

**Draft Minutes
Vermont Downtown Board
07/26/2021**

**Calvin Coolidge Conference Room, 6th Floor, National Life Bldg., Montpelier
& Via GoTo Virtual Meeting**

Members Present (12):

- Josh Hanford (*Chair*), designated by the Secretary of Commerce and Community Development
- Michele Boomhower, designated by the Secretary of Transportation
- Billy Coster, designated by the Secretary of Natural Resources
- Michael Desrochers, designated by the Commissioner of Public Safety
- Laura Trieschmann, State Historic Preservation Officer
- Jaime Lee, appointed by the Governor, representing the Vermont Natural Resources Council and the Preservation Trust of Vermont.
- David Allaire, designated by the Vermont League of Cities and Towns
- Michael McDonough, appointed by the governor, representing local government
- Bruce Cheeseman, appointed by the Governor, representing local government
- Chip Sawyer, designated by the Vermont Planners Association
- Greg Boulbol, designated by the Chair of the Natural Resources Board
- Ed Bove, alternate designated by the Vermont Association of Planning and Development Agencies
- Cathy Davis, appointed by the Governor, representing the Vermont Association of Chamber Executives

Attending Community Planning and Revitalization (CP+R) Team Members (5): Chris Cochran, Richard Amore, Gary Holloway, Caitlin Corkins, and Jenni Lavoie.

Guests (10): David Nelson; Joel MacClaren; Frank Briscoe; Petra Lent McCaren; Jonah Richard; Bruce Westcott; Aidan Calvelli; Eric Mallette; Laura Pomeroy; and Myles Frendel.

Josh Hanford brought the meeting to order at 1:02pm via GoTo Meeting virtual conference call.

Additions or Deletions to Board Agenda

There were no additions or deletions to the board agenda.

1. Public Comment Period

Josh Hanford opened the meeting to public comment: there were no comments at the beginning of the meeting. The following public comments were offered after the Downtown and Village Center Tax Credits spreadsheet with awarded projects was displayed for viewing and discussed.

Frank Briscoe commented that he believes the Downtown and Village Center Tax Credit application process is one of the best that he's seen and participated in, in the past ten years. Additionally, he stated that having the State Fire Marshall involved in the project process from the beginning is key to a successful project.

Bruce Westcott noted his years of experience both writing and reviewing grant applications and said the application process is one of the best he's seen. He said the clarity and the transparency of the scoring process unique.

2. Consent Agenda Items:

A board member noted one minor change to the June draft meeting minutes, with one letter being changed from uppercase to lowercase.

- June 28, 2021 Draft Meeting Minutes
- Chester Village Center Designation Renewal
- Shaftsbury Village Center Designation Renewal
- South Shaftsbury Village Center Designation Renewal
- Jacksonville Village Center Designation Renewal

Jaime Lee made a motion to approve the consent agenda items, and Dave Allaire seconded. Ayes: Bruce Cheeseman, Cathy Davis, Chip Sawyer, Dave Allaire, Greg Boulbol, Jaime Lee, Laura Trieschmann, Michael Desrochers, Michael McDonough, Michele Boomhower, Ed Bove, and Josh Hanford. The motion carried.

3. Downtown and Village Center Tax Credits

Caitlin Corkins presented a spreadsheet of the tallied and ranked scores for the FY2022 Downtown and Village Center Tax Credit applications. Board members submitted their scoring to staff in advance of the meeting and applications were then tallied and ranked from highest to lowest based on the average score.

The resulting scores allow full funding for the top 23 applications, with the 24th application receiving partial funding. Staff recommended the next four ranked projects be selected as alternates. Caitlin also informed board members that as recaptured funds become available, it is likely all four of the alternates will be able to be funded this year.

Board members noted the difficulty of reading some of the handwritten applications this year, and discussion ensued about the possibility of requiring a fully digital application. Board members were encouraged at the important local projects submitted this round that will have a significant impact on the communities which received funding.

Bruce Cheeseman made a motion to approve the slate of FY2022 Downtown and Village Center tax credit awards, and alternates as presented by staff, and Michele Boomhower seconded. Ayes: Bruce Cheeseman, Cathy Davis, Chip Sawyer, Dave Allaire, Greg Boulbol, Jaime Lee, Laura Trieschmann, Michael Desrochers, Michael McDonough, Michele Boomhower, Ed Bove, and Josh Hanford. The motion carried.

4. Old Business / New Business

Josh Hanford noted that the August board meeting has been canceled. The next scheduled board meeting is on Monday, September 27, 2021, in-person at the National Life building in Montpelier.

5. Adjourn

Chip Sawyer made a motion to adjourn, and Bruce Cheeseman seconded. The motion passed unanimously. The Downtown Board meeting was adjourned at 1:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Jenni Lavoie