

City of Dunnellon
City Council Special Joint Workshop With Planning Commission and
Historic Preservation Board

<https://dunnellon.zoom.us/j/99206750643?pwd=d1NGU09iTWFOTm9qVkQ3T1E2S0ZrQT09>

Webinar ID: 992 0672 0643

Date: March 17, 2021
Time: 3:00 p.m.
Place: City Hall
20750 River Dr., Dunnellon, FL34431

Dunnellon City Council workshop held on March 17, 2021 at Dunnellon City Hall with Social Distancing Modifications.

Anyone attending the workshops are required to wear a mask/face covering.

Public Comment

Anyone who wishes to provide public comment will be able to do so by participating in the City Council meeting in person, or via the Zoom "AUDIO ONLY" platform and/or telephone, by speaking during public comment portions of the meeting when recognized per the instructions below or by submitting written comments, evidence and/or written testimony in advance of the meeting via email to the City Clerk at mroberts@dunnellon.org

Members of the public who would like to participate are encouraged to register in advance by Noon on Wednesday March 17th.

Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance:

Mayor White called the meeting to order at approximately 3:08 p.m. and led the Council in the Pledge of Allegiance. He asked if any invitee or volunteer was present to open with prayer. There was none and a silent meditation was held.

Roll Call

The following members answered present at roll call:

Bill White, Mayor, Seat 1
Louise Kenny, Councilwoman, Seat 2
Anita Williams, Councilwoman, Seat 3
Valerie Hanchar, Vice-Mayor, Absent
Jan Cabbage, Councilwoman, Seat 5

Staff Present

Mandy Roberts, City Clerk
Jan Smith, Finance Department
Chief Mike McQuaig, Police Department
Troy Slattery, Public Works Department

Lynn Wyland, Clerk's Department
Julie Danowski, Clerk's Department
Teresa Malmberg, Community Development

Legal Counsel

Absent

The following Planning Commission members answered present at roll call:

Brenda D'Arville, Chairwoman
John Pierpont, Commissioner

The following Historic Preservation Board members answered present at roll call:

Viola Soffe, Vice-Chair
Scott Kiefer, Member
Jane Keele, Member

Proof of Publication

Ms. Roberts announced for the record the agenda for this meeting was posted on the City's website and City Hall bulletin board on Wednesday, March 10, 2021.

Mayor White asked attendees to turn off electronic devices and be sure to speak into the microphone.

Agenda Item Number 1

Historic District Enhancement Plan Technical Assistance Grant Review with Kenneth Metcalf, AICP, Stearns Weaver Miller Weissler Alhadeff & Sitterson, P.A

Teresa Malmberg introduced Ken Metcalf and invited him to begin his presentation.

Mayor White asked if Mr. Metcalf would like questions from attendees during or after the presentation. He requested after.

Mr. Metcalf started the presentation by covering his experience and the various projects he has worked on with the City of Dunnellon since 2016. He provided background analysis and preliminary findings.

The objective is to continue the work that was started in the previous grant for economic strategies and try to build on current assets and identify challenges. An opinion survey went out about a week ago to every resident and business owner in the historic district.

The City obtained a grant award of \$35,000 and they are not always available. The challenge is it didn't get approved to work on until December. His job is to help the City to think through the choices and identify the options. One concept to discuss is public-private partnerships.

Deliverable 1, due March 31, is to evaluate City owned parcels and think about how we might develop a Historic Village center. The City doesn't have a traditional down town, county seat, court house so the Historic District serves as the focal point. He will offer suggestions on how the City can enhance the non-car mobility options and connect to the waterfront better. He suggested a Riverwalk boardwalk.

Deliverable 2, due May 31, is to Draft Historic District Enhancement Plan. The plan can serve as a document to recruit a private developer. Two future meetings are set up to discuss this. The first is in April and is the Planning board / public hearing. The second is in May and is the City Council / public hearing.

Opinion surveys were mailed last week asking questions about satisfaction with shopping, restaurants and entertainment.

The positives about the district are its walkability, its small blocks, it's authentic, already has sidewalks, has high visitor potential and has public lands. The challenges are it lacks focal point, has scattered points of interest, is disconnected from water front, has limited street enhancements (i.e.: benches, lighting), physical condition (street edges, sidewalks, lighting) and not a large business core.

He showed several map slides indicating a quarter mile walking trail, different historic sites and areas of potential development as a village center. He explained why they were good options and would be attractive to developers. He said the City needs to be strategic on where they will begin making investments and connecting points of interest. Mr. Metcalf suggests emanating out from Pennsylvania and City Hall.

A village center prerequisite would be to relocate the boat ramp and trailer parking. He has not reached out to anyone about possible options for a different site yet. He also brought up under-utilized properties along 41 especially at prominent intersections.

Mr. Metcalf showed several more slides with images of the City streets, intersections, buildings and options of what could be improved upon and more of the challenges. He discussed a gateway feature idea and an idea to get schools involved by engaging art students in the creation of a design at an intersection.

He listed several keys to a pedestrian friendly street. Those are moderate traffic speed, buffer between road lane and pedestrian, the feeling of enclosure, shade, benches, visual interest and continuity. He included several photos of other towns as examples. He also showed enhanced photos of Dunnellon with some of the changes he mentioned.

He ended the presentation by saying he felt all of this was achievable, but to get there the City would need to take proactive steps. The City would need to think about what is going to get the market to change and what would get developers interested in investing.

Mayor White called for council questions:

Councilwoman Cabbage asked if existing buildings to refurbish would include Souls Harbor because an Antique mall might be an option for that building. She also suggested slant parking as opposed to parallel. - Mr. Metcalf said both options could be considered. - Ms. Malmberg inserted that West 484 and East Pennsylvania is Marion County and they would need to be involved.

Councilwoman Williams suggested parking behind the buildings as the streets are so narrow. Mayor White said there was a study that had a group of properties where it would work but property owners would need to cooperate.

Councilwoman Kenny appreciates Mr. Metcalf's overview and said public works is expanding our parking. She would like to focus on a narrower definition of what we presently define as historic district. She feels the City needs to start smaller and suggested rather than artistic conceptions, perhaps photographs would be sufficient. She likes the idea of gateway, but doesn't feel it is critical. She would rather see beautification and cleaning up the city first. She concluded with pointing out the influx of additional traffic.

Mr. Slattery said he would like to work with Mr. Metcalf directly as SR484 has major impact on traffic.

Mrs. Smith reminded Council about the bike path project which reconfigures SR484 east around the bridge and may affect the design plans.

Mayor White said the City is trying to hook into the trail system that comes out of Blue Run Park. It would continue down Pennsylvania Ave. and end at the Chamber of Commerce. But there is also discussion of the possibility of purchasing Nine Island Cove, which would draw the bike traffic through the historic section. He also spoke about how he was impressed with the presentation and agreed with many of the points made.

Agenda Item Number 2 – Public Comments

Mayor calls for public comment:

Scott Kiefer, Historical Society President, said a huge pedestrian bridge could serve as a gateway marker. The bike trail is connecting to 1000's of people to Dunnellon and the City will receive a lot of influx of traffic from it. However, he came to a meeting that was supposed to be talking about a \$35,000 grant received. He is confused as to what are we suggesting we use it for.

Mrs. Malmberg clarified the grant is to give us the tools to get the funding to get to the enhancement process. It's a technical assistance grant paying for the study.

Kathy Dunn, 11386 SW Hendrix Dr., suggested taking a building un-salvageable and creating a parking lot. She mentioned two properties she felt would be suitable; the Mercantile and the Buck Horn Bar. She suggested a shopping center and redeveloping the intersection there to have safe walking. She suggested other ideas it could serve as including a music venue, a micro-brewery and a farmers market.

Brenda D'Arville, Planning Commission Chairwoman, loved the presentation and agreed City Hall would be a beautiful focal point.

Dwight Porter, 10483 N. Silver Lake Pt., really like the ideas. He agreed the boat ramp is an issue and suggested alternatives. There is one on Goldendale which is on the Withlacoochee, and another that is a trailer park on the Citrus County side. He shared more history on the town and why it was laid out the way it was.

Julie Mancini, Chamber of Commerce, said greater Dunnellon already has a walking tour and suggested the City add more murals. The Chamber has already been working with the Historical Society searching various areas of Florida looking for monuments which represent our phosphate history. She suggested QR Code stands that could explain about various historical buildings. She also shared current issues with traffic and concerns over it increasing after the trail is completed.

Mr. Slattery offered three possible public-private partnerships with properties either not or under-utilized. Those are the Lions club, the Mason building and the laundromat property.

Mr. Metcalf will go back to the planners and evaluate the new ideas heard today. He will try to outline all the concepts and develop a priority approach for both short and long term. He will also start working on the plan itself and prepare a picture book format to show developers. He will then come back with a draft plan for the Planning Board and a schedule a second hearing with City Council for consideration. He will submit to the State by the end of the month. He has two months to submit the final plan. Before doing so he will return with a mock-up to present to the City and the public.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 5:42 p.m.

Attest:

Amanda Roberts, CMC
City Clerk

William P. White, Mayor