

3/17 expansion summary

Transcript

<https://otter.ai/u/u9AOxAYTy940YTWM4vjNGYCzCz4?view=transcript>

The meeting on March 17 focused on the formation of the East Village Expansion Advisory Committee. The committee will have 11 members, with subcommittees for specific tasks. The proposal includes maintaining current steering committee members and adding diverse voices. The committee will address infrastructure, affordable housing, and public input. The Select Board emphasized the need for a balanced committee, open meetings, and clear goals. The committee will also determine project costs and engage with state agencies. The meeting concluded with a plan to finalize committee composition and responsibilities in a future session. The meeting discussed the benefits of expanding the village designation over obtaining a Neighborhood Development Area (NDA) designation, emphasizing the potential for funding and infrastructure improvements. The committee proposed a diverse composition, including technical experts and community representatives, with a suggested size of 11 members. The town has 24-25 applicants, and the committee aims to balance representation and manageability. The project timeline was reviewed, highlighting the urgency of FEMA buyouts and the need for detailed engineering studies, with a proposed \$150,000 loan from the Vermont Community Foundation to support these efforts. The board also appointed Jesse Cooper to the DRB.

Action Items

- Karl Bissex and Frances Rose to develop a proposal for the structure and composition of the East Village Expansion Advisory Committee and bring it back to the full board at the next meeting.
- Explore the possibility of appointing a Marshfield resident to the advisory committee.
- Investigate the legal requirements around subcommittees and working groups for the advisory committee.
- Provide an update on the timeline of the project, including considerations around FEMA buyouts.
- Discuss the potential \$150,000 loan from the Vermont Community Foundation at a future meeting.

Outline

Meeting Opening and Initial Discussions

- Karl Bissex opens the meeting, noting the date as March 17, and mentions the primary agenda item: the expansion project commission.
- Karl Bissex removes two items from the agenda: the approval of the municipal planning grant and the reaffirmation of legal counsel.
- Frances Rose and Dan Fingas discuss the Ethics Commission's approval for legal counsel, emphasizing the need for no benefit in negotiations.
- Karl Bissex announces an executive session at the end of the meeting to discuss real estate and possibly personnel issues.

Public Comment and Agenda Clarifications

- David Scheckman mentions a petition and asks if it should be presented during public comment or the committee item.
- Arion Timbourmery clarifies the difference between two municipal planning grants, one of which the town is applying for.
- Karl Bissex and Arion Timbourmery discuss the Community Development Block Grant and its relevance to the current agenda.
- Peter Youngbaer and Arion Timbourmery provide additional details about the grants and their status.

Formation of the East Village Expansion Advisory Committee

- Karl Bissex introduces the idea of forming a committee for the village expansion project, emphasizing the need for varying views and a rounded approach.
- Karl Bissex suggests discussing the goals and structure of the committee without making immediate appointments.
- Dan Fingas proposes starting with the two proposals from the village expansion steering committee and the other proposal.
- Arion Timbourmery presents the proposal from the village expansion steering committee, detailing its background and goals.

Proposal for the East Village Expansion Advisory Committee

- Arion Timbourmery outlines the proposal, including the committee's goals, structure, and expected time commitment.
- The proposal emphasizes the need for a financially feasible plan, infrastructure development, and affordable housing.
- Arion Timbourmery highlights the importance of public input and the need for a committee that can make informed decisions and recommendations.
- The proposal includes a detailed description of the committee's roles, responsibilities, and decision-making process.

Alternative Proposal and Public Reactions

- David Scheckman presents an alternative petition with different guidelines for the East Hill housing advisory committee.
- The petition emphasizes the need for diverse representation and a more inclusive selection process.
- Genese Grill makes an emotional appeal for moving forward with the project while considering community concerns.
- Michael Birnbaum and other petitioners express concerns about the current committee's composition and the need for a more balanced approach.

Discussion on Committee Structure and Composition

- Karl Bissex and Dan Fingas discuss the number of committee members, with suggestions ranging from 11 to 21.
- The board considers the importance of having a manageable number while ensuring adequate representation and expertise.
- The idea of subcommittees is proposed to handle specific tasks, allowing for a larger pool of experts and community members.
- The board agrees on the name "East Village Expansion Advisory Committee" and the number of members as 11, with the possibility of forming subcommittees.

Finalizing the Committee's Charter and Next Steps

- The board discusses the importance of the committee's mission and the need to earn broad support from the community.
- Peter Youngbaer emphasizes the need for the committee to include diverse voices and to address concerns about the project's impact on property taxes.
- The board agrees to appoint the committee members at a later date, focusing on defining the committee's scope and responsibilities.
- The meeting concludes with a plan to hold an executive session to discuss real estate and personnel issues.

Discussion on Zoning and Village Designation

- Peter Youngbaer discusses the components of the zoning adopted to obtain a Neighborhood Development Area (NDA) designation.
- Mike Zunner advises expanding the village designation, suggesting it offers greater benefits than an NDA.
- Peter Youngbaer emphasizes the importance of including Goddard College in the village designation for future funding opportunities.
- Karl Bissex notes the need for hard numbers for community voting on bonding and representation of various community views.

Formation of the Committee and Representation

- Karl Bissex suggests the committee should include diverse voices and discusses the number of members needed.
- Eastern O'Hara proposes including members who can listen to critical voices and improve the project.
- Dan Fingas mentions having 24-25 applicants and the need to represent diverse voices without selecting everyone.
- Dan Fingas outlines a proposed committee structure, including representatives from various perspectives and technical expertise.

Technical Expertise and Committee Size

- Frances Rose emphasizes the need for significant technical expertise for the project's scale.
- Jake McBride argues for a larger committee to handle the workload and avoid becoming a "Facebook project."
- Karl Bissex suggests the committee should organize itself and report back to the board.
- Peter Youngbaer highlights the need for professionals with planning, Act 250, and public financing experience.

Next Steps and Committee Proposal

- Peter Youngbaer proposes forming a subcommittee to prepare a proposal for the full Select Board.
- Karl Bissex agrees to form a subcommittee with Peter Youngbaer and Frances Rose to draft a workable format and number of members.
- The subcommittee will consider the input from the meeting and prepare a plan for the next meeting.
- Karl Bissex encourages interested community members to think about how they can contribute to the committee.

Traffic Study and DRB Appointment

- Karl Bissex inquires about the traffic study and its status.
- Michael Billingsley confirms there will be a traffic study for the DRB.
- The board appoints Jesse Cooper to the DRB, with a motion and second from Patty and David Scheckman.
- Peter Youngbaer clarifies that someone can be on both the Planning Commission and the DRB.

Timeline and FEMA Buyouts

- Sandy Vinton and Jake McBride discuss the timeline for the project, including Select Board approval, DRB process, engineering, and wetlands negotiations.

- **Jake McBride highlights the urgency of FEMA buyouts, noting the time limit for homeowners to accept offers.**
- **Michael Billingsley provides details on the timeline for FEMA buyouts, estimating a five-month process from approval to payout.**
- **Dan Fingas adds that the town is confident about the approval of buyouts for 10 households.**

Vermont Community Foundation Loan Proposal

- **Arion Timbourmery introduces a proposal from the Vermont Community Foundation for an unsecured \$150,000 loan for engineering studies.**
- **The loan would be repaid with grants or proceeds from the project's land sales.**
- **Peter Youngbaer questions the timing and amount of the loan, seeking clarification on the next phase of engineering.**
- **Arion Timbourmery explains the need for detailed construction engineering documents and the estimated costs involved.**

Closing Remarks and Executive Session

- **Karl Bissex acknowledges the input from the meeting and the need to finalize the committee's structure and mission.**
- **The board moves to an executive session to discuss a DRB appointment and other matters.**
- **The meeting concludes with a reminder to the community to stay engaged and provide their input.**