

Topsfield Downtown Revitalization Plan

Downtown Strategic Plan Working Group Meeting

October 9, 2019

Topsfield Town Hall

Attendees

- Lynne Bermudez
- Tim Collins
- Sarah Lodewick Guido
- Josh Rownd
- Nicole Manseau
- Andrea O'Reilly
- Alex Qirjazi
- John Spencer
- Brian Woodland
- **Metropolitan Area Planning Council:**
 - o Betsy Cowan, Chief of Economic Development
 - o Jenn Kaplan, Economic Development Planner
- Members of the public were also in attendance.

The Meeting began at 6:35 pm

Presentation: (posted on the Town website)

Betsy Cowan reviewed the planning process and schedule. John Spencer, Lynne Bermudez and Sarah Lodewick Guido gave updates on recent discussions with property owners as well as progress on the storefront improvement program.

Feedback from Business Roundtables:

Betsy gave an overview of the general themes from the two business roundtable meetings in September. There was a total of 24 people in attendance.

Feedback from Open Houses

Betsy and Jenn presented the feedback from the physical open house on September 24 and the online open house which was live from September 25 – October 1. There were a total of 138 registered attendees on September 24 and the headcount was more than 160. 114 people engaged with the online open house.

The group gave particular recognition to the feedback collected by 6th grade students, who attended the Open House and then discussed the plan with students in lower grades. One of the students was in attendance at the Working Group meeting.

Prior to the feedback, the group reflected on how they felt following the successful open house. Key themes included feeling energized, enthusiastic and optimistic by the high volume of feedback. One group member noted positively that it was “about time.”

Discussion following the presentation of feedback focused on the feasibility and locations of physical improvements to Downtown. Some of these improvements included potential housing, improvements to public spaces and parking.

Discussion of goals:

The group then transitioned to a discussion of what goals may have emerged from these themes. Betsy reviewed the results from the SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) analysis that was done at the last meeting. The group decided, after some discussion of the merits of having a preliminary vision before goals, to focus on crafting the vision first and will then discuss the goals and strategies at the next meeting.

Next Steps:

The Working Group scheduled their next meeting for November 6th at 6:30 pm. The agenda for the next meeting will be for MAPC to review the vision that includes feedback from the Working Group and Open Houses. The Working Group will focus on then crafting goals and strategies that align with this vision.

The Meeting was adjourned at 8:35 pm.