

**A JOINT MEETING OF THE PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT
SUBCOMMITTEE AND TOWN COUNCIL
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 2022 – 6:00 PM
REMOTES**

MINUTES

Subcommittee Members in Attendance: Committee Chairman David Adams, Clr Daou, Ctz Mbr Bernardone and Ctz Mbr LaRochelle

Subcommittee Members Absent: Clr Lazo

Others: TM Michael McCall, Clr Marketti, Clr Daniel, Clr Cotrona, Heather Blakely and Peg Dean

Documents:

-Memorandum: Update on the Economic Development Administration's (EDA) ARPA Travel Tourism and Outdoor Recreation grant

-Memorandum: Shared Streets and Spaces grant opportunity

6:03 PM meeting called to order

1. Roll Call

2. Consider and accept Planning and Development Meeting Minutes of January 20, 2022.

Postponed

3. Review/discuss amendments to Southbridge Zoning Map.

Postponed

4. Provide an update on the Economic Development Administration's (EDA) ARPA Travel Tourism and Outdoor Recreation grant

Motion Clr Daou, Seconded by Ctz Mbr Bernardone (3-1-1, Clr Marketti opposed, Ctz Mbr LaRochelle abstained).

Ms. Dean discussed the issues that came about after the Town Council meeting which approved the \$5.6 million rail trail application this past week. The town staff met with the EDA who noted the town needed to reduce the application amount and the Town should be adding 20 or 30 percent matching funds. This was news to both Ms. Dean and the Town Manager who quickly got on the phone with BSC, DPW, state and federal leadership to find a way to cut the cost of the project by \$1.1 to \$1.7 million bringing the scale of the project down to about \$3.5 million. DPW will do in-kind work, the design of the work will include work already being done by the town bypassing West Street School and Westville Dam, parts of the TIP project and using ARPA funds to cover the rest if the state cannot come up with the rest. Both the Town Manager and Ms. Dean noted they received many supporting letters from the state, MASSDOT, LtGov's office and federal authorities. Currently, Southbridge is the only town applying for this grant and feel this project is very important to the economic growth of the town. Ctz Mbr Bernardone, asked if we do not get the funding can we do fundraising, Ms. Dean stated that we could not do it now but something to think about in the future after the results of the grant. Ms. Blakely noted how hard Ms. Dean has worked before and after the news of matching funds and this project is very complex. Clr Marketti felt this was bait and switch maneuver by the federal authorities and if the state wants the town to redevelop the trail they should provide the money and doesn't want

to use ARPA funds going to this where there are plenty of other projects which should take priority. Clr Cotrona asked how many of these grants were out there and Ms. Dean stated there was only one for the entire United States and even if the town does not get the approval for this one grant there may be other opportunities in the near future from the state who would notice how determined the town is to fix up the rail trail. Clr Cotrona still favors this project and is willing to take a chance on it.

5. Recommend Town Council approve applying for the Shared Streets and Spaces Grant funding for snow removal equipment to clear pedestrian ways and to paint priority crosswalks with more durable paint to include pavement treatment if allowed and allow the Town Manager to sign required paperwork.

Motion Clr Daou, Seconded by Ctz Mbr Bernardone (4-0-0).

Ms. Dean briefed the subcommittee on the application for up to \$250,000.00 of the Shared Streets and Spaces Grant. There were two categories that the Town could apply, speed management and equipment. Speed management was up to \$200,000.00 and equipment which is up to \$50,000.00. The speed management was the painting of the priority of crosswalks in town and if able to they would use it on other roads. The equipment was to be utilized to clear sidewalks of snow and ice during the wintertime and it would replace the equipment they currently rent. Clr Marketti questioned if this was being used by DPW why it didn't go to that subcommittee, Ms. Dean stated they had brought this type of grant to P&D in the past while at the same time not all applications in this manner deal with DPW.

6. Adjourn

Motion by Clr Daou, Seconded by Ctz Mbr LaRochelle, 4-0-0, 6:55 pm.