

Danville Train Station Committee Minutes

Meeting of January 9, 2024 4:00-4:50 pm

Location: Danville Town Hall Meeting Room

Attending: Michael Hogue, chair; Rob Balivet co-chair Building, Catherine Whitehead co-chair Use, , Ted Houle, Laural Ruggles, Kitty Toll co-chair Fundraising, Peter Crosby and Tim Ide.

A quorum was present.

No guests.

The Minutes of December 12, 2023, meeting were moved by Tim Ide, and accepted.

Building/Land: Rob indicated that completion of the drainage system is almost completed as the wetlands permit was issued.

He also indicated that we are a little late on filing for the building permit from the Town. The zoning administrator noted that the station is in the Design Control District which requires a hearing before the DRB as the adaptation is a “change in use”. Since VTrans owns a small portion of the land under the ramp area, they will also need to sign the permit application.

Michael reported that everything was not in order with VTrans as they missed our email in October that we were starting construction shortly. It is their policy that prior to commencing work a pre-construction meeting is required, particularly focused on safety issues related to trail activity, and we needed signed leases with VTrans. This meeting took place in early January focused on safety issues, we agreed to improve fencing, flagging of the foundation piers for the platform and moving all equipment from the south side of the trail to the north side of the building. There was an agreement that we can proceed. They will reinspect the site after the construction manager improves flagging. We were encouraged to move quickly on the leases; Michael will call Tyler Hobbs to make sure he has all the information he needs to prepare the VTrans leases.

Use: Kate reported that she had secured agreement from the committed grantors to extend the timeframe as necessary and in some cases reclassify their construction targets. She estimated the amount of new grants we need as the construction costs are now approximately \$775,000. Grant funds currently available for construction amount to \$304,000 (\$309,000 minus \$5,000 for administration in the Downtown Transportation grant). With a fundraising goal of \$165,000, this leaves \$306,000 to be raised from grants.

Kate reported that she filed for another round in VOREC grants for \$260,000. She has also filed for a VTrans grant for \$100,000 which is a federal grant requiring a NEPA (National Environmental Policy Act) review. VTrans agreed to allow Danville to file ‘subject to’. A Town match of 20% is required. By the end of February, Kate will apply for another Downtown Transportation Fund grant in the amount of \$200,000 with a 20% Town match. She is exploring an additional Freeman grant from Preservation Trust Vermont (PTV).

Michael reported that he, Kate, and Alison had a telephone conversation with Caitlan Corkins, Tax Credits & Grants Coordinator for the Vermont Agency of Commerce and Community Development regarding the possibility to use a 501c3 vehicle to manage part of the train station construction which would then apply for tax credits that could be sold to for-profit enterprises (80% to 95% of the tax credit value). Laural indicated that she has been exploring a 501c3 to manage the depot's housekeeping and maintenance needs, and freight room operations. In addition, the nonprofit would also work on other recreation economy opportunities for the Town. It was agreed that Kate, Laural, Alison and Michael would explore this possibility, draft a proposal for the Select Board, and report back to the DTSC for review and agreement.

There was discussion and agreement that the Town would need to manage the lease process for the freight room.

Laural updated the meeting on the LVRT activities and repairs. She indicated that the rail trail is reopened for the entire 93 miles with temporary repairs.

Fundraising: Kitty reported that the \$50,000 fundraising target by years end 2023 was exceeded by \$11,000. These monies are going to help keep construction moving ahead. Her team has an additional \$105,000 funding goal to meet by May 31st.

Kitty reiterated the importance of having 100% of the Select Board, Planning Committee and the DTSC contributing to this project. Michael opined that we are only at a participation rate of around 50%. He encouraged everyone to make their commitment.

Kate and Michael reiterated that Pause Place and its funding is outside of Kitty's goal.

The Better Connections (BC) grant would require that we raise \$20,000 in the first 60 days through crowd source funding and their grant will add an additional \$40,000. If we fail to raise the \$20,000 there is no BC match. Assuming we reach the \$20,000 goal and the cost of the Pause Pace is less than \$60,000, the remaining funds can be used for the depot project. In addition, Michael pointed out that we would contract with their crowd source consultant to continue using the crowd source infrastructure for general fundraising through QR codes.

Being there was no new business there was a motion to adjourn.

Respectfully submitted.

Michael Hogue, chair