

Jaffrey Economic Development Council

Draft Minutes 04/20/22

8:00 am Jaffrey Fire Station

Present: Peter Chamberlain, Chair, Larry Alvarez, Dominique Caissie, Peter Constant, Cathy Furze, James Georgopoulos, Tim Gordon, Ed Merrell, Bill Schofield, Mike Shea.

Staff: Jo Anne Carr, Director

Host: David Chamberlain, Jaffrey Fire Chief

1. Shuttle Van Proposal (attached) Monadnock Trolley Co. *“from headwaters to high country”*

Tim opened the discussion with the idea that with somewhere on the order of 100,000 visitors to Mount Monadnock every year we should capitalize on engaging these visitors in downtown activities and opportunities by linking the downtown with the mountain. The purpose of which is to promote downtown, drive economic development, integrate the rail trail, provide an alternative transit for residents and present the Town as a destination for tourists and visitors.

The start-up concept would be to connect recreational assets, with a focus on a “community center or visitor center” with information and rest area. Initially the trolley could run from Memorial Day to Labor Day. Locals could ride free and the trolley would be outfitted for luggage/packs and bike rack. Through the information available at the center we could highlight the history of Jaffrey from Milltown and Railtown, incorporating the walking tours and historic sites in town. Tim suggests this as a kickstart to “visualize success.” In the long run, this would be a benefit to the Town.

Feedback from the board:

Reach out to the Park staff to open a discussion regarding the possibility of passes, maybe these could be allocated to merchants. There is a limitation on the number of visitors to the mountain.

Install posts at the walking tour sites with QR codes to download the tours – maybe contract for an audio tour.

It was noted that people don’t stop in town – there needs to be a reason to – so a visitor center with a bathroom is a draw. Add in an EV charging station and then people are in town for a bit of time.

Foster food trucks – the fee schedule might need a review. It was also noted that trucks could be competitive with brick and mortar restaurants.

Create a platform that runs itself – the start-up could be funded in part through the DT TIFD but the long term goal is that the service would be self supporting.

Extend the service through Columbus day.

Incorporate bike and e-bike rentals.

This could aid in economic development by creating jobs – at least seasonally.

We should be mindful of the “new workforce” who may have moved to town for remote work and are disconnected socially and seeking things to do.

There was much discussion on a potential route – the anchors are the Contoocook Beach, a central welcome center, the Chamber of Commerce, Civic Center... Ultimately incorporating the up and coming business center at Old Sharon Road.

Bill made a motion to pursue the idea with a second by James - and a unanimous vote of support.

2. Facilitated Workshops on Downtown Revitalization

Are scheduled for June 9 and 23 5:30 – 7:30 at the Civic Center. Tim was assurances that there would be specific opportunities and deliverables reported back from the contractor – NH Listens. Note this is incorporated into the contract.

3. Other business/Updates

Jo Anne reported that a new café has opened at New England Everyday Goods – Optimist Café. They are planning to operate Friday through Monday. They plan to serve breakfast and lunch.

A new operator is moving in to the space formerly held by Sunflowers. The owner hopes to open in April/May. They plan a lunch and dinner menu.

The Stony Brook Estates development on Mountain Road is beginning construction. There are 28 single family homes in the project. Due to potential concerns regarding land clearing, grading and ledge removal (blasting), Jo Anne suggests that questions and concerns should be directed to her.