

**VILLAGE OF ESSEX JUNCTION  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
SPECIAL MEETING  
FRIDAY, DECEMBER 18, 2015  
9:30 AM**

**AGENDA**

**MEET WITH ST. ALBANS CITY OFFICIALS  
TOUR DOWNTOWN REDEVELOPMENT AREA**

This meeting will be held at 109 N. Main Street, St. Albans, VT. For information regarding this agenda, call the Village Manager's office at 878-6944.

## **Question for St. Albans Staff from Essex Junction Trustees**

### **What are two or three program areas you would like more information on?**

1) You have four boards involved with downtown planning and development: The Design Advisory Board, The Development Review Board, the Downtown Board, and the Planning Commission. What are the relative authorities and responsibilities of these boards and how would they typically interact to bring a development project from planning to fruition? Is there one board with primary oversight and responsibility for city center development?

2) What barriers to redevelopment did you (and do you) typically encounter, and how do you address them? How great a role did the TIF district play in your redevelopment efforts? Did you purchase properties and, if so, what were the funding mechanisms? (bonds? taxes?)

3) How do you identify redevelopment projects? Do you rely entirely on property owners/developers to submit applications or do you proactively engage potential developers? If proactive, which board, department, or staff member has that responsibility?

4) How do you engage the public regarding downtown development to garner support and input? Did you have a public/private strategic planning effort or public charrette? Did you revise your land development regulations to accommodate special redevelopment efforts?

### **What challenges/hurdles have you experienced thus far in your redevelopment efforts?**

- 1) How have you dealt with private owners who do not share the same strategic vision or who not wish to redevelop their property?
- 2) Have you encountered significant resistance to change among the public and how have you addressed that challenge?
- 3) Has garden planting/greenspace improvement been part of your strategy? How do you approach it? Entirely government or public/private?
- 4) Have your efforts included rail crossing, track, or station upgrades and, if so, did you encounter any particular challenges?

### **What's missing from Essex Junction that you would like to attract? Or what is present that you would like to abate?**

- 1) Crosswalk culture – our crosswalks are dangerous. We envy other urban centers in VT, such as St. Albans and Montpelier, where drivers seem to respect crosswalks. How do you do it?
- 2) We have very little public parking in our downtown core. We note that you built a multistory public lot. What role does this play in your improvement strategy and has it been worth it?
- 3) Unlike St. Albans, we have no nearby access to I89, no lake front, and few other inducements to attract shoppers or visitors, or provide a focus for redevelopment.
- 4) We have perhaps too many service stations in our core; we have six railroad crossings which randomly halt traffic several times a day; we have no hotel; and we have quite a few underdeveloped or poorly developed (or frankly deteriorating) properties whose owners are not interested in making improvements or who have an exaggerated and prohibitively unreasonable sense of their property's value.