

MYSTIC COOPERATIVE TASK GROUP
MEETING SUMMARY
FEBRUARY 23, 2009
MYSTIC CHAMBER OF COMMERCE CONFERENCE ROOM

I. ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order by Co-chair Josh Lyons 8:00 a.m.

Those in attendance were Josh Lyons, Stonington; Mark Oefinger, Michael Murphy, and Barbara Strother, Town of Groton; Ed Haberek and Peter Balestracci, Town of Stonington; Tricia Cunningham, Greater Mystic Chamber of Commerce; John Kennedy, Mystic Flag Committee; Bill Scheer, Mystic River Park; Jerry Olson, Olde Mistick Village; and Keith Sorensen, Mystic Aquarium.

The group welcomed Keith Sorensen to his first Task Group meeting.

II. DISCUSSION OF MEETING SUMMARY OF DECEMBER 8, 2008

The minutes of December 8, 2008 were accepted as written.

III. ITEMS OF BUSINESS

A. Update on TEA-21 Streetscape/Bridge Repair Projects

Groton – Michael Murphy reported that final plans are being reviewed by CONNDOT, and staff is also finishing up the easement process with the 16 +/- property owners. Michael Murphy also noted that contract modifications have been approved by the Town Council (utility relocation contract and some added services). At this point, advertising for the project is expected in the May timeframe. Mr. Murphy distributed an article on the importance of pedestrian improvements in transportation infrastructure projects.

Mr. Murphy also reported that the Southeastern Connecticut Council of Governments reviewed and ranked 11 transportation improvement projects that had been submitted by member communities to be considered for funding under the Economic Stimulus Program. The number one ranked project was the Mystic Streetscape Project/Phase II Groton for \$2.3 million. The number two ranked project was for the continuation of the Mystic Streetscape Project in Stonington (\$909,897). The project list now goes to the state Department of Transportation for review. The Governor also recently formed a group to review proposed projects.

Mr. Murphy also noted that DOT informed the Town last week that when the Bridge Repair Project begins, there will be no parking from the drawbridge to Gravel Street. Staff is not sure at this time the extent or duration of this restriction.

Stonington – Ed Haberek reported that the Stonington portion of the project, which is smaller in scale than the Groton portion, is moving forward and they hope to

break ground shortly after the Taste of Mystic. They have concluded their easement process and final design. As was noted above, it has been proposed that a continuation of this project be funded under the Economic Stimulus Program. If this funding is secured, the project would expand to the railroad station.

B. Update on Transportation Study Project

Ed Haberek noted that a meeting was held last week with representatives of the Town of Stonington and Mystic Seaport. The DOT is currently reviewing the contract.

C. Mystic Shuttle

Tricia Cunningham previously reported that a group met and put together an RFP, which was designed to provide information on what it would cost to run a shuttle. This cost information was then to be utilized to determine funding sources for the shuttle. Since that time, some local business people have expressed an interest in undertaking a shuttle (potentially in 2010). Due to this interest, the RFP process was put on hold until it can be determined if this other option will be moving forward. Tricia will contact the interested group for an update for the next Task Group meeting.

D. Other

a. New Stonington SEAT Route

Information was provided on the new SEAT bus route for Stonington which will begin March 2nd. This information will be provided on both the Town of Stonington and Mystic Chamber web sites.

b. Loss of Community Leader

John Kennedy shared with the group the recent passing of Captain William Yates. Captain Yates had a distinguished career in the Navy, and was very involved in the Mystic Community, including being a founding contributor and Treasurer of the Mystic Flag Committee as well as a founding contributor of the Mystic River Park.

c. 23 Library Street

Mark Oefinger reported that the Town of Groton is in the process of taking the legal steps necessary to move forward on the demolition of the burned house at 23 Library Street.

d. Retail Update

Tricia Cunningham reported on several relocations of stores in Downtown Mystic and two closings (Chico's and Ship and Shimmer). The Chamber had several "New Shop Coming" signs prepared to place in store windows during the recent renovations. Ms. Cunningham is also working with Groton staff to complete a Downtown Mystic brochure.

IV. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:55 a.m.

Prepared by Barbara Strother
Economic Development Specialist
Town of Groton