

GTF: Ordinance and Policy Sub-Task Force Meeting Minutes Thursday, January 19, 2023

Attendees: John Scheflen, Kate Threefoot and Bev Clendening
Meeting was called to order at 7:35

Minutes from the November meeting were shared via email. John approved them but Kate has not had a chance to look at them. Will wait to hear from Kate before posting.

John sent recommendations for Ordinance 15 to the committee via email. Bev and Kate have not read this yet. This item will be held and discussed at the next meeting. Regarding Ordinance 14 - ADU, Kate needs to revise the recommendations based on the discussion from the full GTF meeting. The recommendations regarding decertification need clarification.

At Town Meeting on January 23, Bev will demonstrate how to view our recommendations on the webpage and how to comment.

John sent the survey about policies to all committee chairs and to the officers. We hope the chairs will bring this up at their next meeting and be able to respond by the end of February. John will send a copy of the survey to Bev and Kate.

We discussed the possible 1-year extension for the GTF that Ray is planning to bring up at the next Town Assembly meeting. Kate would like to see a timeline for the proposed extension that includes meetings with town residents to discuss the work of the Task Force. Kate had previously suggested that recommendations that have been approved by the full TF be presented at TA or special town meetings. These should happen before the GTF completes its work so we can revise the recommendations based on Village input. John reported that Ray has a vision that we should complete our work and then turn it over to the town. We need a discussion at full GTF meeting about this.

Reasons for presenting the completed parts of the GTF work that have already been completed rather than waiting until our work is done:

- If we hand the town the “completed work” someone else will need to follow up with suggestions for amendments.
- All changes to ordinances must be approved by TA and must be read three times before being voted on. This is a nine-month process.
- Some of the ordinances are straight forward and could be dealt with now. If we go through the process of town approval for less controversial recommendation, the entire process may gain more support and acceptance.
- Some of the ordinances are dependent on elements of the Charter (fines, for instances) but the bulk of what we have done can be handled before the Charter sub-TF has completed its work.

We also have questions about the process that needs to occur after we submit our recommendations. Some of the ordinances will need to be re-written based on the recommendations. We need to get clarity on who will be responsible for this. We would like to

define the remaining work. The composition of the task force also needs to be revisited. Is everyone willing to serve for another whole year? Kate will bring this up at the full GTF.

Charter subTF apparently wants to present all recommendations for the Charter at one time. Bev would like to see a report from the Charter committee about work accomplished to date. Bev in her personal notes from reading the Charter has remarks about parts of the Charter that they have apparently finished and there did not seem to be a process for feedback and questions from members of the Ordinance subTF regarding the work of the Charter subTF.

Policies

John reported that the Audit Committee has no policies. Audit may need a set of procedures rather than policies. The procedures written down so someone can take over and so the work of the committee is transparent to the Village. We will recommend to Audit committee that they have a set of procedures. The Forest Committee is working on the Forest Stewardship Policy. The committee want to know the procedure for instituting a new policy. Should it be taken to TA? Need to find out if the current policy was approved by the town. Bev will do this.

Having town approval would make people aware of policies. This is a problem with some policies such as the requirements for excavations. Policies in general should be made more public. Part of our recommendations should be to recommend a mechanism for making all of the Village policies more visible and accessible. The recommendation should also address how prospective owners are made aware of policies that affect their leaseholds. Perhaps the webpage could contain an “Info for perspective residents” section. Kate will start thinking about the best way to share the policies: excavation, Ordinance 11 (leaseholder responsible for maintaining rights-of-way adjacent to leasehold).

Civic does not have a tree policy but acts as if they do.

Bev shared Carol Larson’s draft of a tree policy. The draft suggests a Tree panel. We should revisit this.

- One problem is that the policy refers to fines and this would require an Ordinance.
- Under responsibility “suggest locations for new trees...” This should be last; need to deal with what you have first.
- New tree policy should probably be approved by the town.
- Forest and Civic Committee need to talk to Carol about the Tree Policy.
- The policy assumes that the tree canopy that we have is what we should have. The policy begs the question of whether we have the right number of trees. For trees in the forest – forest committee should be able to decide. For leasehold, is it the trustees? Who decided the correct number of trees?
- Need to define what forest and civic committees do; what the town does and what leaseholders can do.
- The panel is a good addition. It will clarify and make less contentious the decisions that are made about trees.

Bev will work with Carol to refine the proposed tree policy.

Bev will find out how the Stewardship policy was approved. What is the charter for the Forest Committee? What is the committee authorized to do?

In general, this Sub-TF needs to decide if each policy needs to be approved by the town and whether policies are consistent with the Charter and the ordinances.

John will work on a Policy on Policies.

- When should there be a policy?
- Policies should be written down.
- Policies should be approved by town.
- Something about value of policies.

Meeting adjourned at 8:39.