

Community & Economic Development Committee Report

RE: 1) Regional Marketing Initiative Update and Zamias Request  
2) City Owned Properties Priorities Discussion

Date: January 8, 2018

Chair: Christopher Etori

Other committee members present: Aldermen Cook, Humphrey, Ryan

Other Aldermen present: President Davis, Alderman Tommola

Others present:

Lyle Jepson, REDC

Brennan Duffy, RRA

Mary Cohen, RRCC

Jack Crowther

Tara Kelly, Planning/Zoning Administrator

Alan Keays, VTDigger

The meeting convened at 5:30 pm. First on the agenda was the Regional Marketing Initiative. Mary Cohen and Lyle Jepson updated the committee on the activities and fundraising to date. Regarding the activities of the initiative, they emphasized that while it is still early, the campaign is beginning to create an awareness about Rutland. They discussed the reach of the videos and the use of Real Rutland website and social media outlets. The November update from Mondo Media is attached and the RRCC/REDC joint marketing committee is expecting a quarterly update soon. Lyle and Mary agreed to keep the Aldermen updated. Regarding the fundraising, Lyle and Mary are continuing their cross-county visits to all Rutland County communities asking for approximately \$1 per person to help support the sustainability of this initiative. They have been warmly received with towns either granting the money or putting it on the ballot for voters to support. The group believes that a strong showing of support from the towns will enable them to receive money from businesses and other sources. For example, Lyle mentioned that one of the subgroups – the one focused on building a strong and dynamic workforce – has created some sub-subgroups and has attracted a collaborative partner in the Workforce Investment Board and a new potential grant stream of \$200,000. The RRCC/REDC joint marketing committee will also be applying for a grant through the USDA Rural Development and have received interest from Vermont Community Foundation. President Davis inquired about measuring the success of the campaign to which Mary replied that the Chamber is developing a series of benchmark measurements to which we will be able to compare future changes. In light of this information, the RRCC/REDC joint marketing committee submitted an application for Zamias funds in the amount of \$16,000. Alderman Humphrey moved to recommend to the full board the approval of \$16,000 from the Zamias Impact Fees to RRCC/REDC joint marketing committee Regional Marketing Initiative. The motion passed 4-0 and I so move.

Next on the agenda was a discussion of the board's priorities as they relate to the disposal of the City-Owned Properties. The chair referred this to committee after the first round of properties received bids that emphasized different values. Tara Kelly presented a run down of the bids and the discussion that was had at the city-owned properties committee. After some conversation between folks present, it became clear that the top priority for the aldermen present was to be sure that the winning bid would be in an investment in ensuring the strongest grandlist possible with a preference for getting a quick turnaround on the redevelopment plan. Additionally the aldermen present strongly supported owner-occupied bids but recognized that an investor who might flip it to owner-occupied might be the only way to make that happen. This was for information only. The meeting adjourned at 6:25 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Christopher Etori, Chair

