



AQUIDNECK ISLAND PLANNING COMMISSION
MIDDLETOWN - NEWPORT – PORTSMOUTH – NAVAL STATION NEWPORT
437 Broadway
Newport RI 02840
401-845-9299 fax: 401-845-9290
www.aquidneckplanning.org

September 11, 2014, 6pm
AIPC Board of Directors
2014 Organizational Meeting
437 Broadway, Newport, RI 02840

Meeting Minutes

Present:

Gladys Lavine, Middletown
John Ciummo, Middletown
Diana Skaggs, Middletown
Corey Bobba, Newport
John DiBari, Newport
Peter Janaros, Newport
Hilary Stevens, Newport

Ray Berberick, Portsmouth
J. Timothy O'Reilly, Portsmouth
Kate Wilson, Portsmouth
Jody Sullivan, Newport County Chamber of
Commerce

Staff: Sarah Atkins, AIPC Project Advisor

Guest presenter: Tina Dolen: Former Executive Director, AIPC
Public attendant: Thomas Grieb, Portsmouth
Absent: Michael James, Portsmouth

The meeting was convened at 6:00.

Sarah Atkins made welcoming remarks and laid out the strategy for upcoming meetings and scheduling. Introductions were made around the table.

History of AIPC/Staff/Bylaws/ Limits of Power/Municipal Partnerships

Guest speaker Tina Dolen began with reviewing materials in the board book, given to each new board member, including background on the history of AIPC, past staff structure, as well as the bylaws, limits of power, and the relationship with AIPC municipal partners. AIPC has no regulatory powers, but it has the power to recommend strategies, scholarship, and bring integrity to the planning policies on the island. Tina recommended the commission work with Statewide Planning to reward communities that have planning commissions; possibly with monetary grants from the MPO (Metropolitan Planning Organization) funding. It was agreed that the AIPC should identify advisory partners like the Navy and local universities, and other organizations with complementary missions. She noted that it is difficult to get funding for staffing, but it is the Executive Director's responsibility to raise the funding for the necessary staffing, once it is identified.

Plans for upcoming election of officers and revision of bylaws

Election of officers is required to propose the change of bylaws to bring them up to date. A board meeting will be scheduled in the next two weeks to elect the officers. In order to amend the bylaws,

suggested amendments will be presented to the new Chair no sooner than 10 days before they are to be voted upon. Therefore another meeting will be scheduled two weeks after the election of the officers.

RI Law may require a Secretary. Sarah will confirm with the Secretary of State's office.

Current and past projects

Tina reviewed the projects spreadsheet in the board book. She said the AIPC identifies needed projects, experts, finds the funding and hires them to provide services addressing needs on the island.

AIPC works to encourage shared services among the municipalities in areas such as tax assessing, bill collection, IT and Broadband, GIS and mapping, etc. Any shared services depend on the decisions of the municipalities, and so far it's been difficult. There are many more opportunities for collaboration, including solid waste treatment, commercial design guidelines, water quality etc. Tina reviewed current projects:

- the Bikeway project, funded by the van Beuren Charitable Foundation,
- Sustainable Funding, funded by the Prince Charitable Trusts
- Wayfinding, funded by RITBA
- The Broadband Initiative, funded by the Rhode Island Foundation

In answer to a question regarding the Navy land and surplus properties, Tina gave a brief overview and concluded that the municipalities may not want AIPC assistance at this time. However, AIPC may be able to provide studies to assist them.

Public Comment – none taken

Funding mechanisms and sustainable funding opportunity from Prince Charitable Trusts

Tina reviewed funding sources, which include the State and Federal governments, and charities such as the Rhode Island Foundation, the van Beuren Charitable Foundation, Prince Charitable Trusts and the Aletta Morris McBean Charitable Trust. AIPC has generally been funded by specialized grants for specific projects.

Board's primary responsibility to explore and determine Island-wide planning needs followed by designing programs to address those needs

Tina suggested future board meetings should focus on identifying island priorities and the AIPC's relevance and ability to address those needs, among them: waste-water, sea-level rise, transportation, water quality. Tina recommended focusing on one major issue for one year. The AIPC is agile and can respond to changing events, if necessary. Staffing needs will arise out of this determination. She also recommended aligning with Town Administrators and City Manager in the near future and working with Councils.

Gateways to Aquidneck Island - van Beuren Charitable Foundation future planning

The travel experience along the major roadways leading travelers onto the island was identified by all the municipal managers, particularly along the 114 and 138 corridors, as an issue to be addressed. Tina reported that Elizabeth Lynn, the Executive Director of the van Beuren Charitable Trust has requested to meet with AIPC officers soon after their election to discuss future funding.

Discussion of the executive director (ED) vacancy and consideration of the position description, including approximate timelines for advertising and hire. Consider the possibility of an interim director, including contract cost and timing.

Tina recommended beginning the hiring process right away, and noted that Aquidneck Island has a lot of appeal, and to aim for November. A possible resource is the National Association of Regional Councils (NARC). She recommended the ED should have a Master's Degree in Urban Planning or Public Administration. With 5 years experience, a \$65-80K salary could be offered. A large part of the job will be raising funds as well as running projects. If the job description is clear, people will self-select. The AIPC ED requires unique skills. To free up the ED, a grant writer could instead be hired on a percentage basis.

Staffing needs will be dictated by the priorities identified for the organization by the board.

Tina reported there is a 401K dedicated to the ED position, which the agency matches by 2%, which is negotiable. There may be benefits through NARC, and Good Neighbor offers dental and workman's comp.

Current status for office: Sarah Atkins – Part-time Project Advisor

Office obligations: billpay; communications; lease and sub-lease; equipment status; telephone replacement

Sarah reported she works part time at the City of Newport Department of Planning and Civic Investment, and her hours there are increasing to 30 hours a week. She noted that she believes the work at the AIPC can, temporarily, be done 10 hours per week, and that she is committed to staying for as long as the commission needs her.

General Discussion

Discussion continued regarding island priorities and identifying long-term vs. short-term needs. Focus should be placed on the common municipal/island needs, the AIPC sphere of influence and funding opportunities. Corey Bobba noted that where these three things overlap may be the "sweet spot."

The Board will be provided with a To Do list in the next meeting, including providing a sub-lease agreement for Bike Newport.

A motion was made by Tim O'Reilly, seconded by Ray Berberick (?) to name John DiBari as Treasurer. All in favor.

A motion was made to name John Ciummo as Chair and Peter Janaros as Vice-Chair. Vote was tabled, to be taken under consideration at the next meeting.

Identify all objectives agreed upon at meeting and establish due date

- Confirm need for Secretary with the Secretary of State's Office -before next meeting– SWA
- Encourage volunteer opportunity at 4 Bridges Ride, Sunday, September 21 - <http://4bridgesride.com/>
- Contact NARC regarding possible benefits for Executive Director – before next meeting – SWA

Set mutually agreeable meeting date

Tuesday, September 23rd, 6pm at AIPC Office

Scheduling the 3rd meeting was discussed with October 7th as a possibility, but it was decided to wait to schedule it during the meeting on the 23rd.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00.

Respectfully submitted, Sarah Atkins, AIPC Project Advisor