutions within on what we can solve now.

The signage in town was brought up and that someone heard suggestions on better, less confusing signage throughout town.

The committee agrees we need to enhance the awareness of the arts in town.

MElliott will create facebook post campaign of “Did you know” items regarding Groton. She will also make posts asking where people get there information on events in town.

The idea of #GrotonPride came up and will be implemented on future DG facebook and Instagram posts

GSheldon asks committee to critique the presentation and asks for suggestions on the next one

JGordon thought it might have been too long and we could cut out some at the beginning. He also felt there was some confusion around the questions as people had complaints to lodge rather than thinking of the positives on the first question.

GSheldon wonders if we should change the wording from “challenges and opportunities” to include “Character” instead.

Committee discusses and suggests asking about challenges first as they each experienced people not getting to the core of the first question right away.

Committee agrees to modify questions slightly for next Public Forum after Sheldon asks all if anyone had concerns.

JParker-Roach adds that we are promoting Groton as a destination within that region, and we can maximize capturing that revenue

GSheldon asks how do we populate with “the right” businesses?

Committee in turn discusses that the best ways to make ourselves as attractive to the types of businesses we feel will be most impactful to the center of town and in our commercial districts.

JParker-Roach reiterates the many new options at the Prescott Community Center and how it is filled with artists.

JPlatt reminds us that we need to make the center of town attractive to all not just what we think we want.

Patrick Parker-Roach mentions that implementation on the 2014 overlay plan was never followed through on.

GSheldon emphasizes that our committee is the closest thing Groton has to an economic development committee and we should get to work on some of that implementation. He brings up the Earl Carter museum again as part of a center of town plan.

MElliott tells committee that Gail Chalmers came to visit her and told her about a possibility of the building in front of RiverCourt being available for Earl’s museum and that she is interested in obtaining that building for that purpose and Earl Carter has indicated that he likes this plan. MElliott suggests that bringing something to West Groton would be well received and is important to not forget about including West Groton and it’s village as well as the Sqaunnacook in to our plans.

Take aways from the Forum

-Shorten presentation

-Rearrange questions

-Include more equestrian on our promotions

-Include more arts

-Create facebook community survey

MElliott will report back to committee on when forum will be televised.

JParker-Roach brings up masks at next event. Committee agrees that we will publicize as “Masks Recommended”

GSheldon asks JParker-Roach to please reach out to Steve Harrington for his attendance at our next meeting so we can start moving forward on website and branding.

Sheldon then brings up a letter written to Previous selectboard members by Stephen Shepard, a consultant who has done a study on the potential impact of Groton Hill Music on the region. He states in the 3 years it could be at a $21m/year increase and could increase jobs by 195. There is an expected $10.8m direct impact and $7.1 million in indirect impact. He encourages the committee to go read planning board minutes for more on this study.

He asks what we are doing to capitalize on that revenue increase. And sates that implementing the 2014 plan should be a priority.

Committee agrees next meeting to be June 1 at 6:30pm at Town Hall meeting room.

Meeting adjourned 6:45pm