

## Danville Train Station Committee Special Meeting Minutes

*Meeting of February 3, 2021, 5:15-5:45pm*

Location: Zoom

*Attendees: Michael Hogue, Sally Fishburn, Rob Balivet, Kate Whitehead, Patty Conley, Keith Gadapee, Ted Houle, Ross Meaders, Kitty Toll, Tim Ide, Alison Low*

Meeting opened at 5:15pm via Zoom by Michael Hogue

Michael proposed not discussing the stabilization grant being presented to the SB tomorrow night as it was approved at the last regular meeting. The committee agreed.

Michael asked Kate Whitehead to outline the proposed Regional Business Development Grant (RBDG) and its related costs and match requirements. Multiple components of the study are contained in the handout "Danville Train Station Adaptive Reuse Study" that was developed by Alison Low. The key parts are: determine the best possible uses given the building footprint and changes in market operations, architectural review, cashflow projections including ongoing maintenance and overhead. The expected cost is \$35,000.

Alison explained that key element to securing the RBDG grant was the extent of the Town match. To be competitive Alison thought we needed to be at the 51% percent level (\$17,850).

Michael asked if there were other grants available that we could qualify for with small matches. Alison said perhaps except that the submission dates would be in October with fund disbursement in 2022. The committee agreed that timetable wouldn't work.

Tim Ide and Rob Balivet asked what the cost estimates for revitalizing the station were-answer was in the \$425,000-\$440,000 range as determined by three prior estimates (two of which are more than 10 years old). It was pointed out that the estimates included some fit out and site work. The sense of the assembly was that these cost estimates seemed extremely high given the condition of the structure.

Michael asked Patty Conley to describe her recent thinking about a compatible use for the building. She presented a two part plan with the Historical Society have some presence in the passenger side of the building and a real estate office in the recycle side. Her thought was that fit out would be straightforward and easily reconfigured if the tenant moved out, it would have minimal parking needs and it would provide a product of interest to the trail users (ie. listings and rentals in Danville area).

Rob, Tim and Ted Houle all raised the issue of the 'new normal' for conducting real estate operations: online, work from home with little need for space or staff. They were concerned not only on the ability to rent it to a realtor but that the space maybe locked up much of the time.

Rob (or Ted) asked if we had consulted VAST for their thoughts on use. The answer was 'no' but the group agreed that that would be a good idea.

Michael reminded the meeting that the committee meeting next week would focus on use and what was needed now was a determination on whether to apply for the RBDG and ask the SB for the match dollars. The committee is on the SB agenda tomorrow night for this ask.

The sense of the committee was that the grant cost and the match are too high and could possibly create a negative view in the community that would be detrimental to future fund raising plans. Also expressed was the belief that the committee could do this work (market research, use determination and cash flow analysis). However Kate and Alison thought we might go out for RFQ (Request for Qualifications) to see if the cost might come down particularly if we reduced the scope by the committees efforts.

Michael summed up that the sense of the committee was not to apply for the RBDG grant and delay the SB match discussion, with the exception of the stabilization grant.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Hogue, Chair