

**MANSFIELD DOWNTOWN PARTNERSHIP
AD HOC STRATEGIC PLANNING STEERING COMMITTEE SPECIAL MEETING
Thursday, April 28, 2016
Mansfield Downtown Partnership Office
23 Royce Circle**

4:00 PM

Minutes

Members Present: Steve Bacon, Tom Callahan, Mona Friedland, Matt Hart, Betsy Paterson, and Diana Pelletier

Staff: Cynthia van Zelm

Guest: Francine Christiansen with Christiansen Consulting

1. Approval of January 28, 2016 Minutes

The meeting began at 4:10 pm.

Tom Callahan made a motion to approve the January 28, 2016 minutes. Betsy Paterson seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

2. Review of Situational Analysis

Francine Christiansen referred to a Power Point presentation as a guide for the discussion of the Partnership's strategic plan.

Ms. Christiansen reviewed the Situational Analysis with the Committee.

Ms. Christiansen reviewed the Partnership's accomplishments. Mr. Callahan said it is important to include that the Partnership caused a certain amount of investment to be made from the private sector in Storrs Center – the Partnership was the catalyst. The number of jobs and tax revenue should be noted as well.

Ms. Christiansen said it is important to have a crisis management plan as well – who will be the transition manager if staff leave?

Ms. Christiansen is recommending that there be discussion of positioning Storrs Center AND the Partnership.

Ms. Christiansen also suggested a discussion about fee for service for the Partnership's services which enhances the Partnership's viability and sustainability. A Memorandum of Understanding between the Town and UConn on future commitments is also an item to be discussed.

Matt Hart suggested that the role of the Partnership in helping with the business mix also be evaluated.

With a variety of restaurants in the downtown, Mr. Callahan said one idea may be to focus on the downtown area as a restaurant/arts/entertainment district.

Ms. Christiansen said it is important to identify the Partnership's and downtown Storrs's identity. How do we capture the quality of life issue as an important element of what the downtown brings to Mansfield?

3. Draft Plan Framework

Ms. Christiansen introduced the idea of an emerging value proposition. What does the Partnership own?

Ms. Christiansen reviewed a draft plan framework and suggested that instead of a Board retreat, the Board may want to set up a series of task forces to work on the main recommendations going forward.

She said the branding of the Partnership and downtown Storrs is critical and may require some marketing expertise. Mona Friedland said she may have a potential resource to help fund a marketing plan for the Partnership and will send information to Ms. Christiansen and Cynthia van Zelm.

Mr. Hart left the meeting at 5:15 pm.

4. Prep for May 5 Board meeting

Ms. van Zelm will send out the revised Situational Analysis (which now includes the Committee's comments) to the Board with direction on what areas to focus on in preparation for the Board meeting.

5. Next Steps: Plan Development

Ms. Christiansen suggested that work be done with the task forces over the summer and then a special meeting of the Partnership membership be held in the fall.

6. Opportunity for Public to Comment

There was no public comment.

7. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 6:15 pm.