

DOWNTOWN & COMMERCIAL BLOCKS SUBCOMMITTEE



Greenville, Pa
COMMUNITY VISION TASK FORCE

**DOWNTOWN & COMMERCIAL BLOCKS SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING
AUGUST 8th, 2018 | 5:30PM | FRESH GROUNDS COFFEEHOUSE**

PRESENT: Ben Beck, Vicki Poe, Barbara Long-Cooper

ABSENT: Joe Ribley, Jen Ribley, Stacy McKay Benander, Jeanette Rowley, Joshua Rowley

OLD BUSINESS:

2004 Comprehensive Plan Analysis

There was discussion on downtown-related objectives/actions steps found in the History & Community Character, Economic Development, Transportation, Parks, Recreation, & Open Space categories. The one accomplished action item found was the implementation of the Streetscape Plan. The conversation then focus was primarily on the actions steps as follows:

Develop criteria to identify and prioritize dilapidated buildings. The identification and prioritization are finally happening now, 14 years later, through the Brownfields Assessment program. The big question lies with once identified and prioritized will there be any action on the part of the owners? There is major concern over lack of participation in this voluntary program. How can we encourage or incentivise owners to participate in these remediations?

There are multiple factors at play with vacant properties downtown:

- Owners have aged and are no longer able to keep up.
- Owners have died and family has divested.
- Owners have abandoned the property and it has been taken by the bank.
- Owners cannot fund things such as asbestos abatement and other critical and necessary renovations to put the building to use.

Vicki Poe will be setting up an appointment to meet with Salem, OH leaders to discuss their success. <https://businessjournaldaily.com/turning-point-salem-revitalizes/>

Develop a business owners association for Main Street and Hadley Road. There have been continued attempts at this with no success. Why is there no longer any interest or commitment? Vicki Poe noted that we now have several (15?) “young” business owners downtown. How do we get them engaged in taking ownership of the concept of the downtown? How do we foster these business to business relationships? How do we even get them to show up to a meeting and share what they would like to see happen?

Implement a downtown street cleaning program. Sadly nothing ever came of this. Spring Into Action is a great event, but we need to take better care throughout the entire year. Unfortunately, the Borough is not in the financial position to have a dedicated street worker for

downtown who can tackle more than just maintaining the flower boxes, but also take care of the weeds growing in between the bricks and concrete pads, etc.

Identify Funding Programs to support building façade improvements. It is not believed that this was ever looked into. How can we support this investigation?

NEW BUSINESS:

Identifying Our Biggest Threat & Weakness

The group discussed that the ideas of what can be done downtown are not impossible, in fact, they are very much likely. However, we will never see them realized if there the current lack of participation or interest that is presently the case.

Additional Members

Although the evening's lack of attendance is not expected to always be the case, based on previous Downtown Task Force experiences the group discussed adding additional members in order to have a full range of perspectives during the discussion. Barbara Long-Cooper will be inviting Vicki Cousley, Ben Beck will invite Janice Schwanbeck and Evian Zukas-Oguz, and Vicki Poe will be inviting Mike Yursick.

Next Meeting

The next meeting was set for Wednesday, August 29th, 2018 at 5:30pm, Fresh Grounds Coffeehouse. (*Note: Mention what is lost when we don't use our second floors*)

Adjourned at 6:20pm

Respectfully submitted by Ben Beck