

## Mass transit and Highway Advisory Commission meeting

March 23, 2021

### Minutes

Present: Karen Wagner, Herb Asplund, Kathy Hale, Jim MacPherson, Thomas Scheinblum(advisor), Terry Hart.

The agenda and the minutes were approved unanimously.

Herb Asplund led the Pledge of Allegiance

The chairman announced that the Commission has two new Republican members: Michael Leblanc and Renee Powell

### **Old business**

*Grants:* Chairman Karen Wagner reported that she had not heard from the South Windsor Greater Together Community Foundation yet but that others had already been awarded grants.

*BUILD grant:* Karen said the BUILD website posted that the deadline for 2021 grants will be announced by April 26. Commissioners said they should be ready to apply right away. Herb Asplund said he will write a summary of the infrastructure section. Kathy Hale will work on the environmental impact section. Thomas Scheinblum will finalize the economic impact statement.

Thomas reviewed the planning grant criteria, which aren't as strict, and send he would send that around to everyone. He also said it is not necessary to try to make every criterion fit if it really doesn't.

*Matching grants:* Karen purposed that the Commission seek other additional grants that seem to be available now, such as those for climate change, transportation, economic recovery, electric vehicles.

*Trolley:* Kathy Hale reported that Michele Lipe said the concentration of low-income households at the town's western border is due to 60 units

of mobile homes located there. Kathy has also reached out to the owners of the Panera Bread/Walgreen's plaza to ask if we can have our bus stop here. No response yet. She will draft a letter of request for Commission members' review. Herb spoke to Manchester's director of planning and economic development, Gary Anderson, regarding crossing town lines to pick up passengers. He would support the idea. Jim MacPherson said the traffic impact should be considered.

Kathy also got data on new businesses in town. She will forward that to everyone. Terry Hart reviewed the advice he received from a representative of Post Road Stages, including contracting with a service at least during the initial phase of the project. He will make inquiries about possible transportation services that can accommodate 15 passengers.

Legislative Update: Tabled because Sue Larsen was not available.

### **New business**

Commission members reviewed the draft questionnaire that Karen sent around. They suggested changing the wording to focus more on the impact on increasing business, rather than a wider community benefit. With the current economic climate, that is an important argument. Members also suggested doing two surveys, one for businesses on the proposed route and one for other businesses. Herb noted that we also need a letter addressing non-business beneficiaries. Karen will write that as well as incorporating all the suggestions in the next drafts of two business surveys and send it around.

Karen mentioned that the Transportation and Climate Change Initiative is seeking comments on its next steps. The deadline is April 1. She will send around the link.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:15 pm.

The next meeting is to be announced.